

Chapter 2: Speech, Expression, and Assembly

2.1 Governing Principles

2.1.1 Freedom of Speech, Expression, and Assembly

The freedoms of speech, expression, and assembly are fundamental rights of all persons and are central to the mission of the University. Students, faculty, staff, and members of the public 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.

2.1.1.1 Students, faculty, and staff are free to express their views, individually or in organized groups, orally or in writing or by other symbols, on any topic, in all parts of the campus, subject only to rules necessary to preserve the equal rights of others and the other functions of the University. Teaching, research, and other official functions of the University shall have priority in allocating the use of space on campus. Members of the public may engage in expressive activities in common outdoor areas of the campus, subject to discretionary time, place, and manner limitations necessary for preserving the functions of the University.

2.1.1.2 In furtherance of the University's educational mission, University buildings, including their outside surfaces, surfaces associated with or connected to a University building, or a University structure are limited public forums open only to the expressive activities of faculty, staff, and students as set forth in this Chapter. Student, faculty, and staff organizations may not invite the public at large to events in University buildings, facilities, or locations that are not considered common outdoor areas.

2.1.1.3 Except as expressly authorized by 2.2, the University shall not discriminate on the basis of the political, religious, philosophical, ideological, or academic viewpoint expressed by any person, either in the enforcement and administration of these rules or otherwise.

2.1.2 Scope and Related Provisions

2.1.2.1 This chapter protects and regulates speech, expression, and assembly of students, faculty, staff, and members of the public that are not part of the teaching, research, or other official functions of the University, not otherwise sponsored by the University or any academic or administrative unit, and not submitted for academic credit.

2.1.2.2 This chapter also regulates certain speech that is part of the teaching, research, or other official functions of the University:

- a. Section 2.2.4 on Harassment applies to all speech regardless of where it occurs, including off University property, if it potentially affects a University person's education or employment with the University or potentially affects the University community.
- b. This entire chapter applies to speech by academic and administrative units, and speech that is submitted for academic credit in outdoor locations on the campus. The Dean of Students administers and schedules reservations for outdoor signs, tables, exhibits, public assemblies, and amplified sound, even for faculty, staff, and administrative and academic units, because scheduling through a single office is necessary to avoid conflicts.

2.1.2.3 Any program or event sponsored by an academic or administrative unit of the University shall have priority in the use of space and facilities over any speech, expression and assembly that is not sponsored by an academic or administrative unit, except that programs or events sponsored by an academic or administrative unit shall not have priority in the use of weekday amplified sound areas described in section 2.8.2. Academic or administrative units have equal access to scheduling the amplified sound areas. This chapter does not limit other existing authority of University officials to authorize programs and events sponsored by an academic or administrative unit and not provided for in this chapter.

2.1.2.4 Related Regulations and Policies include:

- a. Additional rules concerning free speech and academic freedom of faculty are found in the *Regents' Rules and Regulations*, Rule 31004.
- b. Underlying rules concerning free speech, the University's right to impose time, place, and manner restrictions, and the regulation of off-campus speakers, can be found in *Regents' Rules and Regulations*, Rule 40501.
- c. Rules concerning free speech and regulations regarding use and access to various campus facilities are found in *Regents' Rules and Regulations*, Rules 80101-80110.
- d. Rules protecting and regulating speech on University computer networks are promulgated by Information Technology Services, and are currently found in IT Policies, Information Computing and Web Policy.
- e. Rules requiring University employees to make clear that controversial statements are in their personal capacity are found in the *Regents' Rules and Regulations*, Rule 10101. Rules restricting use of University equipment, supplies, services, and working hours for political activities are found in the *Regents' Rules and Regulations*, Rule 30103.

