

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE POLICIES & RECOMMENDATIONS: FREE SPEECH AND ASSEMBLY POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The University of Maine is committed to free and open inquiry and expression in all matters. It guarantees all members of the university community the broadest possible latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge and learn. With the exception of certain limitations (time, place, manner) on that freedom which are necessary to the functioning of the university, the University of Maine fully respects and supports the freedom of all members of the university community to discuss, debate, write, assemble and/or demonstrate regarding any issue or problem.

The ideas of members of the university community will frequently and naturally conflict, but it is not the appropriate role of the University to shield individuals from opinions and ideas that could be unwelcomed, disagreeable, or even acutely or deeply offensive. Although civility and mutual respect are greatly valued and all community members should take responsibility for maintaining a climate of mutual respect, concerns about civility and mutual respect can never be used as a justification for closing off the discussion of thoughts and ideas no matter how offensive or disagreeable those ideas and thoughts might be to some members of the community. It is for individual members of the university community, not for the university as an institution, to respond to such ideas for themselves, and to take action not by seeking to suppress speech, but to openly and vigorously contest the ideas they oppose with more speech.

POLICY

The University of Maine fully supports and encourages free speech, freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. There are no designated free speech zones at UMaine. The entire campus is open for free speech and assembly. There are however, a few time, place, and manner limitations on these fundamental rights at UMaine. These limitations are:

1. The activity cannot disrupt or interfere with the normal operation or activity of the University; and
2. The activity cannot block or interfere with the safe ingress and/or egress from the indoor or outdoor site for participants and/or for emergency personnel/vehicles.

The normal operation and activity of the University includes but is not limited to: teaching; research; performances; events/contests; basic facility, farm and grounds operations; and similar functions. Safe ingress and egress from indoor and outdoor sites includes but is not limited to: vehicular and pedestrian traffic flow on roads,