

## Signs, Banners, and Artificial Noisemakers

Students may paint themselves, using the common names for Vanderbilt teams (e.g., Dores, Vandy, VU). Students and/or registered student organizations may submit banners to be displayed at the game to the appropriate athletic department official, prior to the game. Banners with obscene, offensive, or derogatory messages—as determined by athletic department personnel—will not be displayed. Efforts will be made to display all banners submitted and approved. Banners must be submitted to the designated member of the athletic department a minimum of 48 hours prior to a contest. Students are permitted to bring hand-held signs to athletic events provided that the signs meet the following guidelines:

1. The signs must be no larger than one piece of standard-size poster board (22" x 28");
2. Signs may not display abusive, offensive, or obscene words or drawings—as determined by athletic department personnel; and
3. Names of commercial products other than the official broadcast networks of the contest may not be mentioned on the sign.
4. Dry erase boards and the like are prohibited. Signs must be completed and approved by the designated member of the athletic department prior to the event, and may not be changed once approved.

Event staff has the discretionary authority to determine whether a sign meets the guidelines. Signs that do not meet these guidelines may be confiscated at any time during the event. Students in possession of a sign that does not meet the guidelines may be ejected from the contest if they refuse to comply with the policy stated above.

Artificial noisemakers (cowbells, vuvuzelas, inflatable balloon-stick clappers, etc.), are prohibited at any athletic event, with the exception of musical and percussive instruments used by official team bands in accordance with Southeastern Conference regulations.

The complete Vanderbilt Athletics Fan Code of Conduct is available on the Athletics [website](#). Where in conflict with this policy, the University's Freedom of Expression policy will be applied to actions of students participating in a protest, demonstration, or dissent.

## Freedom of Expression

As an institution of higher learning dedicated to research, teaching, and service, Vanderbilt is firmly committed to academic freedom and freedom of expression and will maintain the conditions of freedom of inquiry, thought, and discussion on campus. The education of Vanderbilt students is guided by the University's commitment to the principles of academic integrity, open communication and inquiry, nondiscrimination, and civility. Students are considered as partners in this endeavor and, while in a diverse community the views and ideas of its members will inevitably conflict at times, Vanderbilt expects all members of the community to be respectful of each other and to contribute in positive ways to an orderly and civil exchange of diverse ideas and opinions. Vanderbilt seeks to foster a sense of belonging for all students where they can feel welcome and as safe as possible in an environment dedicated to the critical discussion of complex and challenging ideas. Freedom of expression extends to all members of the Vanderbilt community, even when that expression directly challenges the beliefs and ideas of another and even when that expression may be deemed disagreeable or possibly even offensive. When an individual or group deems the ideas of others to be contrary to their own, the response should be to engage in discussion, debate, and mutually respectful dialogue. A core part of the University's mission is to provide opportunities for intellectual exchanges to take place.

To foster such an environment, the following guidelines have been set.

### **Distribution of printed information or use of electronic media**

Students or student groups who distribute information, whether physically or electronically, are responsible for the content. Students may distribute physical materials, including flyers, leaflets, informational sheets, or similar materials, on Rand Terrace or outside the building in which a meeting has been scheduled by another group or organization, if the distributors position themselves twenty feet from the entrance so as to avoid restricting access. For outdoor events, distributors may position themselves twenty feet from the reserved

lawn or area, again in a manner to avoid restricting access. There may be no charge or requested donations for these materials. Students may also distribute information using electronic media in compliance with the University's [Student Computing Policy](#) and the [Computing Privileges and Responsibilities Acceptable Use Policy](#). Students distributing information, whether physically or using electronic media, must also comply with the policies found in the "[Marketing and Communications](#)" section, by including the name and contact information of the distributing individual or group on each piece of printed or electronic material. If the group is not a registered student organization, the names of the individual students responsible for the information must also be provided.

## **Demonstrations, Dissents, and Protests**

- *Definitions*
  - Demonstrations. Demonstrations are independent from any other event or activity occurring on campus. A Demonstration is different from a Protest in that the time, date, and location are not connected to a campus speaker, event, or activity, nor does it need to be for it to accomplish its goal.
  - Dissents. Dissents are short and spontaneous non-violent verbal or non-verbal reactions to a speaker.
  - Protests. Protests are responses to or intentionally take place during other events or activities occurring on campus. A Protest is different from a Demonstration in that the time, date, and location are connected to a campus speaker, event, or activity, and does so in order to accomplish its goal.
  - Organizer. An Organizer is one who is either primarily responsible for planning, funding, or executing a Demonstration or Protest or is so associated with the Demonstration or Protest that a reasonable person would infer that responsibility.
- *Introduction*
  - Demonstrations, Dissents, and Protests are a necessary and valued form of expression. Individuals and organizations seeking to organize a Demonstration or Protest should contact the Dean of Students to assist with planning. The Dean of Students or Dean's designee will advise Organizers on execution of the activity with the goal that it occur as envisioned with minimal complications. All University policies apply during Demonstrations, Dissents, and Protests. Organizers as well as those participating—including, but not limited to, faculty, staff, students, and the public—are responsible for knowing and abiding by University policies as well as local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
- *Planning*
  - When possible, a request to hold a Demonstration or Protest should be submitted to the Dean of Students at least 48 hours prior to the planned activity to ensure its successful execution. The submission should include the time, date, and location. The University may require Organizers to move the time, date, and location if it is determined the Demonstration or Protest, as planned, would be disruptive to campus operations, impede the free flow of vehicular or pedestrian traffic, violate University policies, or significantly infringe on the rights of other members of the University community.
  - For Demonstrations and Protests occurring on campus, only registered student organizations, administrative offices, or academic departments may reserve space. Students not affiliated with a registered student organization, administrative office, or academic departments may only use campus space on a first-come basis and at the discretion of the University. The Dean of Students or Dean's designee can reserve space for such students who have properly engaged in the planning process. The public, including parents and alumni, may not participate in or be invited to an on-campus Demonstration or Protest, except when permitted via the event registration process outlined in the [Use of University Space section](#) of the Student Handbook.
  - For Demonstrations and Protests occurring off campus on city sidewalks and streets adjacent to the University, Organizers should make appropriate arrangements to acquire city permits and should adhere to city ordinances and applicable local, state and federal law. The public may participate in off-campus Demonstrations and Protests.
- *Implementation*
  - Demonstrations