



FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION POLICY

Area:	Student Affairs	Number:	n/a
Applies To:	Faculty, Staff, Students, Visitors	Issued:	August 16, 2018
Sources:	Board of Regents Policy Manual, Section 6.5	Revised:	April 2, 2025
Policy Owner:	AVP for Student Affairs/Dean of Students	Reviewed:	October 21, 2022
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I. Purpose

Georgia Southern University (University) is committed to the freedoms of speech, expression, and assembly. Individuals have the right to assemble, to speak, and to attempt to attract the attention of others, and corresponding rights to hear the speech of others when they choose to listen, and to ignore the speech of others when they choose not to listen.

The rules articulated in this policy apply to all students, faculty, staff, and their registered organizations, as well as other persons and groups visiting the University.

II. Policy Statement

Students, faculty, staff, and their invited guests are free to express their views, individually or in organized groups, orally, by sign or exhibit, on any topic, in all parts of the campus. Persons not affiliated with the University are free to express their views orally, by sign or exhibit, on any topic in the Designated Public Forum Area. (These expressions are subject only to rules necessary to preserve equal rights of others and the functions of the University. Teaching, research, and other official functions of the University shall have priority in allocating the use of space on campus.)

Rules

These rules shall govern the conduct of all assemblies and demonstrations on University property or at University sponsored events.

1. Assemblies and demonstrations must be conducted in compliance with these rules and other applicable University policy and must not:
 - a. result in a breach of peace or violation of law;
 - b. negatively impact the security and safety of persons and/or property on campus;
 - c. interfere with the free and unimpeded flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic on campus or the entry or exit into University buildings;
 - d. materially disrupt or interfere with the normal activities of the University;
 - e. damage or destroy University property.
2. No person conducting or participating in an assembly or demonstration on University

property or at University sponsored events may advocate the deliberate violation of the law. For the purposes of this section, “advocacy” means preparing the group addressed for imminent action and seeing it to such action, as opposed to the abstract espousal of the moral propriety of a course of action.

3. Students, faculty, staff, Registered Student Organizations, and their invited guests may assemble and/or demonstrate anywhere on University grounds between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m., Monday through Sunday as long as the assembly and/or demonstration adheres to the provisions of Item 1.
4. Persons and groups not affiliated with the University may assemble and demonstrate only within the hours of operation of the facility adjacent to the Designated Public Forum Area, as long as the assembly and/or demonstration adheres to the provisions of Item 1.

III. Definitions

Faculty or Staff – any individual employed by the University in a faculty or staff capacity.

Student – an individual who has been accepted for admission to the University and maintains a continuing relationship with the University by being enrolled in classes or being eligible to enroll in classes. Students also include but are not limited to online students, SOAR participants, and transient students taking courses on any University campus.

Registered Student Organization – any number of students who have completed the requirements for being a Registered Student Organization at the University.

Student Group – any number of students who associate with each other for a common purpose but have not completed the requirements for being a Registered Student Organization.

Designated Public Forum Area, Armstrong campus - the grass lawn bordered directly by the Sports Center Parking lot and the Student Union with sidewalks on three sides.

Designated Public Forum Area, Liberty Center – designated grassy area outside of the Student Commons.

Designated Public Forum Area, Statesboro campus – the grassy area between Williams Center loading dock pedestrian and a cut-through pedestrian. The grassy area has a black chain fence on the back of the perimeter.

IV. Exclusions

Due to practical administrative realities, this policy does not apply to University agents and employees when they are acting in the course and scope of their agency or employment.

V. Procedures

A Designated Public Forum Area Request Form (links below) must be submitted to reserve space. If the form is not submitted 48 hours in advance, the reservation cannot be guaranteed. This advance notice allows the University the opportunity to avoid simultaneous or competing assemblies/demonstrations and to arrange for adequate staffing. Only one organization or

cause representative may occupy the Designated Public Forum Area at one time. The online Designated Public Forum Area Request Form requires the applicant to provide a contact name, address, and phone number.

[Designated Public Forum Area Request Form – Armstrong Campus](#)

[Designated Public Forum Area Request Form – Liberty Campus](#)

[Designated Public Forum Area Request Form – Statesboro Campus](#)