



OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE SERVICES
UVM.EDU/POLICIES

POLICY

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Title: Freedom of Expression

Policy Statement

The University upholds and defends the right to free expression, including the freedom to express dissent, within the context of the law. The University encourages the airing of diverse viewpoints and provides a forum for the hosting of events where such viewpoints may be expressed. However, the University does not take a position regarding the viewpoints individual speakers may hold. Freedom of expression is vital to the shared goal of the pursuit of knowledge and the exchange of ideas. Fostering the ability of members of the University community to engage in free expression in an effective and responsible manner is an essential part of the University's educational mission.

Reason for the Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to articulate the institutional commitment to free expression and the exchange of ideas.

Applicability of the Policy

This policy applies to all University of Vermont students, faculty, staff, University recognized groups and organizations, affiliated organizations, and non-affiliated persons and groups on University property or at University sponsored events, including invited speakers, and all persons requesting temporary use of all or part of a University building, facility, or outdoor space for any meeting, conference, event, or activity.

Definitions

Free Expression: Rights guaranteed by the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States, including rights to freedom of speech, peaceful assembly, petition, and association. Free expression, however, ceases at the point when its exercise infringes on the rights of others and, pursuant to law, is subject to reasonable prescription of time, place, and manner.

Unprotected Speech: Speech and other forms of expression that are not protected under federal and state law, include credible threats, fighting words, incitement of imminent lawless action, harassment, obscenity, defamation, and infringement of the intellectual property or privacy rights of others.

Procedures

The expression of views, through words or conduct, must be exercised in a manner that does not interfere with the rights of others to present their views in a lawful manner without disruptive interference, does not disrupt the core activities of the campus (work, learning, studying, etc.), and does not result in a risk to the personal safety of the speaker(s) or others. To protect free expression on campus, the University has the authority and obligation to enforce rules that restrict and sanction those who seek to disrupt the expression of others or the ability of others to engage in the core activities of the campus. Additionally, the University reserves the right to respond appropriately to unprotected speech.

The University's commitment to free expression is operationalized through several interrelated University policies and procedures listed below. These documents guide our community regarding the exercise of free expression on campus, or in association with university sponsored activities, within the boundaries of lawful behavior.

Use of University Facilities, Grounds, and Resources

- [Banners Display](#)
- [Computer, Communication, and Network Technology Acceptable Use](#)
- [Events, Speakers, and Activities - Facilities & Grounds Use](#)
- [Filming on Campus](#)
- [Flag](#)
- [Political Engagement, Advocacy, and Campaign Related Activities](#)
- [Posting and Solicitation](#)
- [Temporary Structures](#)
- [University Name, Symbols, Letterhead, and other Proprietary Indicia of Affiliation](#)
- [Use of Campus Mail and Letterboxes](#)

Promoting Safety and Security

- [Code of Student Conduct](#)
- [Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct](#)
- [No Trespass Notices](#)
- [Personal Safety and Threat Assessment](#)
- [Weapons](#)
- [Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards](#)

Contacts

Questions concerning the daily operational interpretation of this policy should be directed to the following (in accordance with the policy elaboration and procedures):	
Title(s)/Department(s):	Contact Information:
Chief Safety and Compliance Officer	(802) 656-8937
Police Services	(802) 656-3473 Emergencies Only: 9-1-1
University Event Services	(802) 656-5665 eventservices@uvm.edu www.uvm.edu/eventservices

Forms/Flowcharts/Diagrams

- None

Related Documents/Policies

Regulatory References/Citations

- None

Training/Education

Training will be provided on an as-needed basis as determined by the Approval Authority or the Responsible Official.

About this Policy

Responsible Official:	Chief Safety and Compliance Officer	Approval Authority:	President
Policy Number:	V. 3.27.2	Effective Date:	August 26 th , 2024
Revision History:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Replaced the Free Expression and Campus Disruption Policy (V. 1.1.4) and Campus Speakers Policy (V. 3.4.2) on December 19, 2023.• Revised on August 26th, 2024		

University of Vermont Policies and Operating Procedures are subject to amendment. For the official, approved, and most recent version, please visit UVM's [Institutional Policies Website](#)