

## 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,

sidewalks, driveways, etc.; proper door opening/closing/access; and use of and access to foyers, vestibules and atria.

## **REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is required of those planning events, activities, and speakers on campus to use the Event Management Process (EMP) where the anticipated attendance will be 50 or more people, where the use of fire/fire pit is part of the event, where the use of fireworks is part of the event and/or where the use of alcohol is part of the event. The Event Management Process is a pre-event planning process that helps individuals, student organizations, departments and outside groups to safely prepare and hold events and activities on campus. Further, it allows preparation for contingencies such as inclement weather, risk management/safety concerns, competing events/activities, security needs, road/parking lot closures, redirection of normal vehicular or pedestrian traffic, use of fireworks/fire pits, use of games of chance, etc.

Groups not affiliated with the University of Maine and campus departments should contact Conferences and Institutes at (207) 581-4093 (<https://umaine.edu/conferences/>) to begin the EMP. Campus departments can also contact Parking and Transportation Services (207-581-4047) to begin the EMP. Students and student organizations should contact Campus Activities (Division of Student Life) to begin the EMP (207-581-1406), <https://umaine.edu/campusactivities/planning-events/>. The earlier the EMP process is initiated, the better, however a minimum of two weeks prior to the scheduled event date is highly recommended.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. In order to preserve the academic functioning of the University, amplified sound, including but not limited to microphones, speakers and megaphones, is prohibited on the Mall between 7:30 a.m. -7:30 p.m. Mondays-Fridays. Exceptions to this general ban may be given to University departments and/or recognized student organizations: location limited to Fogler Library steps and near vicinity, sound amplification is provided/controlled by the University (Campus Activities), and the time frame for the event is 12:00 noon-1:00 p.m.
2. Planning assistance, including making space and equipment reservations, and compliance with the University's Event Management Process, are highly recommended and in some cases required (ex. use of fire and/or fireworks, events with 50+ attendants). Outside groups and campus departments should contact Conferences and Institutes. Campus departments can also contact Parking and Transportation Services for

assistance with the EMP. Students and student groups should contact Campus Activities (Division of Student Life) located in the Memorial Union (207-581-1406) for the Event Management Process (no cost).

3. Commercial solicitation is not permitted in any University of Maine building, except as noted below.
4. Tabling in and outside the Memorial Union is permitted and encouraged. This service is free to University departments and recognized University of Maine student organizations. Outside/non-University groups, vendors and individuals may also reserve and participate in tabling in and outside the Memorial Union by making a reservation and paying the current rental fee (contact the Division of Student Life for reservations, details, fees, and information, 315 Memorial Union, 207-581-1406). For use of other indoor space in University buildings, contact the building manager of the building of interest.
5. Athletic and recreational indoor and outdoor spaces are also available by contacting those units directly to make reservations and other arrangements (rental fee, equipment, etc.).
6. For safety reasons, do not block ingress and/or egress to sidewalks, roadways, crosswalks, and/or parking areas.
7. Additional information resources include: UMaine Student Handbook, the Use of Buildings Policy, and the Board of Trustees policies.
8. For more information regarding these policies, contact the Division of Student Life, 315 Memorial Union, 207-581-1406.

Created: August 2019

Updated: September 2019 ■