

Rebuttal Statement by Saint Xavier University

An unidentified individual filed Public Complaint No. 1668703215–631243044 (the “Complaint”) against Saint Xavier University’s Chief Public Safety Officer, Melvin Cornelius, alleging that Chief Cornelius abused his authority on September 16, 2022. The Complaint includes links to two “supporting documents,” but those documents are not publicly available and, therefore, the University cannot directly respond to them. The Complaint allegations were posted directly to the website, however, and state the following:

“Police Chief Melvin Cornelius used his authority as Chief to punish and make false accusations against numerous police employees causing 14 members, (13 of which were caucasian) to leave this department in 1 month. Complaints were made against him to the school and they were ignored, again the Chief used his title and position to influence the HR department.”

The University denies that Chief Cornelius abused his authority or made false accusations against police employees. In the fall of 2022, Deputy Chief of Police William Sheehy completed an internal audit of the Public Safety Department’s time and attendance records. The audit revealed that certain police officers in the Public Safety Department had stopped working and left their posts before the time set forth in their time and attendance records. As a result, they were paid for time not worked. Other officers were responsible for reviewing those time and attendance records for accuracy and approving them. Failing to accurately report time and attendance and ensure the accuracy of those records when approving them was a violation of Department policy. During the course of the resulting investigation into the accuracy of the records, certain officers chose to voluntarily resign. Other officers also chose to voluntarily resign around this time, but they did not provide a reason.

The University also denies that it ignored complaints that were made against Chief Cornelius. All complaints that were made to the Office of Human Resources were promptly and thoroughly investigated in accordance with the University’s standard procedures. The University denies that Chief Cornelius asserted any undue influence over the investigative process or the Office of Human Resources.