I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to regulate the use of security video cameras to monitor, record and review University property.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all University personnel in the use of video monitoring, recording equipment and all related systems.

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

The University of Rhode Island Department of Public Safety is committed to enhancing the quality of life, safety, and security of the campus community by integrating best practices of physical and electronic security with state-of-the-art technology. An important component of a comprehensive security plan using such technology is the use of video security systems. The primary purposes of video technology are to proactively deter crime and to assist security/law enforcement personnel in investigating incidents that have occurred. Unless rare, special circumstances present themselves, all video security cameras are not monitored in real time. Most frequently, the use of these cameras will be to review footage to aid in investigations of incidents that are reported to University Police. Any video monitoring or reviewing for security/law enforcement purposes will be conducted in
a professional, ethical and legal manner. Personnel involved in the use of any video technology will be appropriately trained and supervised.

Information obtained through video recording and/or monitoring may be used for security or law enforcement purposes and for compliance with University policies, State of Rhode Island, and Federal regulations. Information obtained through video monitoring or recording will only be released when authorized by the Director of Public Safety or his/her designee. Upon approval by the Director of Public Safety or his/her designee, restricted access to certain cameras can be issued for authorized individuals in each monitored area. If, in the course of a legitimate, safety-related use of video monitoring, information is collected and related to safety and security that warrants disciplinary action, such action may be taken provided that employee or student discipline was not the reason for the installation of the camera and/or the monitoring itself. Information obtained in violation of this policy may not be used in a disciplinary proceeding against a member of the University faculty, staff or student body.

Video monitoring/recording, for the purposes of safety and security, will be conducted in a manner that is consistent with all existing University policies, State, and Federal regulations.

Video monitoring/recording for security purposes at the University will be limited to locations that do not violate the reasonable expectation of privacy as defined by law. Cameras accordingly will generally be placed only in areas to which the public or visitors have free access, areas in which students and/or employees have unrestricted access, or areas in which students and/or employees have restricted access but little or no expectation of privacy, and not in places where employees, students, visitors or members of the public have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as bathrooms or residence rooms. For example, recognizing that students may also have an enhanced expectation of privacy in the hallways of residence facilities, CCTV monitoring for safety and security purposes will not be used in residential building hallways unless the Director of Public Safety, after consultation with the Vice President of Administration and Finance and others deemed appropriate, determines a specific safety/security risk exists. The URI Office of General Counsel will be consulted whenever the current law or legal precedent, or its application to particular situations or circumstances, is unknown or is unclear, or otherwise whenever legal advice appears to be needed.

With the exception of the Police Department Interview Room and Cell block area, the video security equipment used by the University does not possess the capability of recording sound.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

The University of Rhode Island Police Department is the department authorized to oversee and coordinate the use of video security equipment for safety and security purposes at the University. The University Police Department will work in conjunction with Information Technology on coordinating technical aspects and specifications of the equipment and Human Resources/legal counsel to ensure that monitoring/recording is being done in a manner that is consistent with all University policies and applicable laws.
The Director of Public Safety or his/her designee will have the primary responsibility of supervising the use of video security equipment at the University of Rhode Island. Decisions relating to the location, type and method of security monitoring will be made in conjunction with a number of departments that have technical, policy or legal expertise. Should any department, faculty or staff member wish to use video security on campus, they must provide a written request to the Director of Public Safety or his/her designee, prior to any purchase or installation. This request must clearly state the reason for the security measures, financial support sources, privacy issues, etc. In situations where there is some question as to the exact nature of the request, the Director of Public Safety will consult with the Vice President of Administration and Finance and others deemed appropriate.

The Department of Public Safety will monitor new developments in the relevant law and best practices (and the URI Office of general Counsel will be consulted whenever current law or legal precedent, or its application to particular situations or circumstances, is unknown or is unclear, or otherwise whenever legal advice appears to be needed) to ensure that video monitoring and recording at the University are consistent with the highest standards and protections.

V. PROCEDURES

All personnel involved in the installation, operation or maintenance of video security systems will perform their duties in accordance with departmental and University policies, as well as applicable laws. University personnel are prohibited from using or disseminating any information acquired from the video equipment, except for official purposes. All information and/or observations made in the use of video security equipment are considered confidential and can only be used for official University and law enforcement business upon the approval of the Director of Public Safety, his/her designee and/or University legal counsel. Any outside requests for video security system footage shall be released in compliance with Rhode Island General Laws, Chapter 38-2, Access to Public Records Act (APRA).

Camera locations are determined by the Department of Public Safety, after consultation with the requesting party and the affected divisions or departments, and the Office of General Counsel when necessary, before installation takes place.

When applicable, appropriate signage will be placed at various locations throughout the campus announcing the presence of CCTV surveillance. Additionally, a specific link will be located on the University of Rhode Island Police web page describing the video monitoring system and this policy.

Recorded events are stored temporarily on a server/hard drive, unless retained as part of an incident report, criminal investigation or court proceeding, or other bona fide use as approved.

The server/hard drive will be capable of storing images up to 30 days, depending on the amount of recording taking place. The server/hard drive will automatically record over the oldest images when it becomes full. Any footage over 90 days old will be manually purged by the Public Safety Information Technologist.
Cameras are not live monitored under normal operating conditions, but may be monitored periodically for legitimate safety and security purposes that include the following: known high risk situations, at times and locations that have previously experienced violations and in the course of specific investigations upon reasonable suspicion. If monitoring is taking place, it will be done with the prior approval of the Director of Public Safety or his/ her designee.

By order of: ________________________________

Stephen Baker - Director of Public Safety