

Let's Take Safer Steps Together

April 22nd, 2024

Authors:

Tracy Tan

Sebastian Martinez-Minett

Kailey Young

Cameron Robinson

Horace Wong

GEOG 371: Research Strategies in Human Geography

Instructor: Bonnie Kaserman

Disclaimer: UBC SEEDS Sustainability Program provides students with the opportunity to share the findings of their studies, as well as their opinions, conclusions and recommendations with the UBC community. The reader should bear in mind that this is a student research project and is not an official document of UBC. Furthermore, readers should bear in mind that these reports may not reflect the current status of activities at UBC. We urge you to contact the research persons mentioned in a report or the SEEDS Sustainability Program representative about the current status of the subject matter of a report.



Table of Contents

Abstract	4
Introduction	4
Literature Review	6
Methodology	10
Analysis	15
Significance	21
References	25
Appendices	28

Abstract

This study examines the subjective and dynamic concept of safety within the University of British Columbia Vancouver (UBCV) campus environment, focusing not only on how safety is perceived, but also constructed, and influenced by both institutional mechanisms and socio-spatial relationships. By integrating feminist geographies, intersectionality and placemaking theories, this study challenges traditional views that safety is not just the absence of violence but rather is a fluctuating, relational construct shaped by numerous factors, including infrastructure, identity, cultural and sociopolitical factors. This study uses a mixed-methods approach integrating ethnographic observation, surveys, and interviews, using stratified sampling and random sampling techniques to collect data to reflect the reality of UBC campus demographics. This allows for targeted analysis to understand the spatial and emotional dimensions of safety and unsafety. The study worked in conjunction with the AMS Safewalk program, a non-profit, student-run voluntary service at UBC that provides students walking or driving company to destinations anywhere on campus at night. This allowed for an actual example of campus safety measures and access to large data sets. The research identifies significant differences in safety perceptions amongst different demographic identifiers, further influenced by actors such as lighting, community presence, and institutional trust. The study concludes that while certain areas of the campus are deemed safe due to high pedestrian activity and visibility, others are considered unsafe due to poor lighting and low human traffic, contextualising the importance of placemaking frameworks. The study also provides critiques to improve the effectiveness of current safety interventions and suggests more proactive alterations to UBC campus infrastructure and policy to promote greater feelings of safety at UBC.

Introduction

Safety is a crucial aspect of well-being that shapes the university student experience. College institutions have been increasingly called upon to respond to incidents of violence or sexual harassment, which may negatively affect identities and participation in campus life. Yet, experiences of safety are far

more complex than an absence of violence - safety is both a constructed idea and an embodied experience which are shaped by a confluence of factors (Orchard, 2023). Within these factors, institutions are significantly challenged to construct safe academic experiences for students. This research originally sought to examine the roles played by institutions that construct safety through their institutional policing and programmes. In collaboration with AMS Safewalk at UBC, our research aimed to examine the constructions of safety and unsafety in the perceptions of spatial vulnerability within the university campus. The Safewalk programme resources and extensive data provided an effective starting point for understanding safety epistemologies and the spatio-temporalities of safety. The spatiotemporal analysis of safety—understanding where and when spaces feel safe or unsafe—is fundamental in addressing the episodic nature of unsafety on campus. Working with Safewalk, an established actor of campus safety, helped the research to be situated within existing safety mechanisms, thereby allowing for observation of these structures from within. Collaborating with them enabled us to gain real-time insights into the perceptions and experiences of students regarding campus safety. This was crucial for grounding theoretical analyses in actual, lived experiences, thus aligning with feminist epistemologies prioritising embodied knowledge and the subjective understanding of space.

However, as we conducted our research and began to analyse the data, we recognised that safety was a much more complex, unique experience formed by different relations, and thus, we felt that solely examining institutional frameworks and policies limited the reality of safety. This led us to recognise the importance of placemaking in safety experiences. Place, as defined by Massey (1994), is relational and both shapes and is shaped by social relations and power hierarchies embedded into material and social environments that inform student experiences. Therefore, our research morphed from solely examining the role of institutional responsibilities to a more integrative phenomenon of place and placemaking, that better incorporates the diverse realities and relations of safety and unsafety on campus. Our research draws upon feminist geographies in examining the spaces of the UBC campus in the spaces of everyday life. This includes attention not only towards perceptions of institutions but also towards physical infrastructure and student identities and experiences that shape how they interact with the UBC campus.

In complementing placemaking, our research integrates emotional geographies of campus life via a mixed methods analysis of student perceptions of safety and the extent to which the AMS Safewalk may shape these perceptions. In doing so, the paper aims to shed light on placemaking, including but not limited to the role played by institutions in the production of safety epistemologies and how understanding these personal and varied spatial landscapes can be used to improve safety on campus.

Literature Review

Safety can be framed as a psychological concept related to both a fear or crime and feelings of security. It is, therefore, socially constructed as a configuration of multiple elements, temporal contexts, prior socialisation and experiences (Ceccato & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2022; Jacobsen, 2022; Orchard, 2023). These perceptions are in constant flux and render boundaries between safety and unsafety porous, unstable, and subject to variations in both the external environment (Pain & Smith, 2008) and internal identity factors (Ramrakhiani et al., 2021; Lizárraga et al., 2022; Maffini & Dillard, 2022). In recent years, the number of studies focusing on urban safety has increased, going beyond an initial focus on crime and traffic incidence (Day, 1999; Chekwa et al., 2013; Ratnayake, 2017) towards greater attention towards the social constructions of safety that are affected by collective memories and individual behaviours (Risisky et al., 2022).

Infrastructure features play a pivotal role in shaping perceptions of safety within any environment. Perception of safety is a key part of students' willingness to walk and feel safe on campus (Lizárraga et al., 2022). Within this context, buildings play a part in the perception of safety (ibid.); this mostly includes lighting and other emergency features, in addition to contributions of security protocols and personnel (Kondo et al., 2015; Roberts, 2022). Studies on crime have also demonstrated that well-lit pathways, clear signage, emergency call stations, and visible security cameras can significantly enhance feelings of security by reducing opportunities for crime and increasing the likelihood of assistance during

emergencies (Ceccato, 2022; Llinares et al., 2020). In a study on the socio-sustainability of urban spaces, Akcali & Ispalar-Cahantimur (2023) found that open spaces were important in creating a sense of safety that shaped the degree of participation and mobility within the community. Moreover, physical design is significant in informing social infrastructure. Prominent urbanist Jane Jacobs' (1961) seminal work, "The Death and Life of Great American Cities", introduced the concept of "eyes on the street", where pedestrian activity and social interaction are important in deterring crime and creating a sense of community that fosters security. This theory has since been backed up by further quantitative studies (Amiri & Dennis, 2020; Vidal-Domper et al., 2024), demonstrating that the presence of people helps to create perceptions of safety. Therefore, thoughtful design and maintenance of infrastructure, particularly in encouraging community activity, can positively influence community member's perceptions of safety.

Central to the inquiry of safety are feminist geography approaches, which have been influential in drawing attention toward intersectional individual identity factors such as gender, sexuality and race, which significantly frame levels of safety (Ramrakhiani et al., 2021; Allen et al., 2022; Jacobsen, 2022). While it is not new that vulnerable groups such as women, minority races or non-heteronormative groups experience more fear than male-dominant groups, this paper seeks to situate experiences of safety as a feeling which is embodied in place (Yavuz & Welch, 2010). The concept of place embeds material landscapes within their social and cultural associations (Massey, 1994; Lees, 2002). Examining the emotional geographies of place on the UBC campus allows us to delve into the intricate relationship between feelings and the spaces we inhabit, in critically analysing how affective experiences of safety are influenced not only by physical infrastructure but also by the social dynamics that occur within the campus environment (Orchard, 2023). These individual feelings of safety contribute towards the construction of collective community memories and meanings that shape the larger social cohesion of the UBC community.

Our research explores how students experience and interpret their campus environments through their everyday movements, focusing specifically on their perceptions of safety in daily life. This focus on the habitual, mundane, and everyday builds towards an understanding of relational place-making. Place-

making - defined by Pierce et al. (2011) as the set of social, political and material processes by which people iteratively create and recreate the experienced geographies in which they live, is a critical concept that focuses on the networked process of socio-spatial relationships that link individuals together within a particular space and time. Determinants of safety are negotiated by individuals within the complexities of the social and spatial infrastructures of the spaces they interact with, which poses complex challenges that must be addressed by universities. We examine what students' experiences can tell us about the construction of safety, which informs how institutions can better target approaches towards building more inclusive environments.

