

Student Conduct

Protest and Demonstration Policy

Protest is a necessary and acceptable means of expression within the Brown community. However, protest becomes unacceptable when it obstructs the basic exchange of ideas. Such obstruction is a form of censorship, no matter who initiates it or for what reasons.

Protests or demonstrations that infringe upon the rights of others to peaceful assembly, orderly protest, free exchange of ideas, or that interfere with the rights of others to make use of or enjoy the facilities or attend the functions of the University cannot be tolerated.

Picket lines which permit free passage of those who wish to pass, and signs, banners and peaceful assemblies are all acceptable. However, the carrying of signs that by virtue of their construction constitute a hazard to other people may not be permitted. Specifically, this means that signs should be constructed entirely of soft material such as cardboard or cloth, and that signs should not be attached to rigid sticks or poles when such signs are used inside University buildings. Actions such as the following, are unacceptable: blocking; obstructing or impeding passage of a person or vehicle; actions that result in bodily harm; erecting or placing of obstructions that result in depriving others of their rights.

Halting a lecture, debate, or any public forum is an unacceptable form of protest. "Halting" means directly or indirectly preventing a speaker from speaking - even for a brief period of time - or seizing control of a public forum for one's own purposes.

The University must be a place where ideas are exchanged freely. By asserting their rights to protest, individuals cannot decide for the entire community which ideas will or will not receive free expression.