

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

A GROWING CATALOG OF COLUMBIA-WIDE POLICIES

[Home](#) » Interim University Policy for Safe Demonstrations

Interim University Policy for Safe Demonstrations

This interim policy defines the process that needs to be followed for safe demonstrations on campus.

▼ Policy Text



The right of students, faculty, and staff to express their views is the cornerstone of our academic community. We are committed to free and open debate, and the principle that the right to speak applies equally to everyone, regardless of their viewpoint. Just as every member of our community has this right, they also have a corresponding responsibility not to interfere with the rights of others to speak, study, teach, and learn. Consistent with the Rules of University Conduct (the “Rules”), the University is committed to ensuring that all members of the University community have the right to speak, study, research, teach, and express their own views.

To that end, and in order to facilitate the safe conduct of Demonstrations (defined as a group of people coming together in an event of public expression) on campus, the University has adopted the regulations set forth below.

1. The University will designate spaces (“Demonstration Areas”) that will be available on each of its campuses for Demonstrations from 12:00 to 6:00 pm on Monday-Friday (“Regular Demonstration Times”) when classes are in session (does not include reading days or exam periods) in a manner that does not disrupt University matters and subject to the Rules. Any such designation will take account of the importance of providing prominent and central locations for Demonstrations. On the Morningside campus, for example, the designated Demonstration Area will typically be South Field East, South Field West, or the Sundial area. Demonstrations may not be advertised before registration is confirmed.

In order to ensure safety and limit potential interference with normal University activities, Demonstrations will not be permitted in University areas outside of the Demonstration Areas, except as provided in the following paragraph.

Approval for Demonstrations outside the Demonstration Areas and/or the times above may be sought using the registration form and giving detailed information regarding the need for an exception.

2. Two working days’ advance registration is required for any Demonstration to ensure the safety of the University community. [Click here](#)  to register your event. The registration form closes at 4 pm Monday through Friday. If more than one group or individual(s) seeks registration for a Demonstration Area at the same time, the second group or individual(s) will be required to use another Demonstration Area or register for a different time. The University may take appropriate action to ensure that counter protests remain separated. A calendar of registered Demonstrations will be available on the [Event Management System website](#) .

The [University's Vigil Policy](#) will apply to vigils and similar events.

3. The University may not deny registration or approval of an exception for any Demonstration based on the viewpoint of the individual or group seeking to hold the Demonstration. The University will also ensure that all Demonstration requests taking place in the dedicated Demonstration Areas during Regular Demonstration Times will be approved within one working day unless there is a significant, justifiable, and verifiable threat or unmanageable safety concern. The elements that would lead to a refusal must be provided within one working day to the party that requested a Demonstration registration.
4. Demonstrations that are not registered or go beyond the registered Demonstration Area or reserved time will violate this policy. Advertising of Demonstrations prior to a confirmed registration is also a violation.
 - Violations of this Policy by student groups will be reported to their respective student governing board, which will be responsible for making recommendations regarding sanctions within five working days to the Administration and notifying the University Senate Executive Committee of the recommendation. Appeals of Administration decisions will go to the appropriate student adjudication board.
 - Violations by individual students will be reported to the Center for Student Success and Intervention (CSSI) as directed in the University's Standards and Discipline Policy. CSSI will review the report and issue the appropriate notice per the below. A student may not receive more than one warning under this Policy in connection with a single demonstration.
 - The following recommended sanctions will apply to violations of this Policy:
 - First violation – written warning to the student
 - Second violation - warning letter to the student that goes on the student's record but gets removed at the end of the semester *if no further violations*
 - Three or more violations - will go to the University Judicial Board (UJB) for hearing with recommended actions: conditional disciplinary probation, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.
 - On the third violation and onward, CSSI will, by written notice, within 10 business days of the violation instance refer a case to the UJB via the Rules Clerk. The referral will include the investigation report, including a copy of prior warnings and prior sanction(s), the recommended sanction, and any additional information CSSI desires to provide to the UJB for the purpose of a hearing. Referrals will be processed in a timely manner, with decisions rendered in line with the UJB time frame.
 - Students and the University have the right to appeal the UJB decision to the Appeal Board, comprised of three neutral deans. If the Appeal Board chooses to change the disciplinary decision made by the UJB, any such change can never exceed the recommended level of sanction for the event policy violation outlined in the first bullet in this section 4.
 - The Executive Committee of the University Senate will review this Interim University Policy for Safe Demonstrations, including the recommended sanctions, the UJB decisions, and the Appeals Board decisions, if they are involved, at an initial cadence of every four weeks for the remainder of the Spring 2024 semester. The first such review should happen after the first five cases reviewed. After the end of the Spring 2024 semester, this Interim University Policy for Safe Demonstrations policy will be reviewed.

- This policy is intended solely for violations of time/place/manner of the Interim University Policy for Safe Demonstrations policy and NOT for Rules of Conduct violations. Rules of Conduct violations will be handled as outlined in the [Rules of University Conduct policy](#).

This Interim Policy was adopted by the administration in consultation with the Executive Committee of the University Senate and is subject to review and modification based on experience, to take place no later than the close of the Spring 2024 semester. Members of the community should be mindful of other University-wide and school-specific policies and practices, including the University's antidiscrimination policies, which may apply.


▼ Cross References to Related Policies

- [Columbia University Event Policy](#)
 - [Student Group Event Policy and Procedure](#)
 - [Policy for a Vigil on Campus](#)
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Resources

[How to Book Demonstration in EMS](#)

Create an EMS Account

- In person: visit the Event Management office in Lerner Hall (7th floor) to set up your account instantly.
- Online: [submit the EMS account request form](#)  and you will receive your account in one hour.

Responsible University Office

[University Life](#)

Audience

[Students](#)

[Faculty](#)

[Officers of Administration](#)

[Support Staff](#)

Category

[Event Management](#)