



Interim Policy on Expressive Freedom and Responsibility

Introduction

Committed to critical inquiry and ethical practice in local and global settings, Haverford College fosters an inclusive intellectual learning community to prepare students for lives of integrity, ambition, and purpose.

Haverford's mission is fueled by community members' engagement with one another across social, political, and ideological differences. Our commitment to expressive freedom (note that it is defined below) helps foster a thriving intellectual environment wherein each community member is expected to listen, reflect, and gather evidence. Engaging in constructive, informed, and rigorous debate is essential to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding.

Our student-led [Honor Code](#) provides guidelines for students to hold themselves and one another accountable for their actions and to act with the utmost integrity as well as trust, concern, and respect for every individual. [Academic freedom](#) protects the rights of faculty to engage in research and teaching to advance knowledge and learning objectives. This policy bridges the two overarching frameworks, offering principles and specific guidance on the rights and responsibilities associated with free expression at Haverford.

Principles

1. Open inquiry and expressive freedom are core values of Haverford. They are central to our academic mission and our learning environment.
2. Expressive freedom is not limitless and may come into tension with another of Haverford's core values: to foster a community of mutual trust, concern, and respect. This policy articulates limitations to expressive freedom with the intent to safeguard the College's core mission and operations, to prioritize health and safety, to comply with applicable laws, and to protect against property damage.
3. Free expression should encourage, not suppress, robust dialogue and learning. Conduct and expression that hinders others from participating fully in the Haverford community or that create a hostile environment, including harassment, intimidation, shutting down events, and/or threats of violence, are unacceptable, inconsistent with our values, potentially illegal, and amount to

grave disrespect for the dignity of others.

4. Because of the centrality of expressive freedom to the College's mission, the application of any rules or regulations that restrict expressive activities should be construed and applied as narrowly as possible and should be closely tailored to the harms they are designed to prevent, at the discretion of College leadership.
5. There are a few settings on Haverford's campus essential to the core mission and operations of the College where expressive activities are limited or completely prohibited. This includes certain spaces and College events (e.g., libraries, labs, Commencement), as further described throughout this policy.
6. Time, place, and manner rules and other restrictions are intended to be content-neutral with the goal that the College does not favor one set of views or voices over others.

Scope

This Policy applies to expressive activities conducted by all Haverford students, faculty, staff, and sponsored guests who use College resources. Alumni, parents, prospective students, visitors, and other third parties are not considered current community members and are not permitted to engage in expressive activities on campus or use College resources. This policy applies to expressive activities located on Haverford's campus and certain College-sponsored activities off-campus (e.g., alumni events, athletic competitions). Haverford community members who violate this Policy or the policies, including expressive freedom policies, of other college and university campuses (e.g., Bryn Mawr, Swarthmore, University of Pennsylvania, etc.) may be subject to disciplinary processes at Haverford. Official electronic media (e.g., College email, Haverford social media accounts) are considered Haverford resources and, therefore, the use of them by community members is subject to this Policy. This Policy does not apply to the College's own expressive activities, i.e., to expressive activity that is intended to be attributed to the College itself.

Definitions

Expressive freedom

Expressive freedom is the freedom to share and deliberate about ideas. This includes one's own ability to express thoughts, as well as to engage with and respond to others' opinions. Freedom of expression allows for discussion, exploration, discovery, and growth within and beyond the academic offerings and traditional learning environments.

Expressive activities

Expressive activities include teach-ins, demonstrations, marches, protests, counter-protests, rallies, picketing, distribution of literature or fliers, art installations, performing arts, letter or email campaigns, speeches, and other forms of public-facing expression that aim at the public or particular individuals, regardless of whether they have expressed interest in receiving communications from the persons engaged in expressive activities. Expressive activities are distinctive because they are communicative and public-facing.

When engaging in expressive activity, Haverfordians should remember that they speak for themselves only and are responsible for their speech. The speech of sponsored guests may not be attributed to the College. Accordingly, an event or activity hosted at Haverford should not be interpreted to mean that the College endorses, supports, refutes, or disagrees with its subject matter or content.

College resources

College resources include Haverford facilities and other properties owned or controlled by the College; funds; branding (e.g., name or marks of the College); email; or other resources owned or administered by Haverford. Use of College resources for expressive activities is restricted to current members of the Haverford community and sponsored guests. Haverford students, faculty, and staff may mention their Haverford affiliation in message content, but are prohibited from using Haverford brand elements on personal social media accounts, business communications, or other personal endeavors in ways that might be interpreted as representing the College.

