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UNIVERSITY POLICY

50.3.5 Disruptions: Administrative Policy and Response

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| Section Title: | Legal Matters |
| Approval Authority: | Board of Governors |
| Responsible Office(s): | Off. of Academic Affairs |
| Responsible Executive(s): | Sr. V.P. for Academic Affairs |
| Adopted Date: | 04/01/1974 |
| Reviewed Date: | |
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1. Policy Statement

This policy provides direction for addressing disruptions on Rutgers University property. The right of freedom of expression at Rutgers is protected. However, the University has long recognized that the right of free expression does not include the right to engage in conduct that disrupts the University's operations or endangers the safety of others. This policy outlines the difference between expression and disruption and the potential ramifications.

2. Who Should Read This Policy

All members of the University community.

4. Resources

[University Policy 10.2.11: University Code of Student Conduct](#)

[Public Forum Procedures](#)

5. Definitions

Disruption is conduct by any person that intentionally or recklessly obstructs, impairs, or interferes with: (1) teaching, studying or administration of the University, including the clinical mission of RBHS, (2) the authorized and other permissible use of University facilities, and (3) the rights and privileges of other members of the University community to engage in educational pursuits.

Disruptive conduct includes but is not limited to the following: obstruction, impairment, or interference with University sponsored/authorized activities or facilities in a manner that deprives, or is likely to deprive, others of the benefit or enjoyment of the activity or facility.

6. The Policy

The primary function of an academic community is to discover and disseminate knowledge through research and teaching. Freedom of expression is vital to our shared goal of pursuit of knowledge. Such freedom comes with a responsibility to welcome and promote this freedom, even in disagreement or opposition. Community members are therefore encouraged to register dissent for issues and demonstrate that dissent through orderly means.

The right to freedom of expression includes peaceful protests and orderly demonstrations. However, the right to protest does not include the right to engage in conduct that intentionally or recklessly interferes with the University's operations or infringes on the rights of other members of the

community. Faculty, students, and all other personnel who intentionally act to impair, interfere with, or obstruct the orderly conduct, processes, and functions of the University may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action by University authorities.

With this in mind, the following administrative procedures have been formulated to guide the implementation of university policy:

- A. In order to ensure that individuals or groups not intentionally or recklessly interfere with the operation of the University or the rights of others, they shall not:
 1. obstruct vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, or other traffic;
 2. obstruct entrances or exits to buildings or driveways;
 3. interfere with educational activities inside or outside any building;
 4. harass passersby;
 5. interfere with or preclude a scheduled speaker from being heard;
 6. interfere with scheduled University ceremonies or events;
 7. damage property, including lawns, shrubs, or trees; or
 8. engage in any other activities that disrupt university business or infringe upon the rights of others.

- B. The president of the university and the senior vice president for academic affairs will have the authority throughout the university to declare a particular activity to be disruptive. The chancellors of New Brunswick, Newark, and Camden will have the same authority with regard to their respective areas. The appropriate officers as specified in (B), or a designee, have the authority to declare a behavior disruptive, and must, if possible, alert demonstrators that they are in violation of the University's disruption policy. At this point, the officer has the discretion to call upon the university police to contain the disruption. Ordinarily, the president of the university alone, or in his or her absence the senior vice president for academic affairs, will have the authority to decide that civil authorities beyond the campus are to be called upon to contain those disruptions that the university police are unable to handle. In extraordinary circumstances, where neither the president nor the executive vice president for academic affairs is available to make such a decision, the chancellors have the same authority in their respective units.

- C. Members of the university community who are aware of potentially disruptive situations are encouraged to report this to the deans of students on their respective campus. The deans of students and other university personnel may be called upon to coordinate or assist members of the academic community in ending the disruption.