POLICING & MILITARISM
ON CAMPUS: Reformist reforms vs. abolitionist steps

All educational spaces, including colleges and universities, are strategic sites in the work to abolish the prison industrial complex (PIC). These charts break down the difference between reformist reforms which continue or expand the reach of policing, and abolitionist steps that work to chip away and reduce its overall impact. As we struggle to decrease the power of policing on post-secondary educational campuses there are also practical and pro-active investments we can make in community health and well-being.

DOES THIS...
reduce funding and/or capacity for policing and military on campus?
build well-being and/or reduce vulnerability on campus?
create possibilities for radical teaching and learning?
address historical and contemporary harms of policing & militarism?

DEFUND CAMPUS AND LOCAL POLICE:

YES. Defunding police shifts resources and chips away at the idea that police and military are necessary.

YES. Defunding police on campuses frees up funds for critical needs, like housing and food access, while reducing the likelihood of police violence and harassment.

YES. Defund campaigns highlight how the PIC engineers vulnerability through organizing opportunities to identify authentic pathways for community well-being.

YES. Defunding recognizes the harms of policing, challenges their legitimacy, and makes resources available to address those harms.

BUILD TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE RESPONSES TO GENDERED SEXUAL VIOLENCE:

YES. Transformative justice responses help make the case for defunding by highlighting how policing does not reduce or deter gender and sexual violence.

YES. Transformative justice responses address the root causes of gender and sexual violence and are focused on reducing vulnerability and creating genuine well-being.

YES. Implementing sustainable transformative justice practices requires ongoing community learning, dialogues and critical analysis.

YES. Transformative justice responses demonstrate how police and military contribute to gender and sexual violence and develop community-based approaches to interpersonal and state violence.

ELIMINATE PROGRAMS AND RESEARCH FOR POLICE, MILITARY & CORRECTIONS:

YES. Eliminating programs and research not only reduces policing and military presence on campus, but reduces tools, analysis, and workers for these fields.

YES. Reducing the number of corrections/police/military programs challenges the legitimacy of these structures as necessary for our collective well-being.

YES. The naturalization of programs to train police and prison/palliation workers makes it harder to think or teach critically about these systems.

YES. Divesting from research and training programs begins to hold universities accountable for their role in policing and militarism.

BUILD WITH ORGANIZED CAMPUS LABOR TO REDUCE POLICE, MILITARY & POLICE UNIONS’ SWAY.

YES. Shrinking and eliminating the organizing power of carceral unions reduces their fiscal and political power.

YES. Cutting ties to police unions exposes their role in repressing workers and other targeted populations. Police are soldiers, not workers.

YES. Police suppress radical organizing and thinking including labor movements.

YES. Deligitimizing police unions holds them responsible for the historical and contemporary harms that police have inflicted.

ORGANIZE TO COUNTER MILITARY & POLICING RECRUITMENT:

YES. Counter recruitment campaigns question and potentially shrink the economic power attached to military/ICE/policing.

YES. Counter-recruitment campaigns create multiple opportunities for political education and abolitionist study.

YES. Counter-recruitment campaigns draw attention to historical and contemporary violence inflicted by the police and military.

ORGANIZE FOR PRO-FREEDOM, TRANSITION, & HOUSING:

YES. Campaigns redefine what is important, identify necessary systems of services, and shift common causes about what creates “safety.”

YES. By reducing food, housing and other forms of economic insecurity, access to these basic needs makes campus more accessible and education more fulfilling.

YES. Campaigns highlighting the need for healthcare, education, and a safe place to live challenge structures that preserve inequality and rethink the purpose of education.

YES. Organizing for the things we need redrects money away from policing and military and builds our capacity to address the harms inflicted by these systems.

YES. These produce new bureaucracies to function genuine accountability and regulation for the violence of policing and militarism.

NO. This superficially legitimizes policing as “inclusive” while failing to address the violence of police power.

NO. This shifts sustain policing and military capacity on and off campus rather than addressing the harm they cause.

NO. Staff, faculty, & administrative support military on campus?

NO. They channel more funds to research and taskforces and stall or distract from challenging policing and military.

NO. This process will simply increase budgets for policing systems, under the guise of “reform.”

NO. These strategies reproduce (or increase) police funding/capacity through other forms of policing.

NO. The labor of policing continues through different - potentially more diffuse - entities, for example, Title IX offices.

NO. The funds that support these initiatives take resources away from student-led and other programs to support people without police intervention.

NO. Even in cities that have implemented de- and defunding protocols, police assaults, harassment, and killings do not decrease.

NO. Private security, local police, and campus police are all police. Their presence reproduces vulnerability to policing and state violence.

NO. Private security and local police surveil and silence in the same ways that campus police do. Resources that go to policing are resources that are not being used for education.

NO. This is part of a larger trend that extends the harms of policing by enlisting people working in public services and systems.

NO. These produce new bureaucracies to function genuine accountability and regulation for the violence of policing and militarism.

NO. These distract from the project of radical teaching and learning and increase administrative bloating.

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NO. Appropitriating TI/R makes existing systems seem more palatable while doing little to address or transform the harms of policing and militarism.

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NO. Co-opting transformative and restorative justice is not the same as making fundamental changes to how harm is understood and addressed between people.

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