As institutions, universities can be defined by their rules, norms, meanings, practices and habits (Wedel, 2021; Geuijen et al., 2022; Risisky et al., 2022). The AMS Safewalk program is a student-run service at UBC that supports campus security. Driving and walking teams are available between 8 pm and 2 am every night (9pm - 2am during the summer) to accompany individuals feeling unsafe travelling alone (or in small groups) to reach their destination with a greater sense of security (AMS, 2024). AMS Safewalk is an integral component of the university's broader campus security network, accessible via a dedicated hotline or referrals through UBC's Blue Phones—prominently located contact points across campus that provide immediate access to campus security. This service exemplifies how universities govern the spatial and social infrastructures on their campuses, significantly shaping experiences related to safety and vulnerability. Services like Safewalk, common across North American universities, are based on the fear of danger, often reacting to a climate of 'stranger danger' where threats are perceived primarily from unknown sources (Jackson & Gouseti, 2016). This perception is shaped by incidents such as assaults reported in the news (Jacobsen, 2022), prompting institutions to implement measures that are more reactive than preventive (Orchard, 2023). Institutions address safety concerns through both reactive and preventive measures. Reactive strategies, like heightened security and crisis teams, respond to incidents but offer temporary fixes. Preventive measures, such as education and community engagement, tackle root causes for long-term safety. Both measures are important in improving perceptions of safety.

Previous studies have examined how universities influence campus safety through housing infrastructure (Revington & Benhocine, 2023), safety protocols (Izumi et al., 2022) and incident responses (Allen et al., 2022). Moreover, Zavattaro (2019) highlights the pivotal role of institutional trust in shaping perceptions of safety, emphasising the importance of robust university branding to enhance security perceptions. Place branding, as described by Anholt (2005), involves strategies to boost the marketing and emotional appeal of locations, influencing both perceptions and realities of safety on campus. Moreover, trends of more business-oriented management and increased privatisation in university governance have increased not only the importance of place-branding but also perceptions of institutional responsibility (Addington & Yablon, 2011). In an environment where universities are marketed like products, the ability of institutions to manage campus safety is a criterion upon which the quality of the campus experience is evaluated. Safety and institutional branding are important factors that influence one another.

Conversely, experiences of unsafety are shaped by perceptions of inaction from institutions. Funding structures may influence the ability of institutions to enact strategies, particularly ones which are labour-intensive or require large amounts of funding (Roberts, 2022). University campuses have also been criticised for lack of sufficient safety protocols to ensure student campus safety (Izumi et al., 2022; Anholt, 2005). Moreover, strategies implemented by institutions may not be communicated clearly or directly, or miscommunications among colleagues may fail to convey messages efficiently, leaving students and staff uncertain and uneasy, much as their unsafe experiences are not counted when faced with unsafe situations (Orchard, 2023). Larger universities with established organisational practices tend to be perceived as ineffective and slow to change (Chekwa et al., 2013; Geuijen et al., 2022). The challenge lies not only in the implementation of effective safety measures but also in ensuring these measures are inclusively designed and effectively communicated to address the diverse needs of the university population.

The construction of perceptions of safety is complex because it is an assemblage of different parts and interconnectedness and fluidity of various social and material components, making it an abstract concept with mixed understandings of safety that fluctuate based on different experiences and environmental contexts. While there has been extensive research on how safety is constructed through direct institutional approaches towards safety (Basu et al., 2023), as well as how safety is constructed from the perspective of individual identity factors (Orchard, 2013; Esayas et al., 2023), there is a gap in research examining how individual perceptions of institutions may shape affective constructions of place. Therefore, our research will examine the place-making of the university campus, shaped not only by environmental and social factors, but through the perception of institutions that create personal and varied spatial landscapes. Enhancing campus safety involves more than just risk mitigation; it requires creating conditions conducive to the well-being and success of all students. This demands a sustained commitment to improvement and adaptation, focusing on the complex interactions among place, identity, and institutional practice. A deeper understanding of these elements will enable universities to develop environments that are both objectively safe and perceived as safe by everyone in the university community.

Methodology

Safety is a highly complex and dynamic phenomenon that does not have a single definition, and thus, makes studying quite challenging. Nevertheless, the research was undertaken at the University of British Columbia's campus, where safety dynamics can be studied in the context of a large educational institution. The methodology included a triangulated mixed methods approach using ethnographic observation, surveys, and interviews to attempt to examine and study perceptions of safety and unsafety. Individuals, including staff, faculty and students. During the research, adherence to ethical and confidential guidelines was highly respected, especially due to the sensitive nature of safety. Prior to data

collection, all participants were required to sign a consent form, ensuring voluntary participation and understanding of the study's purpose as mandated by the UBC Office of Research Ethics. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained, addressing potential ethical concerns regarding personal safety and data protection. Stratified sampling was used as a deliberate effort to ensure that the survey participants mirrored the diverse demographics of the University of British Columbia's campus population. The objective was to create a sample that statistically represents the broader university community in terms of key demographic factors, thereby providing more precise and valid survey results. Research first began with a multifaceted outreach strategy to recruit students, faculty and staff to participate in the survey about campus safety perceptions; this included collaboration with AMS Safewalk, public and personal social media outreach, referrals and physical flyers.

The survey was initially posted on personal social media accounts such as Instagram and WhatsApp. This strategy leverages the existing networks of researchers to gain initial traction and quickly spread the survey among potential respondents. Direct appeal from known acquaintances might have increased the likelihood of engagement due to personal connections. To broaden the reach and minimise bias introduced by personal networks, the survey was also shared through official channels like the AMS Instagram account. This approach likely extended the survey's reach beyond the immediate social circles of the researchers and tapped into AMS's diverse audience base. In combination, the survey was able to reach a large and somewhat diverse audience, with the AMS account having 3,564 followers and a cumulative 3,554 followers from the researchers' own Instagram accounts.

In order to ensure diversity in survey participation, different outreach methods and locations for flyer distribution were used. However, challenges remained in achieving a demographic spread that accurately reflects the UBC student body's diversity. For instance, the predominant participation by women [67 female respondents, 31 male, and five [non-binary]] might reflect both the composition of the researchers' social circles as three of the researchers were women and two were male and potentially greater interest or concern among women regarding campus safety issues. Thus, reliance on personal networks might have introduced echo chamber effects, where the survey predominantly reached users

with similar demographic characteristics or safety perceptions as the researchers. As well, not all students may regularly access platforms like Instagram or frequent the locations where flyers were posted; thus, while there was a sizable number of followers that could have accessed the survey, a small percentage most likely saw it, as illustrated by the number of respondents: 120. The relatively lower number of respondents significantly reduces the generalisability of the study. The differential access could skew the survey sample towards more active social media users or those who frequent certain campus areas. Additionally, as the survey was the primary method to acquire participants for the interview, with the last question at the end of the survey asking if they would be okay if contacted for a one-on-one interview, this limited the number of interview participants and type. Thus, its position at the end of the survey may have led to lower visibility and response rates for this question. Not all participants might have completed the survey, leading to missed opportunities for gathering more in-depth data, with likely only the participants that are most passionate about safety or close friends of the researchers allowing for follow-up contact for an interview.

The second method of outreach relied on 20 flyers placed in high-traffic areas, such as ‘The Nest’ and various departmental buildings. Areas were determined based on researchers’ personal experience and ethnographic observations. Targeting different departmental buildings ensured respondents would include a broader range of perspectives on safety that would improve the generalizability of responses. These flyers featured QR codes for easy access to the survey, using a visually appealing colour palette of navy blue, yellow, and orange to attract attention and encourage participation. The language on the flyers aimed to invoke a sense of individual agency and community responsibility to participate, with phrases like “Scan. Share. Shape Safety” and “Safety Starts with You”. By scanning the QR code, respondents could directly access the survey, significantly reducing friction. However, the physical nature of flyers means they can be easily ignored, vandalised, or removed, which might reduce their effectiveness over time.

Ethnographic observations and photographic evidence, though not primary data sources, enhance qualitative research methodologies by contextualising quantitative and qualitative responses within the campus's physical and social environments. Observing behavioural patterns and environmental interactions first-hand helps researchers interpret nuanced survey and interview feedback. For example, correlations between participants' reports of feeling unsafe in dimly lit areas and actual observations of sparse lighting and deserted pathways validate these findings, enhancing the research's overall reliability. Such observations provide insights into how students interact with safety infrastructure like emergency phones and well-lit paths, influencing perceptions of security or vulnerability. However, the inherent subjectivity and potential bias of ethnographic methods, along with their limited scope and generalizability, can somewhat diminish the breadth and applicability of these findings. The data reflects the observer's personal perceptions, which could influence the selection and interpretation of observed phenomena.