2.1.3 Definitions

In addition to the general definitions contained in Chapter 2.2, as used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

- a. "Amplified sound" means sound whose volume is increased by any electric, electronic, mechanical, or motor-powered means. Shouting and group chanting are not amplified sound and are not subject to the special rules on amplified sound, but are subject to general rules on disruption;
- b. "Common outdoor area" means outdoor space that is not used for dedicated University business or an event, an educational function, or a research function on either a permanent or temporary basis. It does not include the outside surfaces of a University building, surfaces associated with or connected to a University building, a University structure, spaces dedicated to temporary outdoor banners, spaces dedicated to temporary outdoor exhibits, or any other space within the University's limited public forum. Common outdoor areas are designated by state law as traditional public forums.
- c. "Event" means something that occurs in a certain place during a particular interval of time; events include but not limited to guest speakers, exhibits, tables, distribution of literature, signs and public assemblies.
- d. "Expressive activities" means any speech or expressive conduct protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or by Section 8, Article I, Texas Constitution, and includes assemblies, protests, speeches, the distribution of written material, the carrying of signs, and the circulation of petitions. The term does not include commercial speech.
- e. "Limited public forum" means University property, both indoors and outdoors, that is not part of the common outdoor area, including the outside surface of a University building, surfaces associated with or connected to a University building, a University structure, spaces dedicated to temporary outdoor banners, spaces dedicated to temporary outdoor exhibits, residential outdoor spaces managed by the University, or other areas dedicated to operations or functions of the University.
- f. "Off-campus person or organization" means any person, organization, or business that is not an academic or administrative unit, a registered student, faculty, or staff organization, or a student, faculty member, or staff member, including invited speakers;
- g. "Room or space" includes any room or space, indoors or outdoors, owned or controlled by the University.
- h. "Student event request form" means the form used by a registered student organization to schedule an activity on the campus and is available at the Student Engagement and Leadership Center.
- i. "Table" means booths, displays, furniture, enclosure or any other structure temporarily used for distribution of literature, or for displaying signs or posters or for raising funds or soliciting, or for other similar activities;
- j. "University facility" means an auditorium, arena, dormitory, other building, room, public area, or any other area on the campus.
- k. "University person or organization" includes academic and administrative units, registered student, faculty, and staff organizations, and individual students, faculty members, and staff members.

2.2 Prohibited Expression

2.2.1 Obscenity

No person or organization shall distribute or display on the campus any writing or visual image, or engage in any public performance, that is obscene. A writing, image, or performance is "obscene" if it is obscene as defined in Texas Penal Code, Section 43.21 or successor provisions, and is within the constitutional definition of obscenity as set forth in decisions of the United States Supreme Court.

2.2.2 Defamation

2.2.2.1 No person shall make, distribute, or display on the campus any statement that unlawfully defames any other person.

2.2.2.2 A statement unlawfully defames another person if it is false, if the false portion of the statement injures the reputation of the other person, and if the speaker has the constitutionally required state of mind as set forth in decisions of the United States Supreme Court.

2.2.3 Incitement to Imminent Violations of Law

No person shall make, distribute, or display on the campus any statements directed to inciting or producing imminent violations of law under circumstances such that the statements are likely to actually and imminently incite or produce violations of law.

2.2.4 Harassment

2.2.4.1 No person shall make, distribute, or display on the campus any statement that constitutes verbal harassment of any other person. This section applies to all University speech including speech that is part of teaching, research, or other official functions of the University whether in person or not. "Verbal harassment" means hostile or offensive speech, oral, written, or symbolic, that:

- a. personally describes or is personally directed to one or more specific individuals; and
- b. is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent to create an objectively hostile environment that interferes with or diminishes the victim's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the University; and
- c. is not necessary to the expression of any idea described in paragraph

2.2.4.1.1 below.

2.2.4.1.1 To make an argument for or against the substance of any political, religious, philosophical, ideological, or academic idea is not verbal harassment, even if some listeners are offended by the argument or idea. The categories of sexually harassing speech set forth in Section VI: Equal Opportunity of this Handbook are rarely, if ever, necessary to argue for or against the substance of any political, religious, philosophical, ideological, or academic idea.

