

April 21st, 2021

Fellow Falcons,

On April 18th and April 20th men brandishing firearms were walking our campus in an attempt to demonstrate their second amendment rights. This event caused a great level of fear and outrage among the student population as our generation has a shared lifelong trauma of experiencing the constant threat of mass shootings at our schools, events, and in our communities. Yesterday we all felt fear and panic when word spread about men on campus with firearms and the silence from official university channels was unacceptable.

Although yesterday's actions were a direct violation of BGSU's policy, yesterday's activity was not unlawful. With this in mind, it is important that we do not utilize legality as a synonym for morality. As can be seen throughout history, atrocities have been committed due to lackluster laws and regulations. Utilizing legality and morality interchangeably can cause an imminent threat to the safety and well being of our community at large.

Regardless of the legality of these two men's actions yesterday, the Undergraduate Student Government cannot and will not support any sort of behavior that threatens our community. The difference between a "protest" and a massacre is less than a second in these situations and we call upon BGSU to better safeguard students from potential harm through the following changes:

- BGSU shall send out information through official channels informing students when these demonstrations will take place.
- Updates to the BGSU weapons policy should be made to ensure students know specifically what the Ohio laws are that allow open carry on campus.
- Bowling Green State University Police Department should release a statement on the events of Tuesday the 20th to recognize the shortcomings of their response by failing to alert the campus that men on campus were going to open carry.
- ALICE training events shall be offered for students each semester.

As the Undergraduate Student Government of Bowling Green State University, in order to prevent a tragedy at BGSU, we commit to working with Student Government Leaders from around the state to lobby on behalf of sensible gun regulation in Ohio that will ensure that the 500,000+ public university students do not have to live in fear at their respective Universities.

The fact of the matter is that the gun laws in place in this state and this nation are failing us. There have been over 120 mass shootings in the United States in 2021 so far, and we are not even a third of the way through the year. Four of these mass shootings happened in the state of Ohio. As the voice of the Undergraduate Student body and as empathetic and compassionate human beings, the Undergraduate Student Government will work to ban open carry in the state of Ohio and ban the sale and ownership of assault rifles through coordinated efforts of the public universities in Ohio. There is absolutely no reason why these weapons, whose sole purpose is to guarantee the swift and efficient extermination of human life, should be legal in the state of Ohio, nor should it be legal to brandish them openly. The right to own a firearm does not supersede others' right to live.

We understand that these recent events have come at a time that is already very tumultuous with a global pandemic, and the recent tragedies our campus has experienced. Please feel free to utilize the following resources:

BGSU Counseling Center: (419) 372-2081
Harbor Behavioral Health: (419) 352-1545
National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255

If you see someone acting irrationally or something on campus that may result in a dangerous situation please contact these resources:

Bowling Green Police Department: 911 or call (419) 372-2346 for non emergency situations

If you have any further questions of concerns please feel free to contact us:

President: Alexander Chiarelott - achiare@bgsu.edu
Vice-President: Gil Lutz - jglutz@bgsu.edu
Director of Diversity Affairs: Aarian Lynn - aarlynn@bgsu.edu
Director of Student Safety and Wellness: Abby McNichols - amcnich@bgsu.edu
Director of Minority Coalition: Chloe Cox - chloeec@bgsu.edu
Student Affairs Chair: Ana Vorobeva - voroba@bgsu.edu

In Solidarity,
The Executive Board of the Undergraduate Student Government