The survey was the primary data collection method, employing qualitative and quantitative techniques to grasp the complex and evolving safety perceptions among students and staff. It integrated various question types and theoretical frameworks to detail how factors influence feelings of safety or unsafety on campus. Quantitatively, the survey gathered essential demographic data—age, gender, race, area of study, and time spent on campus—to analyse diversity and contextualise perceptions, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the findings, as highlighted by Bosworth (2011). This approach helped identify correlations between demographic factors and safety perceptions, useful for designing targeted interventions and policy adjustments. For instance, the inclusion of the duration of association with the university provided insights into how familiarity with the campus environment affects safety perceptions (Tulloch & Lupton, 2003).

Subsequent qualitative questions were essential for capturing the complex, nuanced, and dynamic nature of safety perceptions among students and faculty. The survey explored the subjective and complex nature of safety with questions like “I often think about my safety when on campus,” rated on a Likert scale from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree”. This allows for nuanced responses that reflect the

gradations in participants' feelings of security, which might be obscured by a simple binary choice, reflecting the subjective nature of safety and acknowledging the complexity of interpreting such data. The survey also evaluated the Safewalk program, assessing awareness, usage, and perceived effectiveness through simple yes/no questions like "Have you ever used UBC's AMS Safewalk Program?" and options for detailed elaboration.

The follow-up qualitative interviews after the survey aimed to enrich the understanding of the subjective and dynamic perceptions of safety, contextualise survey findings, and assess the effectiveness of safety programs. The interviews were divided into three parts: contextualisation and depth, Safewalk evaluation, and spatial analysis. The first section deepened survey responses with questions such as "What do you associate with the word safe?" and elaborating questions like "Why do you consider this area less safe?" These helped elucidate the specific conditions or stories affecting safety perceptions. The flexibility of the interview format allowed researchers to tailor questions and probe based on responses, capturing the nuanced emotional subtleties crucial when discussing sensitive issues like personal safety and experiences of harassment or assault. The second segment focused on the Safewalk program, collecting detailed feedback on its effectiveness and perceived value to improve its impact potentially. Questions were designed to assess both awareness and actual use, providing insights into the program's operational success. The final part involved an interactive mapping exercise where participants marked areas on a map they perceived as safe or unsafe. This method visually represented safety perceptions across campus, identifying critical locations for potential safety interventions or successful existing measures. By allowing participants to physically plot their feelings of safety on a map, researchers could identify specific locations where safety measures might be needed or where existing strategies were successful.

Whilst the interviews were very helpful, they proved to be the most challenging methodology due to its placement in the survey-requiring participants to finish the survey before being asked to be interviewed, scheduling issues, restrictions in technology, and building trust. This is reflected in the

original ten interviews that were scheduled, but only four were actually conducted. Two interviews were conducted on Zoom, one on the phone, and only one in person.

Nevertheless, together, these varied components of the interview process—emotional exploration, program evaluation, and spatial mapping—provided a comprehensive understanding of safety dynamics on campus. This mixed quantitative and qualitative methodology ensured that the research captured a wide range of data, from emotional and subjective experiences to practical assessments of safety initiatives and their geographical implications.

Analysis

The demographic analysis of survey respondents highlights significant insights into the perception of safety and unsafety and utilisation of AMS Safewalk programme at UBC. Survey responses were mainly from Arts (48%), Science (20%), and Commerce (10%). This likely reflects the social networks of the predominantly Arts student researchers, demonstrating how personal connections play a significant role in participant recruitment and how social relations shape research outcomes (Jacobsen, 2022). Nearly all respondents (97%) were undergraduates, with 40% having been at UBC for at least two years and 21% for three years. This extended duration on campus might contribute to greater awareness and use of campus safety measures, supporting Pierce et al.'s (2010) theory on place-making and familiarity with resources.

Women comprise 64% of survey respondents, men 30%, and non-binary 5%. Notably, 39.3% of women have used Safewalk, compared to 13.8% of men and 25% of non-binary users, aligning with feminist geography insights that women often feel more vulnerable and may actively seek out safety services due to perceived vulnerability risks (Ramrakhiani et al., 2021). Additionally, 67% of people use Safewalk for safety, and 33% for convenience; more specifically, 57.1% of women use it for safety and 42.9% for convenience, while men and non-binary use it exclusively for safety. This dual usage suggests women integrate safety into daily life due to heightened risk awareness, while men view safety resources more traditionally, only acknowledging vulnerabilities when directly threatened (Jacobsen, 2022). Thus,

perhaps Safewalk is perceived more as a preventive intervention for women and more of an acute intervention for men.

What is your primary reason for using Safewalk?				
	Total	Female	Male	Non-Binary
Feelings of Unsafety	66.7%	57.1%	100.0%	100%
Convenience of transport	33.3%	42.9%	0.0%	0.0%

Figure 1. Sample Survey Question

Moreover, despite a general awareness of Safewalk (74%), the actual usage is relatively low (31%), with regular use even lower. This could suggest a gap between the availability of safety programs and their perceived relevance or effectiveness, a problem supported by literature that critiques university safety protocols for not always aligning well with student needs or not being adequately communicated (Izumi et al., 2022). One major factor influencing Safewalk usage could be its perceived relevance; students might not use the program if they do not feel unsafe, as personal safety perceptions significantly impact usage (Ceccato & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2022). Additionally, Anholt (2005) notes that ineffective communication about Safewalk’s benefits under place branding could reduce its use. Uncertainties about accessing the service and practical issues like restricted hours or the hassle of arranging a walk might also deter usage.

Variations in Safewalk usage among international and domestic students may reflect different trust levels in safety measures, a crucial effectiveness factor (Zavattaro, 2019). Out-of-province students (37.9% usage) compared to BC residents (25.6%) might use Safewalk more due to unfamiliarity with the campus and increased insecurity (Pain & Smith, 2008). International students’ moderate reliance (28.6%) could hint at cultural differences in safety perception and trust. They might use Safewalk more if they are

from regions with high safety trust or feeling vulnerable abroad (Jacobsen, 2022). A 100% use rate by faculty highlights that more established institution members often engage more with safety mechanisms (Jacobsen, 2022).

A strong link between infrastructure and perceptions of safety was found. From the interviews, all interviewees defined *safety* as their adequate physical safety and the assurance of protection to their physical location by sufficient street lights and security patrols. This underscores the external environment surrounding people as a decisive factor in shaping safety between individuals (Pain & Smith, 2008). Interviewees reveal their perception of unfamiliarity with the Safewalk service despite instances of safety concerns on campus that their friends encountered once. 2 of the interviewees indicated that their friends feel unsafe on campus due to the appearance of stalkers and homeless, but 3 of the interviewees did not put Safewalk as their considerations when encountering possible unsafe experiences as they lacked the acquaintance of the service. Although all interviewees are acquainted with the existence of the service, one female interviewee has a debatable perception of the usage of the service if encounters possibly unsafe since Safewalk fails their intentions based on possible hearsay:

"Because I've heard that say for those take around like half an hour to come...it's like too slow for you like right?...if you consider like if someone feels unsafe enough to use the safewalk service, you'd expect them to come almost immediately not after half an hour because you don't know what would happen within that half an hour."

Another interviewee considers Safewalk an emergency service from the campus and an ultimate solution to decode his feeling of being unsafe on campus, and he prefers to bypass potentially unsafe experiences in advance by collecting possible related information from his companions and media. These responses demonstrate the importance of branding Safewalk, and constructing efficient communication to promote their intentions and purposes to students (Anholt, 2005).

Ultimately, safety is reflected as socially constructed, which was reflected in how students reported their sense of safety and interactions with the campus. Both the interview and the survey sought

perspectives on which specific parts of the campus felt safe or unsafe for students. Based on 88 survey respondents and the four interviews that were conducted, we were able to map out safe and unsafe areas of the campus.

More than 50% (46) of respondents to the survey question indicated that they preferred central areas of the campus, such as Main Mall and the Nest, while peripheral areas of the campus were reported as unsafe. This supports the literature that crowded spaces are closely associated with a perception of less danger in the presence of others (Solmaz & Dennia, 2020; Vidal-Domper et al., 2024). In central, open areas of campus, many student activities often take place that invite human traffic and create familiarity with the campus area.



Figure 2. Campus Safety and Unsafety Map.

