

To Whom It May Concern:

In Fall 2010 Columbia University Emergency Medical Services (CU-EMS) approached the student councils requesting an office transfer from the basement of Carman Hall to the recently vacated Broadway 102 and 103. After a review process, the Columbia College Student Council (CCSC), Engineering Student Council (ESC), and General Studies Student Council (GSSC) passed separate resolutions in support of the transfer, but containing a discrepancy over the allocation of Room 102. Whereas the CCSC voted to allocate only 103, the ESC and GSSC voted to allocate both Broadway 102 and 103 to CU-EMS (Exhibits C & D).

The councils approached the Activities Board at Columbia (ABC) and the Student Governing Board (SGB) at the beginning of this process, whereupon both ABC and SGB voted on the transition. SGB voted unanimously to support the transition of CU-EMS to Broadway 103, but did not support allocating Broadway 102, finding that the former room was “sufficient to meet the needs of CU-EMS” (Exhibit A). ABC voted 9-7 against the transition of CU-EMS to Broadway.

The councils have decided to remain in support CU-EMS’ request to move to Broadway 103, given the support from the SGB and the divided opinion of the ABC. The councils appreciate the careful considerations presented by ABC. The ABC acknowledges that “CU-EMS deserves additional space for a separate sleeping area,” and also suggests that the band practice room be moved from Carman to Broadway, “allowing CU-EMS to expand into the vacated space” in Carman (Exhibit B). However, the councils have noted that much of CU-EMS’ membership does not have access to undergraduate dormitories and that there are costs associated with sound-proofing rooms in Broadway. Given these constraints that ABC itself recognizes, we ultimately argue that the most efficient allocation of space given various constraints is to move CU-EMS from Carman to Broadway 103.

The councils have resolved their discrepancies by deciding to support the allocation Broadway 103 but not 102 for the ongoing use of CU-EMS as its center of operations. In addition to significantly increasing the space available to CU-EMS, Broadway 103 addresses nearly all of the issues to which the CU-EMS proposal refers.

The councils discussed at length the merits of allocating Broadway 102 to CU-EMS. CU-EMS argued that Broadway 102 could be used to store confidential documents that require storage in a locked space. However, rather than an additional room, any item could be used to secure these confidential documents. Thus, the councils recommend that CU-EMS obtain a device to secure such documents (e.g. a locking cabinet) and that Broadway 102 be used for student groups as originally intended.

We recognize that failure to obtain Broadway 102 may limit CU-EMS’ ability to conduct training sessions within their own offices. Therefore we hope to implement a method so that CU-EMS can book space on campus through University Event Management, which will alleviate the challenge of training and information sessions.

Given the acquisition of Broadway 103 by CU-EMS, we require that CU-EMS relinquish the Carman space, and we require the Carman space be allocated for student groups following a review process.

This CU-EMS proposal has revealed a lack of continuity in agreements made between councils, administrators, and governing boards dating back to 2008, and we would like to implement a formal review process for space allocation moving forward. However, these considerations should not delay a speedy transition for CU-EMS, and we would ask that the possibility of transitioning over winter break be seriously considered.

Signed,

Chris Elizondo (President, ESC)
Learned Foote (President, CCSC)
Jacqueline Thong (President, GSSC)

Heidi Ahmed (VP Policy, ESC)
Andrew Nguyen (VP Policy, CCSC)
Elliot Shackelford (VP Policy, GSSC)
Benjamin Paladino (Delegate At-Large, GSSC)

Exhibit A: SGB Statement

At its meeting on November 21st, 2010, SGB voted to recommend the CU-EMS move into Broadway 103 from their current space in Carman Hall, on the pretense that the Carman space will become available for student group use, and that Broadway 102 will be designated exclusively for use by groups under governing board jurisdiction, excluding CU-EMS.

The SGB recommends the use of 103 by CU-EMS as they are crucial to the well-being of student life on campus and provide an invaluable service to our community. They must be provided with the means to continue this service without the problems that exist within their current space. All members of CU-EMS must feel comfortable participating in their group, and the SGB does not want any members to be dissuaded from joining due to issues that are caused by the limited space available to them at the moment.

The SGB voted against the use of Broadway 102 by CU-EMS because the amount of space offered in Broadway 103, combined with its organization into multiple compartments, is sufficient to meet the needs of CU-EMS. The SGB suggests that the need for storage of medical records can be accomplished through the use of locked file cabinets placed in 103. Consideration could also be given to the possibility of rearranging walls to create a separate locked space for medical records.

EXHIBIT B: ABC Statement

Dear councils,

At its meeting on November 17, 2010, ABC voted not to recommend CU-EMS' move from its current location in the basement of Carman to Broadway 103. Seven board members supported the move while nine board members opposed it.

The majority of the board believes that the student groups represented by ABC would not benefit from the move. Broadway 103, currently open to student group reservation, is roughly twice the size of the Carman space currently occupied by CU-EMS, which would be put to student group use if CU-EMS were to

move. To give such a large space to one group at the exclusion of others would be a disservice to the 153 groups recognized by ABC. Our groups have long complained of the lack of meeting and storage space, and other proposals, such as the Student Sustainability Center, should be seriously considered before a decision is made. Alternative uses of 103 have not been explored, and the spaces within 103 have not been open for student group reservation long enough to justify the argument that they will not be used efficiently by student groups.