2.2.4.1.2 Verbal harassment may consist of threats, insults, epithets, ridicule, personal attacks, or the categories of harassing sexual speech set forth in Section VI: Equal Opportunity of this Handbook and is often based on the victim's appearance, personal characteristics, or group membership, including but not limited to race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, citizenship, veteran status, sexual orientation, ideology, political views, or political affiliation.

2.2.4.2 Harassment can also consist of nonverbal conduct, such as hazing, practical jokes, damage to property, and physical assault. In the case of sexual harassment and sexual misconduct, sexual conduct is often central to the offense.

These forms of harassment are prohibited in this Handbook, Section II: Student Affairs, Chapter 1.3.8; Section VI: Equal Opportunity and in the Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, Rule 30105. To the extent of any conflict in the definition of verbal harassment, the more detailed definition in this section controls.

2.2.4.3 The harassment that this section chapter prohibits does not exhaust the category of speech that is unnecessary and inappropriate to vigorous debate in a diverse community of educated people. An essential part of higher education is to learn to separate substantive argument from personal offense, and to express even the deepest disagreements within standards of civility that reflect mutual respect, understanding, and sensitivity among the diverse population within the University and in the larger society. These are community norms, even though they cannot be enforced by disciplinary rules.

2.2.4.4 Verbal harassment has been interpreted very narrowly by the federal courts. Many University policies on verbal harassment or hate speech have been held unconstitutional, either because they prohibited harassment only when it was based on race, sex, and similar categories, or because they failed to protect the expression of potentially offensive ideas. This policy should be interpreted as narrowly as need be to preserve its constitutionality.

2.2.4.5 Complaints about harassment may be reported as follows:

- a. a student who believes he or she has been harassed should report the alleged violation to the Dean of Students;
- b. a faculty member or staff member who believes he or she has been harassed should report the alleged violation to the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Office;
- c. alternatively, any person who believes he or she has been harassed may report the alleged violation to the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Office or to any University official, administrator, or supervisor. A faculty member is not an "official, administrator, or supervisor" for this purpose unless that faculty member holds an administrative position;

d. any University official, administrator, or supervisor who receives a report of alleged harassment shall promptly refer that report and the complainant to the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Office, or to the Dean of Students, as appropriate. A complainant whose report is not forwarded to the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Office, or to the Dean of Students, has not initiated proceedings for providing a remedy to the complainant or for imposing discipline on the alleged harasser.

2.2.4.6 Investigation of the information provided by a complainant, and any subsequent remedial or disciplinary proceedings, shall proceed under the procedures set out in the harassment policies found in Section VI, Equal Opportunity.

2.2.5 Solicitation

2.2.5.1 No person shall make, distribute, or display on the campus any statement that offers or advertises any product or service for sale or lease, or requests any gift or contribution, except as authorized in paragraph (b), by 2.4.3, or by the Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, Rule 80103. The following are not solicitation within this definition:

- a. words or symbols on personal apparel, or on decals or bumper stickers affixed to a vehicle by an owner of that vehicle;
- b. unadorned acknowledgements or thanks to donors.

2.2.5.2 Permissible Solicitation includes:

- a. a registered student, faculty, or staff organization may advertise or sell merchandise, publications, food, or nonalcoholic beverages, or request contributions for the benefit of the organization, for the benefit of another registered student, faculty, or staff organization, or for the benefit of an organization that is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. No organization may sell items obtained on consignment. No organization may request contributions for an off-campus tax-exempt organization for more than fourteen days in any fiscal year;
- b. registered student, faculty, and staff organizations, and academic and administrative units may sell, distribute, or display literature that contains advertising, subject to the limits in 2.4.3. Individual students, faculty members, and staff members may distribute or display such literature, but may not sell it;
- c. individual students, faculty members, and staff members may post advertisements for roommates, subleases, and sales of used goods that the seller has personally owned and used, but only on a bulletin board designated for that purpose by an academic or administrative unit in space that the unit occupies or controls. Any unit that designates a bulletin board for this purpose may regulate that bulletin board under the procedures set forth in 2.5.6;
- d. a resident of a University residence hall or apartment building may occasionally invite one or more salespersons to come to the resident's room or apartment, and in that room or apartment, the salesperson may offer products or services for sale to other residents of that residence hall or apartment building;
- e. a registered student, faculty, or staff organization may collect admission fees for programs scheduled in advance under Section II - Chapter 3 (Use of University Facilities);
- f. a registered student, faculty, or staff organization may collect membership fees or dues at meetings of the organization scheduled in advance under Section II - Chapter 3;