Conversely, areas with less human activity were reported as feeling less safe. An interviewee, a 20-year-old female international student living off campus, remarked that she would never find herself going down Marine Drive and Chancellor Boulevard, citing that she “...would be dead in a ditch and no

one would find her”. The unfamiliarity of Marine Drive as a road with no school buildings where classes were held and relatively less footfall created a perceived danger of being unable to seek help in the event of an emergency. The university is conceptualised as a social arena in which activity and mobilities are relational to the wider student body. During reported observations, it was observed that movement around campus was greatly affected by the presence of others. In the evening, students coming out from classes and exiting the campus walking in pairs or small groups were marked by loud, animated conversation, often pausing to laugh or to interact with the environment, displaying confidence. Conversely, students walking alone often walked much faster, listening to music and did not pause, travelling straight to their destination. Familiarity, built up through daily routines and the presence of student activity, was an important factor that surfaced during our research as important to safety. These observations support the literature that safety is supported by a sense of community that corresponds to student activity. Safewalk’s low usage rates could thus be explained by students feeling safe in routine travel patterns, and travelling within areas of student activity, and therefore only requiring additional assistance in the event that they travel to a place out of their normal routine, perceiving a greater sense of risk.

News, insufficient lights, and lower footfall density also significantly shape the feeling of being unsafe. One of the female interviewees mentions that getting harmed in the bush is possible under insufficient lights, and it is challenging to call for assistance with the lower density of people, and one of the male respondents highlights the importance of news regarding life-threatening incidents in certain areas of campus building up his strong awareness and concerns towards those areas to bypass as possible. A female interviewee desires to look for street light installations in the campus area when she compares them to places she has become accustomed to.

"In Victoria, there are more street lights overall, especially in Downtown. I don't feel uncomfortable walking alone in Chinatown at 9 pm...Vancouver as a whole is pretty dark for me,

lacking of city lights in many places, and tons of....who behaves badly, like shouting at people or even chase after if needed."

These responses highlight how the external environment could heavily shape fear and unsafety for individuals, where gender is a great factor in shaping safety levels of females due to the fear of sexual violence (Pain & Smith, 2008; Orchard, 2023; Esayas et al., 2023). The picture below was taken during an ethnographic observation at night, where, despite lighting and wide roads, the absence of footfall and automobiles magnifies the quietness of the road. Despite the presence of street lighting, the surrounding trees have shielded part of the lighting, which reduces visibility. This is compounded by the lack of lighting infrastructure at the crosswalk, where pedestrians and cyclists are more vulnerable and require arguably increased visibility.



Figure 3. Taken by Tan. T. (2024) UBC Campus at night. [Photograph]

The interviews conclude by inviting interviewees to suggest whether UBC Vancouver is a safe place and provide feasible ideas for the institution to improve the safety experience on campus. All

interviewees indicate very positive feedback regarding UBC as a safe place. One female interviewee emphasises the importance of student and professor populations significantly contributing to the perception of safety on campus, citing that it evolves “a trust that people here are all students or professor, which also means safer people for me”. One of the male interviewees highlights the prestige of the geographical location of UBC Vancouver, whose exclusivity in accessing the campus creates a physical barrier preventing a certain number of visitors, as well as the potential threats to students brought by the visitors.

"...because like UBC is kind of like recited on like, an exclusive part that kind of like away from everything. So, it's kind of like it would take a lot of time to get into UBC and out. It's kind of like secluded...not a lot of people like come in and out of UBC unless they're going for school."

All respondents further informed us of possible proactive procedures for institutions to shape students' safety on campus. For instance, limiting access to certain buildings on campus, setting security stations and allocating more people to campus security so students are able to access security services prematurely. The most supportive suggestion from all interviewees is the installation of the lights, and the institution should bear its responsibility as “a school property that provides for students”, citing one of the female interviewees.

Significance

Based on the analysis of the results and the supporting scholarly literature, the following recommendations have been suggested to improve campus safety through partnership with the AMS and UBC. There is compelling evidence that both the physical infrastructure of the campus and the

operational aspects of the Safewalk service can be possibly altered to improve perceptions of safety on campus.

As stated in the academic literature (Lizárraga et al., 2022; Llinares et al., 2020; Pain & Smith, 2008), the physical infrastructure around campus is vital in improving safety. This was echoed in our survey and interviews, with the main suggestion being the use of lighting in lower population areas to deter potential offenders by increasing the risk of detection (Kondo et al., 2015; Roberts, 2022). It is noted that this may conflict with potential sustainability practices as well as wildlife protection efforts in certain areas. In these areas, we would encourage increased UBC's Blue Phones stations to provide an even more visible security presence. Not only does this reassure community members, but it also offers immediate access to help when needed, again enhancing overall campus safety.

Another suggestion we have is potential shuttle services between certain places on campus, especially first-year residences, as 20% of the journeys between May and December of 2023 were from first-year to first-year residences. Though the 68 bus, operated by Vancouver Translink, has multiple stops around campus and in these areas. We discovered that convenience and timing play a large part in how students interact with services. As stated in the interviews, if there is a large waiting time, students can be dissuaded from using the Safewalk program. Encouraging alternative transport options, such as bicycles, can offer another safe mode of transportation; however, again, this leads back to the infrastructure of bike lanes and secure bike parking areas.

We also believe that targeted "about us" campaigns and effectively communicating the specific role of Safewalk will help the campus community understand the available safety services and how to access them. To ensure Safewalk is primarily used for safety, AMS should clearly communicate its purpose, establish usage criteria, and monitor patterns with feedback. Training staff to handle convenience requests distinctively and promoting alternative transport options, alongside safety workshops and community feedback sessions, can foster appropriate use. This could play an important

part in reducing the 30% number of students that use it for convenience. We would suggest that Safewalk continues with an annual advertising campaign, refreshing all students' memory of the service, especially for incoming students during events such as Jump Start, as was seen in the 2023-2024 academic year, to increase awareness and usage.

In improving its branding, AMS Safewalk could also look towards developing its services to explicitly acknowledge student concerns and intersectional identities, for example, directly addressing gender-based or international student concerns, given the results of our study highlighting the significant effect of gender on safety perceptions. Furthermore, student engagement by the AMS through polls, outreach events or activities could help to foster attention towards its services throughout the school year, improving its branding and potentially increasing service uptake. While not directly changing the operations of its service, modifications in Safewalk's branding may serve to improve perceptions of both safety as well as institutional presence on campus.

Overall, our research shows that proactive changes to infrastructure and awareness can make a tremendous difference in not just perceptions of safety but, importantly, experiences on UBC's campus as well. Whilst Safewalk services encourage feelings of safety, their current role seems to follow a more reactive method and could be expanded and complimented by more institutional proactive placemaking approaches to support safety perceptions at UBC.

Future directions

This study delves into the emotional geographies of safety that are shaped by place-making, highlighting the university campus as socially constructed through student interactions that embed the material infrastructure within cultural and social identities. Institutions create safety not only through addressing direct risks to safety, but create a sense of security through fostering community and

increasing institutional presence. AMS Safewalk is one such service whose low usage, while not having a significant usage among the larger population, supports the place-branding and sense of community among students by making students feel less alone. Yet, measures towards safety cannot merely be targeted towards lowering incidents of disorder or preventing attacks; improving perceptions of safety on the university campus cannot be looked at in isolation of place, and work towards creating human connections to the material environment at the heart of safety. Rather than a reactive approach, perceptions of safety are better improved through preventive approaches that can strengthen the community and encourage student activity and solidarity.

Within the university campus, student community-based approaches are central to the construction of safety: when students feel belonging, they feel safe, and when students feel safe, they belong. Community-centred research is essential as it anchors safety as an affective construct that is shaped by material, social, human and non-human factors. By looking at safety as an assemblage of its different parts, future research within UBC can delve into supporting student communities and activities that take place at night, thereby centring the institution's safety branding around student solidarity and leveraging on existing student networks through outreach with AMS student clubs. Through more focused research on student activity and community, services such as the AMS Safewalk can be better integrated into student networks as part of a more cohesive UBC institutional branding. Further research on student activity, particularly in transport to and from campus during low-lit periods of the day, as well as following student events that end late, can also direct more focused approaches to researching everyday patterns of student mobilities during times when students typically feel unsafe.

Moreover, our research can be further expanded to explore other aspects of material infrastructure that can promote student networks and activities. In promoting greater mobility around the campus, alternative mobilities besides walking and private vehicular transportation can be considered to encompass other forms of inclusive mobilities, such as cycling on bicycles or the use of e-scooters, in line with increasing interest in modes of active transportation as engendering greater mobility. More research

can also examine university priorities concerning the different goals prioritised during infrastructure planning stages (e.g., sustainability concerns and cost-effectiveness), which are informed not only by student concerns but also by campus administration and funding structures. Safety cannot be studied in isolation but rather as an intersectional phenomenon that takes into account the subjective perceptions and varied narratives of the unique individuals that make up campus life.

