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UTPD responds to possible homicide in Waller Creek



UTPD is investigating a possible homicide on campus. The body, found in Waller Creek on Tuesday morning, has yet to be identified. President Fenves urges everyone to be careful and aware of their surroundings when walking alone.

Photo Credit: [Marshall Tidrick](#) | Daily Texan Staff

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BY [CALEB WONG](#), [MIKAELA CANNIZZO](#)

Update (12:45 p.m.): According to an email sent to the University by Fenves on Wednesday morning, the law enforcement agencies working on the investigation have finished processing the crime scene.

"[The law enforcement agencies] are working to identify the victim; and are focused on locating and apprehending a suspect in this unthinkable crime," Fenves said in the email.

Fenves said that he has requested that Austin Police Department lead the investigation due to "its deep knowledge and experience." APD will still be assisted in the investigation by UTPD, University of Texas System police, the Texas Department of Public Safety and the Texas Rangers.

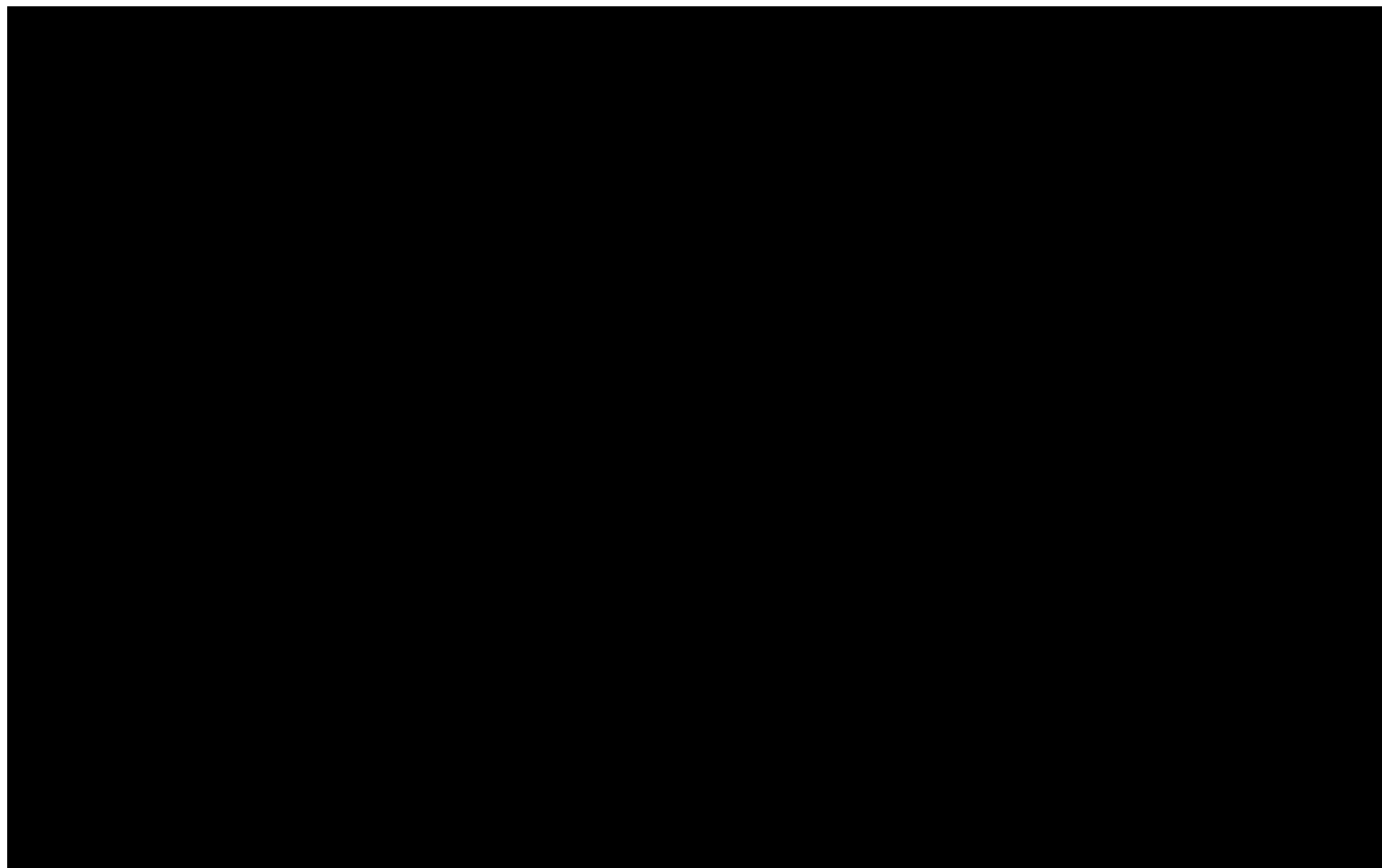
In addition to extra officers and police vehicles patrolling campus, the University will provide extra van shuttles for students after their evening rehearsals near the Winship and Fine Arts buildings. Fenves said that other enhanced safety measures on campus are being reviewed.

