

Feeling safe at our place

Romain Mirosa

University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand

romain.mirosa@otago.ac.nz

Bernard Morrison

University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand

bernard.morrison@otago.ac.nz

Margaret Morgan

University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand

margaret.morgan@otago.ac.nz

Safe campus environments have a positive effect on student learning and feeling safe on campus can affect very directly a student's experience of place. Campus security and protection services have changed and grown in importance with the "massification" of the tertiary sector. The success of these schemes depends at least partially on the level of support they enjoy among their constituents. Yet surprisingly little is known about how campus security services are perceived by students. This presentation will investigate the progression overtime of students' perceptions of a new campus security and pastoral care service introduced in a New Zealand research-intensive residential university. The study outlines the analysis of open ended comments collected via annual students' perceptions surveys. The study covers the period 2006-2011 which follows the introduction of the new service. Overall, the research suggests that despite an initial vocal opposition highlighted in local media coverage, there was considerable support amongst the student body for the new service and that, over time, this support has solidified. The analysis reveals a clear distinction between male and female attitudes toward the new scheme with the service being supported overwhelmingly by the latter group. Asian students were also much more likely to comment positively on the service than those from other ethnic groups.