

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 right to speak one's mind with the right 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

- 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

- Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., outdoor amplified sound on campus (including microphones, amps, and bullhorns) is only permitted in the EMU Amphitheater, only with an approved request submitted to Scheduling and Event Services, and the amplified sound must be provided and/or monitored by Scheduling and Event Services; outdoor amplified sound may not exceed 83db measured 40 feet from the sound source in any direction
- At other days/times, the Eugene Municipal Code on noise (Sections 4.080, 4.081, 4.083, 4.084) regulates outdoor sound on campus; the code (with some exemptions) forbids amplified outdoor sound between 10:00 p.m.-7:00 a.m. daily
- No amplified sound indoors (megaphones and other sound-amplifying devices are not allowed inside); no amplified sound at outdoor information tables
- Sound amplified by event schedulers is allowed in athletics and entertainment venues

- Please be considerate of classes and other events when demonstrating outdoors

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”x2”

Graffiti

- No markings, including chalking, may be left on campus buildings or other structures or surfaces; chalking may be allowed on certain sidewalks and streets, but is subject to removal, consistent with campus maintenance standards and practices

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://policies.uoregon.edu/policy/by/1/01-administration-and-governance/freedom-inquiry-and-free-speech>
- <https://policies.uoregon.edu/policy/by/1/04-facilities/facilities-scheduling>
- <https://scheduling.uoregon.edu/resources>
- <https://scheduling.uoregon.edu/sites/scheduling1.uoregon.edu/files/EO-Amphitheater-Sound-Policy.pdf>
- <https://www.eugene-or.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2693>
- <https://policies.uoregon.edu/vol-3-administration-student-affairs/ch-1-conduct/student-conduct-code>
- <https://policies.uoregon.edu/proscribed-conduct>

Office of the General Counsel | 1226 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403-1226
Office: Johnson Hall, Room 219 | 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.