The board does recognize that CU-EMS has demonstrated certain needs not met by its current space situation. There are several reasons for why CU-EMS' current space in Carman is inadequate, including

1. There is no cellphone reception in the basement of Carman
2. Members of the opposite sex are sometimes obliged to sleep in the same room, making some feel uncomfortable for religious reasons
3. There is not enough space to hold EMT training sessions
4. The band practice room next door is really annoying, especially when volunteers on duty are trying to sleep

ABC values all the hard work and dedication of CU-EMS volunteers as well as the vital role they play on campus. However, ABC believes that CU-EMS' reasoning is insufficient to justify a move to Broadway.

Not all on-duty volunteers are required to stay in the CU-EMS room at night; those who live within four minutes of the ambulance may stay in their rooms. Students who find the sleeping situation intolerable have the option to live in the several residence halls that satisfy CU-EMS' requirements. So the problem of individuals of the opposite sex sleeping in the same room is not universal. The board generally agrees that it is significant, however, and warrants a solution; CU-EMS deserves additional space for a separate sleeping area.

A concern was raised that the 103 space, even if walls were knocked down, may still not be large enough for EMT training sessions. And even if the space were large enough, it would likely be underutilized, as only CU-EMS would be able to use it. A more efficient solution would be to allow CU-EMS to book spaces like the Broadway Sky Lounge.

The band practice room in Carman is certainly annoying, but it does close at some point in the evening. On-duty CU-EMS volunteers are able to sleep at night without bands playing next door. An alternative that could be explored is moving the band practice room to Broadway 101 and allowing CU-EMS to expand into the vacated space.

At this point, ABC cannot recommend CU-EMS' move from Carman to Broadway 103. As representatives of 153 cultural, performance, special interest, pre-professional, science/engineering, and publication groups, ABC members believe that Broadway 103 should be reserved for student group use and that a more efficient solution may be found to CU-EMS' current situation.

This statement has been approved by the majority of ABC board members.

EXHIBIT C: CCSC Resolution

Proposed: November 14, 2010

Adapted: November 14, 2010

Resolution to Allocate Broadway 103 for CU-Emergency Medical Service

WHEREAS the Columbia University Emergency Medical Service (CU-EMS) provides medical care to all members of the Columbia community, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year; and

WHEREAS the current office of CU-EMS in the Carman Basement has proved inadequate in the past few years, for the following reasons:

1. The size of the office does not allow enough room for the various members of CU-EMS to sleep in observance of religiously mandated gender segregation[i]
2. The office is located next to a band practice room in Carman Basement, which causes severe challenges with conflicting sleeping and practicing schedules
3. In recent years CU-EMS has expanded its services, with the volume of calls increasing by over 20% from 2003-2009.

WHEREAS CU-EMS has submitted a proposal requesting a transfer from the Carman Basement to Broadway 102 and 103, offices which were recently vacated due to advising offices transitioning to Lerner 4; and

WHEREAS CU-EMS has collected 1,569 signatures from the Columbia community in favor of this transfer; and

WHEREAS The Student Governing Board and Activities Board at Columbia have distributed a survey to their constituencies, the results of which indicate general support for CU-EMS taking over the space in Broadway; and

WHEREAS This transition would open up space in the Carman Basement, which could be allocated for student use in the most appropriate way, pending a review of the need for space on campus; and

ACKNOWLEDGING CU-EMS has requested the use of Broadway 102 in their proposal, the council nonetheless does not find this need to be as critical, as CU-EMS would have significantly more room to store their equipment and medical records and accommodate their membership for sleeping arrangements, training, and effective volunteering in Broadway 103 alone; and

ACKNOWLEDGING That this proposal will also be voted on by the Engineering Student Council, the General Studies Student Council, the Activities Board at

Columbia, and the Student Governing Board, and that this proposal should be weighed alongside support from these other councils and governing boards; then

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

1. That Columbia College Student Council supports the transition of the CU-EMS office to Broadway 103;
2. That the open space in Carman Basement should be reallocated after a survey to determine the most effective use;
3. That the necessary renovations should take place in Broadway 103 to ensure a speedy transition so that CU-EMS can continue to provide its services.

[i] CU-EMS currently has 44 active members, 91% of which are required to sleep in the office on a regular basis to enable an immediate response in case of emergency.

EXHIBIT D: GSSC Resolution

2010-2011 Session
9 November, 2010

RESOLUTION

Subject: CU-EMS Proposal for Broadway Residence Space

Whereas the Columbia University Emergency Medical Services (CU-EMS) provides important life-saving medical assistance to entire university community; and

Whereas the CU-EMS has a history of voluntary and selfless sacrifice; and

Whereas the CU-EMS currently occupies an office space in Carman basement which is not compatible with needs of their individual members nor their time critical mission; therefore

Resolved, That the General Studies Student Council supports the formal change of office for the CU-EMS as outlined in their current proposal from their current location in the Carman basement to Broadway rooms 102 and 103.

Reviewed and approved this date by the Student Council of the School of General Studies.