Policy: Time, Place, and Manner Rules for Expressive Freedom

This policy outlines several rules and considerations intended to affirm Haverford's mission, core values, and principles of expressive freedom. While expressive activities by Haverford community members are permitted at Haverford, the following rules specify time, place, and manner limitations in order to center community safety, care, and learning through expression. This policy is intended to be administered in a content-neutral manner, without regard for the message or viewpoint being expressed.

Prohibited activities

Haverford prohibits harmful acts, including expressive activities, that are violations of law or other College policies; acts of violence; damage to or destruction of property; trespassing; harassment or intimidation; bringing weapons on campus or wielding

various implements as weapons; blocking building entrances, corridors, stairways, or doorways; impeding access to or from College property or campus roads; displacing other activities; violating occupancy limits, fire codes, or otherwise endangering the physical safety of others.

Responsibilities of expressive activity organizers

Organizers of expressive activities are responsible for ensuring they comply with all College policies. Organizers should consider: protecting the physical safety of all members of the Haverford community as well as any alumni, parents, prospective students, visitors, or other third parties on campus; preventing damage to Haverford grounds and property; preserving unimpeded mobility on pathways, streets, and within buildings, including entrance to and departure from buildings; and avoiding interference with or disruption of other scheduled College activities and/or core operations. Organizers of expressive activities involving sponsored guests must provide Haverford's Core Values and Expressive Freedom and Responsibility policy to the guests before the activity transpires.

Use of College space and scheduling

Community members are required to comply with the [Facilities Use and Reservations policy](#). The College's existing event scheduling platform should be used to reserve locations for speakers or other expressive activities using dedicated space, including tabling, installations, and camping.

Pre-scheduling demonstration or protest activities is encouraged, but not required. Such pre-scheduling can help reduce the potential for conflicts with other scheduled activities and address any health or safety needs through pre-event planning. Except for the locations described below in the section on considerations for special settings on campus, demonstration and protest activity may occur anywhere on campus, consistent with the principles and requirements of this policy.

Candlelight vigils and other expressive activities using open flames

Expressive activities involving open flames should follow the College's [guidance for promoting fire safety](#). LED candles must be used for vigils within buildings and tents. Pre-scheduling candlelight vigils is encouraged but not required.

Amplified or otherwise loud sound

On campus, expressive activities involving amplified or otherwise loud sound are permitted on Founders Green Monday through Friday between 12 to 1 p.m. or between 5 to 9 p.m., and on weekends between noon to 9 p.m., without prior approval (except when the space is reserved for another program or event). Expressive activities involving amplified or otherwise loud sound in or near faculty and staff offices, residential halls, and near classrooms are prohibited, with the exception of those near Founders Green during the permissible hours specified above. Striking objects or physical building structures to make disruptive noise is strictly prohibited.

Special programs or events involving amplified sound on Founders Green and in other campus locations (e.g., athletic competitions, Haverfest, etc.) may be permitted by going through the normal event-planning and approval processes. For example, a College-sponsored after-workday-hours drumming event on Founders Green would likely be an approved event.

Interruptions and disruptions of speakers or events

Interruptions or disruptions of speakers or events, including via heckling or amplified or otherwise loud sound, that interfere with the speech or expression of others are prohibited.

Use of College space and financial resources

While Haverford is a private college, our campus welcomes visitors and invited guests. However, the use of College spaces for activities, including expressive activities, is limited to members of the Haverford campus community. It is the responsibility of Haverford community members hosting an expressive event or activity with visitors and invited guests to be present during the event or activity and ensure that their guests abide by College policies prohibiting expressive activity and protecting the health and physical safety of community members and operations.

Visual Media

Posters, banners, installations, and other visual media are governed by the [Posting Policy](#). Visual media content, like all forms of expression, is subject to this policy and to policies addressing [Harassment and Discrimination](#). Individuals and organizations responsible for visual media are accountable for their content and placement, ensuring compliance with College policies. By upholding these standards, we honor our commitment to co-creating a welcoming and inclusive campus community.

Erecting structures

Founders Green is one of the most commonly used and traversed outdoor spaces for Haverford community members and visitors alike. To preserve this important space and ensure its accessibility to many, only Haverford community members are permitted to erect structures (e.g., tents, gazebos, temporary walls, etc.) on Founders Green for limited durations of time, pending prior approval. In weighing requests, College officials will consider whether the structures will negatively impact health and safety, accessibility, college operations, or grounds and facilities. Other portions of this policy will also apply (e.g., amplified or otherwise loud sound, visual media). The College reserves the right to restrict structures from being erected on other campus grounds and to remove approved structures when it deems necessary.