References

- Addington, L. A., & Yablon, Y. B. (2011). How Safe Do Students Feel at School and While Travelling to School? A Comparative Look at Israel and the United States. *American Journal of Education*, 117(4), 465–493. <https://doi.org/10.1086/660755>
- Akcali, S., & Ispalar Cahantimur, A. (2023). How socio-spatial aspects of urban space influence social sustainability: A case study. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 38(4), 2525–2557. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10901-023-10052-y>
- Alfonso, J. R. (n.d.). *Safe Walk: A Network Analyst Framework for Safe Routes to School* [M.S.]. Retrieved 22 January 2024, from <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2055703269/abstract/462A05B426CB4BE4PQ/1>
- Allen, L., Fenaughty, J., & Cowie, L. (2022). Thinking with new materialism about ‘safe-un-safe’ campus space for LGBTTIQA+ students. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 23(5), 757–773. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2020.1809012>
- Amiri, S., & Crain, D. R. (2020). Quantifying Jacobs’ notion of ‘eyes upon the street’ in 3-dimensions. *Journal of Urban Design*, 25(4), 467–485. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13574809.2019.1691440>
- Anholt, S. (2005). Nation brand as context and reputation. *Place Branding*, 1(3), 224–228. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.pb.5990023>
- Basu, N., Oviedo-Trespalcios, O., King, M., Kamruzzaman, M., & Haque, S. Md. M. (2023). What do pedestrians consider when choosing a route? The role of safety, security, and attractiveness perceptions and the built environment during day and night walking. *Cities*, 143, 104551. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2023.104551>
- Bosworth, K., Ford, L., & Hernandez, D. (2011). School Climate Factors Contributing to Student and Faculty Perceptions of Safety in Select Arizona Schools. *The Journal of School Health*, 81(4), 194–201. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1746-1561.2010.00579.x>
- Ceccato, V., & Loukaitou-Sideris, A. (2022). Fear of Sexual Harassment and Its Impact on Safety Perceptions in Transit Environments: A Global Perspective. *Violence Against Women*, 28(1), 26–48. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801221992874>
- Chekwa, C., Thomas, E., & Jones, V. J. (2013). What Are College Students’ Perceptions about Campus Safety? *Contemporary Issues in Education Research*, 6(3), 325–332.
- Day, K. (1999). Strangers in the night: Women’s fear of sexual assault on urban college campuses. *Journal of Architectural & Planning Research*, 16(4), 289–312.
- Esayas, H. L., Gameda, H., Melese, T., Birgoda, G. T., Terefe, B., Abebe, S., Bekele, M., Wolde, F., & Birie, B. (2023). Sexual violence and risk factors among night shift female college students

- in Hawassa city, South Ethiopia, 2020. *BMC Women's Health*, 23, 30.
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12905-022-02150-w>
- Geuijen, K., Hartley, J., Fuglsang, L., & Rønning, R. (2022). Institutions, Actors and Leadership. In R. Rønning, J. Hartley, L. Fuglsang, & K. Geuijen (Eds.), *Valuing Public Innovation: Contributions to Theory and Practice* (pp. 223–262). Springer International Publishing.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-15203-0_8
- Hayes, B. E., O'Neal, E. N., Meeker, K. A., Steele, S. A., Brady, P. Q., & Bills, M. A. (2017). Assessing online strategies aimed at enhancing campus safety. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*, 10(2), 112–122. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JACPR-05-2017-0293>
- Izumi, T., Pal, I., Shaw, R., & Springer Nature - Springer Earth and Environmental Science eBooks 2022 English International. (2022). *Safety and Resilience of Higher Educational Institutions: Considerations for a Post-COVID-19 Pandemic Analysis* (1st 2022.;1;). Springer Nature Singapore. <https://go.exlibris.link/jffvdCXj>
- Jackson, J., & Gouseti, I. (2016). Threatened by Violence: Affective and Cognitive Reactions to Violent Victimization. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 31(18), 2987–3016.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260515584336>
- Jacobs, J. (1961). *The death and life of great American cities*. Random House.
<https://go.exlibris.link/Yk9dL7bM>
- Jacobsen, S. K. (2022). “More of a Girl Thing?” Examining the Role of Gender and Campus Context in Perceptions of Risk and the Shadow of Sexual Assault. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 37(15–16), NP13468–NP13496. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605211005142>
- Kondo, M. C., South, E. C., & Branas, C. C. (2015). Nature-Based Strategies for Improving Urban Health and Safety. *Journal of Urban Health*, 92(5), 800–814. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-015-9983-y>
- Lees, L. (2002) Rematerializing geography: the ‘new’ urban geography, *Progress in Human Geography*, 26(1), pp. 101–112. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1191/0309132502ph358pr>
- Lizárraga, C., Martín-Blanco, C., Castillo-Pérez, I., & Chica-Olmo, J. (2022). Do University Students' Security Perceptions Influence Their Walking Preferences and Their Walking Activity? A Case Study of Granada (Spain). *Sustainability* (Basel, Switzerland), 14(3), 1880.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su14031880>
- Llinares, C., Higuera-Trujillo, J. L., Montañana, A., & Castilla, N. (2020). Improving the Pedestrian's Perceptions of Safety on Street Crossings. Psychological and Neurophysiological Effects of Traffic Lanes, Artificial Lighting, and Vegetation. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(22), 8576.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17228576>
- Maffini, C. S., & Dillard, K. C. (2022). Safe & sound? Perceptions of campus safety for Black college students. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 25(1), 2–17.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2021.1997972>
- Massey, D. B. (1994). *Space, place, and gender* (1st ed.). University of Minnesota Press.
- Orchard, T. (2023). “It can be very easy to feel uncomfortable”: Socio-spatial constructions of campus safety among university students and administrators. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 49, 100975. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2023.100975>
- Pierce, J., Martin, D. G., & Murphy, J. T. (2011). Relational place-making: The networked politics of place. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 36(1), 54–70.
- Ramrakhiani, S. H., Byrne, A. M., & Sink, C. A. (2021). Examining the Experiences of Campus Safety among International Students. *Journal Committed to Social Change on Race and Ethnicity (JCSCORE)*, 7(2), 2–31.
- Ratnayake, R. (2017). Sense of safety in public spaces: University student safety experiences in an Australian regional city. *Rural Society*, 26(1), 69–84.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10371656.2017.1284616>

- Revington, N., & Benhocine, C. (2023). Financializing Through Crisis? Student Housing and Studentification During the Covid-19 Pandemic and Beyond. *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie*, 114(5), 415–430. <https://doi.org/10.1111/tesg.12549>
- Risisky, D., Duff, E., & Espinet, J. (2022). College students' perceptions on safety measures and campus engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of American College Health*, 0(0), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2022.2138717>
- Roberts, N. (2022). The dark and desolate campus: What can be done to enhance students' perceptions of safety on-campus? *Safer Communities*, 21(3), 157–170. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SC-01-2022-0006>
- Safewalk. (n.d.). *AMS of UBC*. Retrieved 22 April 2024, from <https://www.ams.ubc.ca/support-services/student-services/safewalk/>
- Shariati, A. (2022). Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) and its potential for campus safety: A qualitative study. *Security Journal*, 35(4), 1198–1219. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41284-021-00322-1>
- Smith, S. J. (2016). *Fear: Critical Geopolitics and Everyday Life*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315582054>
- Vidal-Domper, N., Herrero-Olarte, S., Hoyos-Bucheli, G., & Benages-Albert, M. (2024). Do Jane Jacobs's conditions fostering the presence of people influence crimes in public space? An econometric analysis in la Mariscal neighborhood in Quito. *Cities*, 148(Journal Article). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2024.104863>
- Warren, L., & Grime, K. (2016). The evolving nature of university campus safety in Australia. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 3(3–4), 200–214. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tam0000073>
- Wedel, H. (2021). *Rebranding & Revamping the University of Minnesota Duluth Safewalk System*. <http://conservancy.umn.edu/handle/11299/223205>
- Yavuz, N., & Welch, E. W. (2010). Addressing Fear of Crime in Public Space: Gender Differences in Reaction to Safety Measures in Train Transit. *Urban Studies (Edinburgh, Scotland)*, 47(12), 2491–2515. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098009359033>
- Zavattaro, S. (2019). Using Feminist Geography to Understand Feelings of Safety and Neighborhood Image. *Journal of Health and Human Services Administration*, 42(2), 167–205.

