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Expression and Demonstration Policy



AUBURN
UNIVERSITY

Expression and Demonstration Policy

Effective:	8/1/22
Responsible Executive:	Senior, Vice President for Student Affairs
Applicability:	All students and employees of Auburn University; campus visitors
Review By:	08/01/2027

I. Policy Statement

The free exchange and expression of ideas are essential to Auburn University's mission of discovery and dissemination of knowledge through teaching and research. Accordingly, the university's spaces are dedicated primarily for use by the Auburn University community to further the institution's mission and related teaching, learning, studying, research, academic, extracurricular, student life, administrative, and other supporting activities.

Auburn University also recognizes that members of our campus community are entitled to freedom of speech and assembly as guaranteed by the First Amendment and other legal authorities. Accordingly, outdoor campus spaces may be used to engage in demonstrations and other expressive activities according to the requirements and limitations contained in this policy and other applicable policies, including those found here: <http://www.auburn.edu/policies>.

II. Policy Principles

A. General Guidelines

Auburn University students, employees, and invited guests of student organizations or employees may engage in demonstrations in generally accessible outdoor areas of the university campus without prior notice or reservation, subject to applicable laws and other university policies. Such demonstrations may not conflict with prior reservations, impede pedestrian and/or vehicular traffic, substantially disrupt or interfere with normal academic, administrative or student activities, or

involve coercion. Events involving 100 or more people must be approved in advance as described in the [Campus Events Policy](#) . Students, employees, and invited guests of student organizations or employees may use tabling spaces to distribute literature only after making a prior reservation in accordance with the Campus Distribution Policy.

Demonstrations by invited guests must be supervised or managed on-site by the sponsoring University unit, group, or individual.

Demonstrations may not occur in indoor university spaces without prior permission.

B. Formal Forum Area: Open Air Forum

To facilitate the free exchange of ideas, the university has established high visibility areas on campus as an “Open Air Forum,” which may be used without prior notice or reservation for demonstrations by any individual or group. Visitors may engage in demonstrations only within an Open-Air Forum and not elsewhere on campus unless prior permission has been granted by the university. Such activities may not conflict with a prior reservation.

The Open Air Forums are located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Mell Street and Roosevelt Drive and at the northeast corner of the intersection of South Donahue Drive and the West Thach Concourse.

Although it is not necessary for a person using the designated Open-Air Forum to obtain prior permission from the university, such persons are encouraged to contact the Student Center Reservations Office for scheduling purposes to minimize possible conflicts. That Office may be reached at: [334-844-1320](tel:334-844-1320) during the hours of 7:45 a.m. until 4:45 p.m. Monday-Friday.

C. Amplified Sound

Amplified sound devices, including microphones, speakers, and bullhorns, may not be used in connection with demonstrations anywhere on campus without prior permission from the university, as provided in the [Outdoor Amplified Sound Policy](#) .

D. Time Restrictions

Demonstrations may not occur in any outdoor campus spaces between 11 p.m. and sunrise, unless prior permission has been granted by the Office of the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs.

E. Guidelines for Organized Demonstrations

Freedom of expression for the university community includes organized demonstrations or events. At the same time, the university has long recognized that this right does not include the right to

engage in conduct that disrupts the university's operations or endangers the safety of others. Accordingly, the university requires individuals or groups planning a large-scale event to contact the Student Center Reservations Office in advance of the activity as well as register the event in the Campus Event Planning System (<https://cws.auburn.edu/CEPS>). Large-scale events are events that include invited speakers, use of amplified sound, marches, parades, and other events such as protests and demonstrations that are expected to attract 100 or more people. A representative of the Campus Events committee will work with the requesting person to either meet the request or find a suitable time and location.

The purpose of this policy is to promote and facilitate free expression while allowing the university to ensure such activities do not interfere with the university's mission and operations. The university may require the requesting party to provide a parade route, hire security, ensure egress to facilities, and take other steps to maintain the safety of campus. All participants must follow university policies as well as the guidelines outlined in Section II.A.

III. Definitions

Campus includes the core Auburn University campus generally bounded by South College Street, West Magnolia Avenue, Wire Road, and Woodfield Drive.

Coercion is an attempt to intimidate or badger a person into viewing, listening to, or accepting a copy of communication; persistently requesting or demanding the attention of a person after that person has attempted to walk away or has clearly refused to attend to the speaker's communication.

Demonstration is a form of public expression by one or more persons that includes public speech-making or other verbal communication, protesting, marching, peaceful assembly, carrying signs, circulating petitions, or distributing literature.

Open Air Forum is a designated area on campus (two locations: at the northeast corner of the intersection of Mell Street and Roosevelt Drive and at the northeast corner of South Donahue Drive and West Thach Concourse) not confined by walls or a roof.

Visitors are individuals who are not Auburn University employees, currently enrolled Auburn University students, or guests of Auburn University employees or recognized Auburn University student organizations.

IV. Sanctions and Enforcement

Visitors who violate university policies, including this policy, will be subject to immediate removal from the campus grounds, without prior warning, by appropriate university agents or officials and may be subject to appropriate legal action.

Auburn University students, student organizations, and employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action according to university policies and procedures.

V. Exclusions

This policy does not apply to Auburn University's official use of its spaces for university programs and activities.

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Responsible Department

Student Affairs

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