

Guidelines for Speaking Out at the University of Oregon

Balancing dissent and free speech

At the University of Oregon, established guidelines protect the right to free speech, while ensuring that opposing views may also be expressed. The basic guideline says that whenever one person's or one group's activities prevent another's sanctioned activity from taking place, rights are being violated.

The university has the responsibility and authority to protect those rights. The university strives to balance the right to dissent with the right to be heard, the right to speak one's mind with the right to listen.

Access to facilities at the UO

To enable the free sharing of ideas on campus, the UO has procedures for reserving space or other facilities. The person or group reserving the facility is entitled to determine how, within university guidelines, that facility is used.

Common sense and courtesy are guiding standards of most activities. Evening or early morning activities must respect the rights of campus neighbors and residence hall students to quiet and rest. Activities should be held in rooms capable of accommodating them. Sound levels should not disrupt classes or meetings.

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.

Expectations and consequences

Visitors to the University of Oregon campus have the responsibility to obey federal and state laws, as well as University of Oregon rules and policies, and may be cited for trespass or subject to prosecution for any illegal behavior committed on campus. Faculty and staff members and students may face disciplinary sanctions imposed by the university if they ignore these standards of behavior. 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.

The university will take action consistent with its commitment to freedom of inquiry and free speech, to ensure compliance with university policies. This may include stopping individual or group behavior when:

- Doorways, hallways, stairways, fire exits or fire lanes are blocked, causing a threat to safety.
- The number of people in a room exceeds its safe capacity.
- A person's or a group's activities pose a threat to the health and safety of themselves or others.
- A scheduled speaker is prevented from presenting views or responding to questions.
- Someone's behavior makes it difficult to continue with scheduled or other normal university activities.
- The security of university property is at risk, unreasonably increasing the likelihood of breakage, damage, loss, or theft.
- University property is being damaged, or vandalized.
- In addition, action will be taken to stop any illegal activity taking place on the University of Oregon campus.

The University of Oregon is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution committed to cultural diversity and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.