Requests for Identification

Any person observed violating this or other College policies may be approached by Campus Safety or a member of the Dean's Division requesting to see a Haverford OneCard or other form of identification. Haverford community members shall comply with such requests for accountability to the principles articulated in this policy.

Photos and Video Recordings

Campus Safety is permitted to take and share with other College offices photos and video recordings of persons who are non-compliant with requests for identification.

Masking

Wearing masks or face coverings is permitted on Haverford's campus. However, community members are expected to comply if requested by Campus Safety or Dean's Division staff to briefly unmask to reveal or confirm their identity.

Applicable law

Federal, state, and local laws can sometimes be more restrictive than Haverford's rules, and the College cannot override these laws. For example, local fire codes may limit the maximum occupancy of a room. Compliance with this policy does not relieve participants from their other legal obligations.

Classroom setting not applicable

This policy does not pertain to speech and expressive activities within individual classrooms and other instructional settings (e.g., studios, labs), which remain the purview of individual faculty members and the College. Guidance on College policies relating to academic freedom and speech in the classroom context may be found at [Haverford's policy on Academic Freedom](#).

Considerations for special settings and events on campus

Haverford's campus is a place of work and study, where people live, dine, receive services, and socialize. College operations include all faculty, staff, and student functions, whether or not there is a direct connection to the educational enterprise. Students' ability to attend College functions (including classes) and reasonable quiet times in the residence halls and libraries to facilitate studying or sleep are included in College operations. Across campus, there are certain settings where expressive activity that is visually or audibly disruptive to non-participants (i.e., excluding one-on-one and group conversations) is either prohibited completely, limited, or given special consideration.

Living spaces

Residential halls are students' homes on campus. Living spaces are locations where expressive activity is prohibited, including at entrances and exits to residential halls, common hallways, and other areas that residents must walk through to get to their rooms. Postering and signage are allowed in designated residential spaces. The development of programs to promote awareness of and sensitivity toward how public-facing expression might impact other students and community members is encouraged.

Libraries

Lutnick and all other Haverford libraries should be maintained as places for reading and study, and accordingly, disruptive activities of all kinds are prohibited. Peaceful, quiet expressive activities that are not disruptive (e.g., sit-ins that do not interrupt or disrupt the ability of other community members to use the space and resources) and other types of quiet activities are permitted if they do not displace others from shared spaces or prevent the library from providing its core services, such as providing access to collections or service points (reference desk). Classrooms in libraries should be managed like other classrooms, which remain the purview of instructors and the College. Expressive activities are not allowed in meeting rooms and reservable spaces in the library if they are disruptive to other community members.

Offices

Expressive activity in all staff and faculty offices and nearby open areas across campus is prohibited.

Labs and research spaces

Haverford includes numerous laboratories and research spaces where work could be compromised by noise or other disturbances. Expressive activity in all campus labs and research spaces is prohibited.

Dining halls

Expressive activity of limited duration and frequency, so that it does not displace other activities or disrupt College operations, is permitted in open areas of the dining halls. Expressive activities are not allowed in meeting rooms and reservable spaces in dining halls if they are disruptive to other community members.

Commencement and other College events

Expressive activities during Commencement ceremonies inside the venue are strictly prohibited. Such activities may be permitted to take place in authorized outdoor settings near the venue with durational limits through advanced registration and approval by the Dean's Office. Similar restrictions apply for other College-sponsored events (e.g., guest speakers, conferences, athletic events, etc.).

Policy development and review

This policy is developed by members of the College's senior leadership team in consultation with student, staff, and faculty leaders and reviewed regularly, no less than annually.

Policy administration

Campus community members who have engaged in an activity that violates this policy will be referred to the appropriate adjudicating office (e.g., Dean's Office for students; Human Resources for staff; Provost's Office for faculty) for resolution processes based on its seriousness and whether it poses a risk of ongoing harm. Our campus ethos is to

resolve community breaches through restorative and educational processes wherever possible. Sanctions are levied when policy violations are severe or pervasive, or as otherwise deemed appropriate by the adjudicating office.

Related Resources

- [Honor Council and Honor Code](#)
- [Faculty Academic Freedom](#)
- [Student Academic Freedom](#)
- [Policies and Student's Guide](#)
- [Non-Discrimination Statement](#)
- [Harassment and Discrimination](#)
- [Dean's Office Resolution Guidelines and Procedures](#)

Responsible Office: Office of the President

Responsible Executive: President

Revision History: Issued April 15, 2025

Replaces Expressive Freedom and Responsibility Policy (revised October 11, 2017) and Interpretations and Clarifications about Time, Place, and Manner of Expression (revised September 3, 2024)
