

Free Speech and Demonstration Guidelines

Rights, rules, responsibilities, and resources

At the University of Oregon, established guidelines protect the right to free speech, while ensuring that opposing views may also be expressed. The university strives to balance the right to dissent with the right to be heard, the ability to speak one's mind with the opportunity to listen. The university applies its rules and expectations in a manner neutral to the viewpoints expressed.

Printed Material

- Most building walls and campus fixtures, as well as most bulletin boards, are regulated. Building or department operators may determine what content may be approved (i.e., requiring content related to a particular program, or published by university groups for a university audience). Unapproved or unrelated material may be removed
- Material may not contain "true" threats of violence

Demonstrations

- Are subject to university policies, including prohibitions on harassment
- May not interfere with scheduled university activities or speakers (such as classes or events)
- May not block doors, hallways, stairways, fire exits, fire lanes, or public rights of way including streets, sidewalks, etc.
- May not pose a threat to health and safety
- May not result in damage, theft, or vandalism of property
- May not exceed safe occupancy capacity in a room (Oregon Fire Code, Sections 104.1, 107.5, 107.6)
- May not have open flames larger than a standard candle outdoors, or any open flames indoors

Sound

The following sound limits apply during core academic class time 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday, and 10:00 p.m.-7:00 a.m.:

- Sound originating from an outdoor source must not exceed 90 decibels for more than 10 cumulative minutes as measured from any *outdoor* location measured 50 feet from the source.
- Sound originating from an outdoor source must not exceed 65 decibels for more than 5 cumulative minutes as measured from any *indoor* location. An exception to this provision is Johnson Hall where sound must not exceed 83 decibels for more than 10 cumulative minutes as measured from anywhere inside the building.
- In the EMU Amphitheater, sound must not exceed 83 decibels at a point 5 feet above the seating area located 40 feet from the stage edge. Within the amphitheater use of any device to amplify sound must be regulated by UO Event Services staff to ensure that the maximum acceptable limit is not exceeded. This may entail an hourly charge.
- Sound that exceeds ambient noise levels in any adjacent space must not originate from inside any UO building for any duration.

- When more than one sound limit listed in this provision apply, the more restrictive sound requirement governs

Signs

- May not have attached sticks inside buildings (safety hazard)
- May not make direct, "true" threats of violence
- May be removed if not attended to at all times
- May not involve weapons or dangerous objects, including sticks or sign poles larger than 1" width x 2" depth

Graffiti and Chalking

- No markings, including chalking, may be left on campus buildings or on other structures or surfaces
- Chalking is allowed only with removable chalk on exterior horizontal surfaces that are exposed to the rain and not within 30 feet of any campus building
- Chalking that does not relate to student activities sponsored by Student Organizations is subject to immediate removal

Spaces

- To enable the free sharing of ideas on campus, the UO has rules and procedures for reserving space or other facilities
- When campus activities conflict with one another, university officials have the authority to request those involved in one activity to stop, move, or change their behavior, so that the other activity can continue
- Violations of the standards above may result in university action to stop the behavior, as well as disciplinary consequences for students or employees, and possible legal action.

Online References and Resources

- <https://freespeech.uoregon.edu/>
- <https://generalcounsel.uoregon.edu/free-speech>
- [Academic Freedom, Freedom of Inquiry, and Free Speech Policy](#)
- [Facilities Scheduling Policy](#)
- [Scheduling and Event Services Resources](#)
- [UO Scheduling and Event Services Sound Policy](#)
- [Proscribed Conduct Policy](#)
- [Student Conduct Code Policy](#)
- [Eugene City Code](#)

Office of the General Counsel | 6251 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403
Office: 219 Johnson Hall | P: 541-346-3082 F: 541-346-6110
gcounsel@uoregon.edu generalcounsel.uoregon.edu

Visitors to the University of Oregon campus have the responsibility to obey federal and state laws, the municipal code, and University of Oregon rules and policies, and may be cited for trespass or subject to prosecution for any illegal behavior committed on campus. Additionally, students are subject to the requirements of the Student Conduct Code, and members of the faculty and staff are subjects to UO policies governing Proscribed Conduct, as well as the university's policies on progressive discipline.