Appendices

Interview schedule

3rd April - 12:00 noon	Interviewee A (In-person, nest lower atrium)
3rd April - 6:00 pm	Interviewee B (Zoom)
4th April - 5:00 pm	Interviewee C (Zoom)
6th April - 10:00 am	Interviewee D (Phone)

Interview transcripts

#1 - Interviewee A

Me: Hi, we're Steps Together, a group of students who are currently conducting research projects focused on perceptions of safety on campus and how the campus can be made into a safer place. We're specifically looking at the AMS safewalk, which is a student accompaniment service provided by the AMS, the student group on campus. Because this is a sensitive topic, please feel free to only share as much as you're comfortable with. So first question, What do you associate with the word safe?

A: Uh, I would associate the word safe with uh security, um feeling Protected and uh...Feeling like um...There are people around I would say. Yep. Yeah.

Me: So what would you what would perfect safety look like to you?

A: Uh, sorry you mean in terms of like?

Me: Like a place of perfect safety. Any possible examples that you could provide?

A: Okay. Um, so for example, I would say perfect safety in terms of uh, I'll say because this is for schools and then I would say for school environment would be um, uh, there are lots of not necessarily lots of street lights, but at least it, um, the street lights are like kind of like bright across, um, the whole Road. Um, so even at night like I would be able to see where I'm going. They're not like many blind spots. Um, I would also say that perfect safety would look like there are Not a lot of security but like 1 or 2 security is on patrol just to make sure the place is safe. Okay. Um, I would also say, uh, not necessarily but since perfect safety. Uh, things are less likely to happen when it's more there are more people but not crowded.

Me: All right. Um, have you ever had any experience of unsafe be on campus?

A: From what I can recall not really.

Me: Do you think your friends have?

A: Yes. So 1 of my friends, He was he came back late. He came back from uh nightclub. Uh, he was walking with uh, 2 other friends who are females. Uh, they were walking from the Bus Loop, uh back to his friend's dorm, which is pain Rosa common, uh, they sound like they're being tailed by 1 single person.

Um, so they wanted to test whether the person was actually following them. So as they sped up, uh, they realized that the guy or whoever it is at the back also set up. So, um that kind of made them feel uneasy and unsafe that like, oh like what is it someone that wants to follow us or like To and God God knows what will happen. Uh, so they kind of rushed back to the dorm. But once they were in there the guy or the person, uh, wasn't there anymore? But in terms of otherwise, I've not heard of too much.

Me: Thank you for sharing that to me. So right now we're really moving on to the next part of our interview about the usage of safewalk service. So have you heard of UBC's AMS Safewalk Program?

A: Yes.

Me: Have you ever used Safewalk?

A: I have never used.

Me: If you are in the areas feeling unsafe, are you going to use the safewalk service?

A: Uh, not personally, but I have heard other friends or they use them. Well, I would say, since I feel like this kind of security service is for when it's like very urgent. So like, if it's just in general like in a dark place where you feel a bit like creeped out and I say if there's actually no one around or it's actually fine. I probably wouldn't call safewalk like I feel unsafe, but if there's nothing around then I'll probably call just because I kind of don't want to use the emergency service. It's not necessarily. But if there was a situation where someone sold me or something more severely happened like there was an instant on campus or I heard on a news that something happened, I might use a clock at night just to be safe.

Me: So Safewalk service is kind of an emergency service for you, right?

A: Yes.

Me: Thank you. So right now we're going to start off with a map on campus. We'd like you to highlight parts of campus where you feel safe in blue, and places where you feel less safe in red. Please take your time to think about it.

A: Sure.

Me: So thank you for drawing the map and I can I can find out like... You draw the blue at most of the campus, and the west of the bus loop. Would you like to explain about it more?

A: Okay, uh, so basically, uh, I'll explain from the blue part. So blue part is mainly the main road. So you usually ones that I go to uh, in terms of school hang out with friends. Uh, so those ones are safe, uh, no matter night or day. Um, whenever I study late, uh, I need, I walk through these areas and I feel safe. However, there is 1 spot. So that is next to orchard Commons, There's actually small road that goes out to Maine Mall. It's like a shortcut. Um, I did stay in Orchard Commons for it before and uh, whenever I walk through there at night, I feel unsafe just because there's not a lot of lights and um, it seemed kind of

um, creepy just because there's not a lot of things around, just that little road there. But once I get the orchard comments, it's all good.

Me: How about the other red areas that marked as unsafe for you?

A: So a lot of the red parts as you can see on the map are on the left side of campus. So those are the areas for like driving mostly just because um, if I walk through there I feel dangerous that cars would come but also that I feel like there's not as much people walking around here. Nor Have I seen lots and lots of street lights, especially in places near or um along that kind of road. So I'm kind of worried and it's also totem Park is actually quite dark at night. So that totem Park area is also kind of scary sometimes. And then Thunderbird residents, the safety is not because it's dark. It's just that I've heard a lot of people like mess around there. That's why I highlighted Thunder the residents red. And then in terms of East Campus, I don't really have a comment. I've been there before it seems okay, so that's why I marked it in blue. Um, and then Westbrook the main roads are good just because I did stay in Westbrook before and then when I walked through these roads I feel safe. However, there's a little path that goes from Berton to Birney Avenue. There's a little path in between that goes to buildings, and there's no streetlights at night. So it's kind of dark. In a sense, I have walked past and I didn't know there was a coyote their kind of thing. So it was just that um, and then the kind of the middle of Westbrook place, there's also not a lot of street lights so at night it seems very dark. Otherwise, the main ones are just the specific region part because I have heard a lot of things. So whenever I walk out onto dining roads, sometimes I'm kind of afraid.

Me: Thank you for sharing such rich information. So do all these kinds of ideas change according to your kind of day?

A: Yes, I would say these ones that I have marked right now. They are according to at night. So during daytime, it might be more safe but I would say specific Regional Park for me is still a red right now just because I've heard of stuff before during daytime as well. But once it's daylight, I think everything's okay because there's sunlight.

Me: Are there any like certain areas on campus that you would avoid?

A: I would say that for an area. Uh, there is not exactly an area. I avoid I just don't go as much. There's a as you know, like there's a long staircase that goes down from Like the UBC side. So on the West Side to wreck Beach. It's a really long like path. Um, I'm kind of worried at night especially because it's a really long path. Um, there's not a lot of lights. So a lot of times when we go down at night. It's like we navigate through like flashlight or like just by friends, so makes me afraid like if something pops out and like.

Me: How about the certain areas on campus that you would like to visit more often?

A: Um, if you look on the map, East Mall, I walk through there a lot. Just because my faculty is around there too. And then, sometimes I walk towards the bus loop, and then I kind of walk in the exchange area, where life building is. And everything that's where I hang out a lot, also Buchanan as well, I have classes

there. But mainly, East Main Mall as well, the Main Mall where everything is, where the fountain is that area as well. Those are the main areas I go to so if I kind of like the main passage and the buildings that you have the class and right, it's like these are all areas that you'll like that these are like the main intentions of campus and the place that you have class.

Me: So right now we're moving to the last part. What are the factors can make you have more feeling of safe?

A: I would say factors that make me feel more safe would be like with a bunch of friends. I'll say like not necessarily like people around but like with friends like I think it makes me feel more safe just because people are less likely to you know, like approach a big group of people. Another thing would be kind of I don't know like If we like talk or like make sounds or like play, it feels more safe. Just because there's like some sound around it's not like all quiet and everything. Yeah, I think those are the main factors.

Me: So as long as you can make some noise, you can feel more safe, right?

A: Yes. I'm not quieter but like, uh, I don't want the quieter.

Me: How do you think about the international students versus the domestic ones that born and raised in Vancouver? Would you want to share some thoughts about this? Since right now at this point, we had some interesting responses from our surveys about it, and I would like to dig this a bit more personally.

A: I don't think born and raised in Vancouver would really change. Um, Like in terms of like the status in Canada kind of thing, I think foreigners like often get like discriminated or some people like some crazy people might like attack. But I think it's very rare. I would say I don't think it matters just because I think people just attack sometimes randomly. But also like it is also like a case where like if they see foreigners like people that are not of their color they might attack them more likely so that's why I was like, oh, I don't think it really matters like the international students versus like, um born and raised in Vancouver unless it is a kidnapping or you know, I'm not sure but yeah, that's like very rare I think. So I don't think it would be a big factor or I would take that into account.

Me: So overall, do you feel UBC is a safe place?

A: Do you want me to say this like give it a rating or like?

Me: Yeah, kind of a rating thing. but you would like to explain why.

