

Public Forum Use of University Facilities

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University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

Campus Policy Statement

Public Forum Use of University Facilities

Consistent with University of Massachusetts system wide Guidelines on Responses to Demonstrations, the Dartmouth campus promulgates the following policy on public forum use of University facilities.

General Policy Statement

The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth recognizes the rights of members of the University community and visitors to the community to freedom of assembly and speech, and strongly endorses the free exchange of ideas at the University. Subject to the provisions of this Campus Policy Statement, members of the University community and its visitors may exercise such rights in appropriate public forums without seeking sponsorship or permission of the University. However, as a matter of law and University policy, these rights must be exercised on University property in a manner consistent with the mission and operation of the University and the rights of other members of the University community.

Some members of the University community and some visitors to the campus on occasion have exceeded the bounds of appropriate expression during the course of such public forum uses, by interfering in the educational activities and business of the University and with the rights of others. The University therefore reaffirms the importance of the establishment of appropriate time, place and manner restrictions on public forum use of facilities.

Applicable Rules and Regulations

These rules and regulations apply to all members of the University community, including undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and administrative staff as well as to guests and visitors

- The use of University property for public forums is subject to all relevant policies and procedures including, but not limited to, the Code of Student Conduct, and the University Alcohol and Drug Policy, and the University of Massachusetts Guidelines for Responses to Demonstrations on University Property. [Copies of these documents may be found in the

Student Rights and Responsibilities section of the Student Handbook and on the University Web site under UMass President's Office.]

- Public forum uses are limited to appropriate public forum spaces, which do not include, among other locations, faculty and administrative offices, classrooms and other instructional facilities and residential facilities.
- Public forum spaces are locations that by tradition or policy are available for public assembly and speech. The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth recognizes the following public forum spaces:

The grassy areas to the south and east, within 75 feet, of the campanile, bounded by the Group I campanile walkway and the Group IV campanile walkway. Students in wheelchairs may access this area from any of the following disabled access parking lots, (Lots 8 & 9) by following the prominently marked signage indicated below, directing students to the Public Forum Space. The ramp leading to the platform at the Campanile is not wheelchair accessible.

- Public forum uses shall not be allowed at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth from midnight to 6:00 a.m. The area must be restored to its previous state by midnight, including an area clean up. Any materials left on the site after that time will be cleared by Facilities and the user may be charged for the cleanup.
- The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth will hold participants accountable for actions that violate University policies and regulations. Such improper actions include but are not limited to:
 - Material disruption of or interference with instructional activities and other University business and campus events;
 - Actual or threatened physical violence, or other forms of harassment, or destruction of University, or other public, or private property;
 - Interference with free entry to or exit from University facilities and free movement by individuals;
 - Interference with the rights of other members of the University community to freedom of speech and assembly, and other rights; and
 - Damage to University property, which shall cause the participants to be responsible for reimbursing the University for the cost of the cleaning, repair or replacement of such property.
- Scheduled events sponsored by University organizations or departments will have priority over public forum uses for access to all University facilities.

Procedures

- Person wishing to use a public forum space must inform the Department of Public Safety (DPS) at least 48 hours in advance regarding the date, time, number of people involved, and the contact person(s) for the event. Once DPS has been notified of an event DPS will issue a work order for Facilities so that the signage noted above can be placed prior to the scheduled event. This protocol is the same for any special event on campus.
- Persons desiring to use sound amplification at a public forum should get the request approved by the Vice Chancellor for Administrative and Fiscal Services. Sound amplification equipment used without the written approval of the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administrative and Fiscal Services may be disconnected, removed, or confiscated by the Department of Public Safety if it interferes in the educational activities or business of the University or with the rights of others.

Where appropriate, the University shall endeavor to maintain open lines of communication with demonstrators and to provide opportunities for discussion of matters in dispute so long as the demonstrators act in a manner consistent with University policy and the rights of others. As a general rule the University shall not negotiate with individuals who occupy any University facility in violation of this policy or any other University policy, or with associated demonstrators, while any such occupation continues, and shall never negotiate within an occupied facility.