

University Policy on Public Speech, Assembly, and Demonstrations

Policy Statement

Southeastern Louisiana University recognizes the fundamental importance of freedom of speech and assembly to intellectual and social development. These freedoms, guaranteed by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, shall be enjoyed by the university community. It is not the role of Southeastern Louisiana University to shield individuals from speech protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States or Article I, Section 7 of the Louisiana Constitution; or, prohibit ideas or opinions that some may find unwelcome, disagreeable, or offensive.

Purpose of Policy

In accordance with these principles, Southeastern faculty, staff, and students have the freedom to assemble and engage in spontaneous expressive activity, provided it is lawful, does not disrupt the functioning of the institution, and participants do not violate other university policies.

Applicability

This policy applies to all Southeastern students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

Demonstration and Assembly Locations

Southeastern has designated the following sites as preferred locations for public discussion and/or peaceful public assembly or demonstration: (1) Student Union Annex; (2) Student Union Plaza; and, (3) the grassy area of Friendship Circle. Although other campus locations may be available for public speech and assemblies by students without prior administrative approval, these locations are recommended due to the high volume of student traffic.

Groups and organizations who choose to engage in expressive activity outside of one of the preferred locations may be asked to relocate should the expressive activity interfere with the normal operations of the university.

Students, faculty, and staff may use these areas of campus without prior permission from the University as long as: (1) The area has not been previously reserved or scheduled for a particular activity; (2) No sound amplification is used; and, (3) Participants do not violate university policies.

Although faculty, staff, and students are permitted to assemble and engage in expressive activity without obtaining prior permission, registration with the Office of the Dean of Students is encouraged to ensure adequate arrangements and minimize possible scheduling conflicts.

Outside Groups: Registration of Activities

Groups and organizations not affiliated with the university are required to register activities with the Office of the Dean of Students and/or Event and Conference Services at least two business days prior to the event date.

Office of the Dean of Students

Phone: 985-549-3792

Email: deanofstudents@southeastern.edu

Office of Event and Conference Services

Phone: 985-549-2094

Email: conf_services@southeastern.edu

Flash demonstrations (spontaneous gatherings) or demonstrations that have not been approved are prohibited. The Office of the Dean of Students will make every effort to approve applications quickly; however, applicants may not take action until an application is processed and approved. A requested event may not interfere with another approved event, interfere with University operations, be scheduled during other major university events, and must not have amplified sound.

Nothing in the above sections shall be interpreted as limiting the right of free expression elsewhere on campus as long as the expressive activities or related conduct do not violate any other applicable university policies.

Guidelines

The following will generally be considered to be disruptive of University activities and functions:

(1) The use of amplified sound and/or obstructing building entrances, walkways, and rights-of-way; (2) Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic on or adjacent to campus; (3) Interfering with classes-scheduled activities; or (4) Interfering with other essential processes of the University. - Use of areas on campus shall not include activities that could constitute non-permissible solicitation; or, would be an infraction of the university [sign policy](#) in regards to indiscriminately handing out materials to passers-by.

Masks, Props, Disguise Material

As a reasonable restriction on the time, place, and manner of expression to ensure personal safety, the University reserves the right to prohibit the wearing of masks, personal disguises, or other means of concealing one's identity, as well as the possession of weapons, props, or items that may be used as weapons or protective gear on the University campus and/or at University events.

Sanctions

Students who interfere, disrupt, or attempt to intimidate others while exercising their First Amendment rights will be subject to disciplinary action and sanctions as outlined in the [Student Code of Conduct](#). Disciplinary cases arising out of violations of the University policy on public speech, assembly, and demonstrations shall follow the normal disciplinary proceedings outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

Visitors, guests, and outside groups engaging in disruptive action or disorderly conduct shall be subject to charges of violations of the law and subsequently barred from campus.

Reporting

Students who believe their First Amendment rights have been violated in any manner should file a grievance with the Office of the Dean of Students. Reports can be made online at www.southeastern.edu/reportit.

Non-endorsement / Non-Guarantee

All views expressed by any individual or organization are those of the speaker and not necessarily reflective of Southeastern Louisiana University. References made to any products and/or services are not guaranteed by the University.

Video / Audio Taping

Southeastern Louisiana University reserves the right to video and/or audio record any public speech, assembly, or demonstration held on its campus.

[End of Policy]