A: I would still say, UBC relatively speaking as I've heard from other places compared to a lot of other Unis or places. It's relatively safe. There was a lot of security around. I think It's also because like UBC is kind of like recited on like, an exclusive part that kind of like away from everything. So, it's kind of like it would take a lot of time to get into UBC and out. It's kind of like secluded, and that kind of like makes it quiet like not a lot of like thing like, um, how do I explain that? Because there's not a lot going on or not like if there's not a lot going on but like kind of the secluded so not a lot of people like come in and out of

UBC unless they're going for school. So I think that's one thing that makes UBC a safe place. I think also, I think a lot of times when we're in UBC like we're with friends. We're usually in less likely be alone unless we're in dorm. So I think Yeah, overall. It's still a safe place. I've heard like that many things so on as compared to like Seattle, yeah, like you need in Seattle.

Me: So if the exclusivity of UBC is actually like a kind of a barrier for safety.

A: Yeah. I think that the exclusivity like the secluded kind of like, um, geographic of UBC from the rest kind of makes it an advantage where because that means like people are less likely to actually like come all the way in you know. Actually wanted to like touch with this when they wanted to target someone, you know, yeah.

Me: Um, so for our last question, do you think that institutions can do more about safety?

A: Well, of course, yes. I think especially in areas where it's like around dorms. I think there can be a lot more security patrols. And, I actually don't really know how safewalk works. But I would say, so in the case where someone um is in immediate danger or like they feel like they're unsafe they call the from what? I know you call the hotline and then they'll come find you, but it really depends on how fast they respond to it or like how quick it is just because some people are in a very immediate situation where they might not even have covers so like protest them. It really depends on how the Community response to this, and I will say the effectiveness of the program. I can't judge but then I would say if institution can do more. It's like set up more stations around, allocate more people, so when you need to dispatch someone to help someone, it would be a much more effective, even so like just install more street lights for institutions because street lights, like people, if people will probably want to hide it they want to attack someone so they wouldn't want to hide like under a street light like where it's well lit. So, I think well in areas are also a very important thing in UBC.

Me: Yeah. Thank you so much. This is the end of our interview. On behalf of Steps Together, I would like to thank you for your participation again since you supported us in shaping our campus safety and contributing to a safer academic experience in future. Do you have any questions towards our interview and our research?

A: I think uh, I'm just curious like are you guys actually helping like, safewalk like, um, yeah just going to be like the results will be like sent to the safe walk for evaluation or I think that would be really nice.

Me: Yeah, actually we're like kind of like working with AMS, providing like the results of the project and giving suggestions to them to improve the safewalk service and all that. I'll say they are kind of a supervisor of our research.

A: Um, yeah, I think also I think not like a question. It's just like research wise. I think like people especially in UBC, like there's a lot of concern about car safety as well like that. Not necessarily is about

like campus security. But also I think like having campus security like divert traffic or making sure that people are not speeding on campus would be helpful just because, they would love to access that because of over speeding. And then, like unfortunately people are walking die, or like they crash into like car parks and stuff that has happened. So I think in terms of security in that sense.

Me: I wish I could answer your questions. Thank you so much. Take care.

A: Thank you. You too.

Interview #2 - Interviewee B

Me: Hi, we're Steps Together, a group of students who are currently conducting research projects focused on perceptions of safety on campus and how the campus can be made into a safer place. We're specifically looking at the AMS safewalk, which is a student accompaniment service provided by the AMS, the student group on campus. Because this is a sensitive topic, please feel free to only share as much as you're comfortable with. So first question, What do you associate with the word safe?

B: Uh, probably just in general not having to worry about anything.

Me: like when are you like walking or or outside, right?

B: Yeah, it's when I don't have to worry about my own safety when I'm outside. Just walking around perfect.

Me: so what you what with perfect safety look like to you?

B: I mean just probably like I can walk at night without worry or like like walk alone in a quiet place without worrying about my own safety. Yeah.

Me: have you ever had an experience of unsafety on campus?

B: No. Not at all.

Me: Do you think your friends have?

B: Um, not particularly. Not that I know of at least. I will say no for this.

Me: So next we are like moving on to talk about the usage of safe for service. Have you heard about the ubc's AMS safe for program?

B: Yep.

Me: have you used ever used that?

B: No. Never had the chance.

Me: If you are already in the area feeling unsafe, are you going to use the cable service?

B: Debatable. Because I've heard that say for those take around like half an hour to come. It was just being like, it's like too slow for you like right? Well, if someone wants to use safewalk, not as much as a sufficiency as they said right? Because if you consider like if someone feels unsafe enough to use the safewalk service, you'd expect them to come almost immediately not after half an hour because you don't know what would happen within that half an hour.

Me: Thanks for sharing. Right now we're going to start off with a bamboo campus and we we would like you to highlight some parts of your campus where you feel safe and blue and place where you feel less safe and red.

Me: So thank you for drawing the map. Um So why would you consider this area safe?

B: Those areas are mostly I've been there. There isn't any like thing that's dangerous I guess.

Me: So these are all the places that you have been before and you feel safe, right?

B: yeah.

Me: Alright. And I saw like you have some also has got some red areas like if you can see and including like the East campus like the residence area and also the part like And the front of the boulevard, would you like to explain why?

B: It's just mainly because I haven't been there my myself and I can't really say that I can consider it safe or not safe, but mostly I do not feel safe, uh with areas that I'm not familiar with. So aside because you're not familiar with you're not familiar with so you pretend like there's like, um, if there's like something uh unhappy with some unhappy stuff or like unfortunately stuff happens. You don't know how to like track tackle with or like even like get out of there, right? Well, yeah mainly because I don't know how to go there or get out of there.

Me: Does this change according to the time of day?

B: Yes, and no, um for safety. I don't think it is changes that much but the places that are available for you to hide in or like just till in usually closes around 11:00. So if anyone that will have Danger. Within that area or within UBC in general, there isn't a place for them to hide I guess or like escape to. One night, I was in the campus to like 11 something I got kicked out from the nest at 11:00.

Me: Oh.

B: I heard about like some of the building were like open to 24/7 during the finals but I haven't most of them are like locked.

Me: Uh oh, so Is there are there any like certain areas on campus that you would avoid?

B: Probably like near the area that only has residences because like well, why would I be there? And yeah, right

Me: So it's like the areas that you're not you don't have reason to go with.

B: Yeah

Me: Are there any are certain areas on campus that you visit more often?

B: Uh, probably near from Buchanan to nest.

Me: Any specific reasons about this?

B: I mean mainly because my courses are like my lectures are on that area. And if I want to go back I still have to go past the nest to go to a Bus Loop and stuff. And it's definitely very crowded near the nest as well.

Me: Thank you for sharing such rich information. We're right moving on to the last part. So what are the factors can make you have more feeling of safe?

B: Probably more light. And More like security and places to be open even like in the late times, I guess.

Me: I'm pretty sure that that you're talking about streetlights, right? But how about the lights from the buildings? Does that work for you also?

B: Well, I found the building lights from the building doesn't really you know light up the roads itself. So I guess it's like street lights. Also, since there's a lot of like forests like-ish area around UBC and there's like it's pretty dark within those areas.

Me: Overall, Do you feel UBC is a safe place?

B: Yes.

Me: Do you think like the institutions can do more about safety?

B: Well, yeah, I think safewalk should be more. And also, UBC should possibly just make more area to be allowed. For well, or just have someone around the campus because like you don't know what would happen even to the people in dorms. So, for example, like hiring more security? I was quite literally sitting out of nowhere last time after I got kicked out from nest. Is that really necessary for them?

Me: So you're like thinking about like taking you out to the nest it's actually kind of a bit meaningless, right?

B: Yes. Because I thought Nest is open 24/7 for so long and there is security inside. And it's also like a school property that provides for students. It's not like I was in there for any specific reason or like bad reason. I was just in there to you know, avoid the wind and stuff. That's it.

Me: Thank you so much. This is the end of our interview. On behalf of Steps Together, I would like to thank you for your participation again since you supported us in shaping our campus safety and contributing to a safer academic experience in future. Do you have any questions towards our interview and our research?

B: Not specifically. I think.

Me: Thank you so much, take care!

Interview #3 - Interviewee C

Me: Hi, we're Steps Together, a group of students who are currently conducting research projects focused on perceptions of safety on campus and how the campus can be made into a safer place. We're specifically looking at the AMS safewalk, which is a student accompaniment service provided by the AMS, the student group on campus. Because this is a sensitive topic, please feel free to only share as much as you're comfortable with. So first question, What do you associate with the word safe?

C: Home? Definitely not outside on the street in vancouver.

Me: What would perfect safety look like to you?

C: I don't have to be afraid of walking alone on the street at night.

Me: Have you ever had an experience of unsafety on campus?

C: Not really.

Me: Do you think your friends have?

C: Yes, there is a homeless man once spit on my friends' laptops when they were sitting in the life building during a daytime.

Me: Do you know what is your friend's reaction regarding this?