Original story: The University of Texas Police Department is investigating a suspected homicide on campus after a dead body was found in Waller Creek, west of the Etter-Harbin Alumni Center, on Tuesday morning.

The victim is a woman in her 20s, according to Austin-Travis County Emergency Medical Services. The identity of the victim has not been confirmed yet, UTPD spokesperson Cindy Posey said.

UT President Gregory Fenves, who returned from Amarillo to respond to the situation, said multiple law enforcement agencies, including officers from the Austin Police Department, the Department of Public Safety and Texas Rangers, are investigating this as a possible act of homicide. He said counseling services are available for students.

"My heart and our hearts go out to the victim and the family," Fenves said. "It's a tragic day for our campus community."



In an email to the University community Tuesday morning, Fenves said campus public safety leaders are “doing everything possible to ensure safety on campus.”

“We are also working closely with Austin police to identify possible suspects,” Fenves said in the email. “Based on the information we have and our conversations with police, the campus continues to operate fully, and all classes and events remain on schedule.”

While most classes and events continued as planned, the theatre and dance department canceled classes for the remainder of the day upon the advisement of the College of Fine Arts’ Dean’s Office, according to an email from Cassandra Gholston, marketing manager for the college. The college also encouraged theatre and dance students to come to the Brockett Theatre on Tuesday evening in the email, but did not specify why the event was being held other than to acknowledge that to provide an opportunity “to gather as a community.”

“We know this is a difficult time,” Gholston said in the email. “Please be respectful of information you share on social media.”

While numerous rumors regarding the identity of the victim have circulated on social media, UTPD has yet to

identify the victim.



Marshall Tidrick / Daily Texan Staff

UTPD Captain Don Verett said at a press conference that the department would increase foot and bicycle patrols in the coming weeks. Verett advised members of the University community to “practice personal safety” by walking in groups; using SURE Walk, a Student Government-provided service where students can be accompanied on their walk home by other students; and being aware of their surroundings at all times.

“Based on current information from the investigation, the campus is safe,” Verett said. “As we gather further information, we will update campus community, public and the media.”



Officer Wusterhausen stands on the bank of Waller Creek on Tuesday afternoon. Marshall Tidrick | Daily Texan Staff

According to the UTPD crime logs, no homicides on campus have occurred in the past 15 years.

Civil engineering freshman Kelly Mullins said she got a notification in class that UTPD was investigating a homicide scene.

“Typically, that kind of stuff happens by non-UT students off-campus, and this is kind of a shock to me,” Mullins said. “There’s tons of people going in and out of campus all the time, and for a dead body to be found on campus is terrifying.”

Gage Paine, vice president for student affairs, reminded students of resources available from the Counseling and Mental Health Center in an email following Fenves’ message to the community.

“Please be respectful of members of the community during this difficult time,” Paine said in the email. “It’s always important to remember that Longhorns take care of one another and themselves.”

If you are seeking help, you can reach the UT Counseling and Mental Health Center Crisis Line at 512-471-2255. This resource provides an opportunity for students to talk with trained counselors about concerns. To reach the Behavioral Concerns Advice line, call 512-232-5050. For more resources, click [here](#).

To see the Daily Texan's live coverage from Tuesday, check out the updates [here](#).

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