C: She is pretty clam about it, more like considering they were disgusting.

Me: Do you know what happened next?

C: Just went to tell the campus security and that's it.

Me: Thank you for sharing. Next, we are going to move on to asking about the AMS safewalk service. Have you heard of UBC's AMS Safewalk Program?

C: Yes.

Me: Have you ever used Safewalk?

C: No.

Me: If you are in the areas feeling unsafe, are you going to use the safewalk service? Why or why not?

C: Not really, because i never heard my friends using it and i am not familiar with it. Also, I would not be staying at campus very late since I am not living on campus.

Me: Thank you. Right now we're going to start off with a map on campus. We'd like you to highlight parts of campus where you feel safe in blue, and places where you feel less safe in red. Please take your time to think about it.

Me: Thanks for drawing the map. Would you like to tell me why you consider these areas as safe?

C: These are the area that most students gather around, and it's the centre of the campus.

Me: How about the red zones?

C: I'm just not familiar with this area.

Me: Thanks for sharing your thoughts. Next question, does this change according to the time of day?

C: No.

Me: Would you like to explain for a bit more?

C: Well... I think it's more like I won't be on campus after 12am, and I walk with my friends most of the time so I feel like its fine.

Me: Are there certain areas on campus that you would avoid?

C: Yes. But more like I don't have to go there. Also the red circles ones I drew on the map.

Me: Are there certain areas on campus that you visit more often?

C: Yes. The blue circles I drew on the map. Its near to my all the buildings I have classes, and its next to the bus loop.

Me: Thanks! We are now moving to the last part. What other factors can make you have more feeling of safe?

C: The more people I meet in ubc, the more I feel safe on campus. As I make friends, I know that people here are also very friendly, which makes me feel safer to walk around on campus.

Me: So friends is kind of a huge factor that makes you have more feeling of safe right?

C: Yes.

Me: Overall, Do you feel UBC is a safe place?

C: Yes, compared to downtown Vancouver.

Me: Do you think institutions can do more about safety?

C: I think it would be nice if some buildings might only have limited access for UBC students. Since UBC is open for everyone to enter, I feel less safe when I walk around on campus. So I think having limited access for some buildings may be a good way to ensure safety.

Me: This is the end of our interview. On behalf of Steps Together, I would like to thank you for your participation again since you supported us in shaping our campus safety and contributing to a safer academic experience in future. Do you have any questions towards our interview and our research?

C: No.

Me: Thank you so much. Take care!

Interview #4 - Interviewee D

Me: Hi, we're Steps Together, a group of students who are currently conducting research projects focused on perceptions of safety on campus and how the campus can be made into a safer place. We're specifically looking at the AMS safewalk, which is a student accompaniment service provided by the AMS, the student group on campus. Because this is a sensitive topic, please feel free to only share as much as you're comfortable with. So first question, What do you associate with the word safe?

D: The condition of physically and mentally healthy.

Me: Next, what would perfect safety look like to you?

D: The assurance of not things being stolen, and touched by someone I don't know... including physical body.

Me: Have you ever had an experience of unsafety on campus?

D: Nope. But I've seen a homeless coming into the nest before. I got scared, but the security came right after to kicked him out.

Me: Would you like to tell me when was it?

D: It was probably last year around this time?

Me: Interesting. Did you remember was it daytime or evening?

D: Daytime.

Me: Thank you for telling me. Next, we are going to move on to asking about the AMS safewalk service. Have you heard of UBC's AMS Safewalk Program?

D: Yes.

Me: Have you ever used Safewalk?

D: No.

Me: If you are in the areas feeling unsafe, are you going to use the safewalk service? Why or why not?

D: I don't think so, because I don't know how to use the service. If I know, I would.

Me: Could you think about any potential scenarios that could trigger you to use the service?

D: If anyone is following me on campus...

Me: So, it's like anyone which looks suspicious right?

D: Yes. Especially non-student.

Me: Thank you. Right now we're going to start off with a map on campus. We'd like you to highlight parts of campus where you feel safe in blue, and places where you feel less safe in red. Please take your time to think about it.

D: Okay.

Me: I can see you consider most of the main passages as safe. Why do you consider those area safe?

D: For me, I think these areas are constantly passing by. So if anything happens, there will be most likely someone.

Me: So it's' more people in that areas means more safe to you right?

D: Exactly. I always try to walk road with more people.

Me: Thanks for telling me. I can also realize that you draw the red areas at the very outskirts of the campus. Would you like to tell us more about?

D: It's less people, and the narrow roads mean even anything happen, no one can help out the situation. Especially as a small female, it's easy to get abducted or assaulted.

Me: Thank you for telling me about that. Actually I'm interest on the red line underneath the north parkade. Is there anything happen to you before on that area?

D: Nope. But I remember that roads being so narrow and dark. I'd prefer to walk with city lights.

Me: Fair, they need more lights at there.

D: Personally, I also think that area is kind of spooky for me at night. So that the CCTV can see things clearly if anything happen.

Me: So the outskirts of the map which you drew red is because it's also way less people right?

D: Yeah. Less people, it is dark, and people could get harm in the bush too. And less lights.

Me: How about the cars on that area? Would you consider it as one of the factors contributing to your unsafety at that area?

D: Yes. Not only because of the possible accidents but also abduction.

Me: Thanks for sharing such rich information. Next question, does this change according to the time of day?

D: Not really, narrow roads are to some extent. I always avoid, because if less ppl. But for sure, I consider it to be safer during the day time.

Me: Are there certain areas on campus that you would avoid?

D: Those I drew lines in red. Also for the beach road, I can if I'm just on the bus. But I wouldn't walk all the way.

Me: Are there certain areas on campus that you visit more often?

D: Probably Asian center, Nitobe garden, Buchanan area, nest, bookstore area, which I use the big road all the time.

Me: I can see those areas are main passages of the campus, and also the areas, buildings you really familiar with since you have classes or club activities right?

D: Yeap.

Me: Thanks! We are now moving to the last part. What other factors can make you have more feeling of safe?

D: Hm.... Definitely More lights, CCTV, and even sign of CCTV. Because that way I know whatever happen, there should be a proof.

Me: You mentioned "lights", I guess you are talking about streetlight for sure. But how about the buildings with lights?

D: Streetlights would be more helpful. But not much from building lights. But for sure, it'll be better with it.

Me: It's like better than nothing right.

D: Yes

Me: Overall, Do you feel UBC is a safe place?

D: Yes. Way safer than rest of Vancouver. Other than causing accidents.

Me: why you feel UBC is way safer than rest of Vancouver? or why you think rest of Vancouver is really not that good? Would you like to tell us more based on your response?

D: Um...because I lived in Victoria for my high school before. I often compare between Vancouver and Victoria. In Victoria, there are more street lights overall, especially in Downtown. I don't feel uncomfortable walking alone in Chinatown at 9pm, unlike here. I don't see any homeless, or drug addicts back in Victoria. I feel like UBC is safer because, I don't see much homeless or drug addicts, also because there is a trust that people here are all students or professor, which also means safer people for me. Vancouver as a whole is pretty dark for me, lacking of city lights in many places, and tons of homeless, drug addicts who behaves badly, like shouting at people or even chase after if needed.

Me: So the students and professors here are like a barrier for you right?

D: Yes.

Me: I am interested on the response about Vancouver as a city that is pretty dark for you, would you like to tell me more about it? What makes you think about it?

D: I live in Kitsilano right now, and I wish there were more city lights because there was actually a car accident right in front of my street. They set up the signal and cross walk after that. Now it's safer because of it, but more city lights would help. I feel safe back in Japan because everywhere is lit up with city lights.

Me: So even the neighborhood you are living right now wasn't safe enough for you before?

D: Yeah. I don't know why they don't much streetlights in my neighborhood still.

Me: Last question! Do you think institutions can do more about safety?

D: Sure, I think there is still a room for improvement. UBC should be the one ensuring the safety I think, rather than AMS. As a University, they should be spending more money to ensure students safety especially there are so much international students who are living by themselves. Invest more in setting more city lights should help.

Me: So it's like institutions actually bear the responsibility of the campus more than other else right?

D: Yes. And CCTV! And sign saying CCTV is watching everything! So that people won't think crazy stuff. Like causing a crime. Awareness is important, very important.

Me: I can feel that you consider that institutions are not doing their job on students' safety at the moment.

D: Yes. Not enough. It's not equivalent to the amount I pay.

Me: This is the end of our interview. On behalf of Steps Together, I would like to thank you for your participation again since you supported us in shaping our campus safety and contributing to a safer academic experience in future. Do you have any questions towards our interview and our research?

D: No!

Me: Thank you so much. Take care!