- g. a registered student, faculty, or staff organization may sell charitable raffle tickets on behalf of an organization that is authorized to conduct a charitable raffle under the Texas Charitable Raffle Enabling Act, Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 2002, or successor provisions.
- h. A registered student, faculty, or staff organization may host a public performance of a film scheduled in advance in accordance with Section II – Chapter 3. In accordance with Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, Rule 80103, admission fees may be collected. All registered student, faculty or staff organizations that exhibit films on campus must obtain a Public Performance License for the individual film(s) from a licensing agent. This license is required even if the exhibition of the film is offered to the public for free and is educational in nature. Registered student, faculty, or staff organizations will be required to follow the process prescribed by the film distributor to obtain approval to exhibit the film. Federal Copyright Laws protect all films viewed in public areas regardless of format. There are a few exceptions. Registered student, faculty, and staff organizations may exhibit a film publicly if:
- The film is in the Public Domain
 - The registered student, faculty, or staff organization has written permission from the film's producer or other holder of the right to grant such permission; or
 - The film is obtained from a company that provides Public Performance License with the purchase of the rental of the film

2.2.5.3 A registered student organization that receives funds from solicitations under this section shall deposit and account for such funds under the rules in Section II-Chapter 4 (Student Organizations).

2.3 General Rules on Means of Expression

2.3.1 Disruption

Except as expressly authorized in 2.8.2 or by an authorized University official responsible for a program or event sponsored by an academic or administrative unit, no speech, expression, or assembly may be conducted in a way that disrupts or interferes with any:

- a. teaching, research, administration, or other authorized activities on the campus;
- b. free and unimpeded flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic on the campus; or
- c. signs, tables, exhibits, public assemblies, distribution of literature, guest speakers, or use of amplified sound by another person or organization acting under the rules in this chapter.

2.3.1.1 The term "disruption" and its variants, as used in this rule, are distinct from and broader than the phrase "disruptive activities," as used in the Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, Rules 30103 and 40502. This rule is concerned not only with deliberate disruption, but also with scheduling and coordination of events to manage or minimize the inevitable conflicts between legitimate events conducted in close proximity, and to preserve the University's ability to execute such functions.

2.3.1.2 Except in the most extreme cases, interference and disruption are unavoidably contextual. Intentional physical interference with other persons is nearly always disruptive in any context. Interfering with traffic depends on the relation between the volume of traffic and the size of the

passageway left open. Disruptive noise is the most contextual of all, because it depends on the activity disrupted. Any distracting sound may disrupt a memorial service. Any sound sufficiently loud or persistent to make concentration difficult may disrupt a class or library. Occasional heckling in the speaker's pauses may not disrupt a political speech, but persistent heckling that prevents listeners from hearing the speaker does disrupt a political speech. These illustrations may be helpful, but none of them includes enough context to be taken as a rule. We cannot escape relying on the judgment and fairness of University authorities in particular cases. In this context where difficult enforcement judgments are unavoidable, it is especially important to remind administrators and law enforcement officials that their judgments should not be influenced by the viewpoint of those claiming disruption or of those allegedly disrupting.

2.3.1.3 Potentially disruptive events can often proceed without disruption if participants, administrators, and law enforcement officials cooperate to avoid disruption without stopping the event. In cases of marginal or unintentional disruption, administrators and law enforcement officials should clearly state what they consider disruptive and seek voluntary compliance before stopping the event or resorting to disciplinary charges or arrest.

2.3.2 Damage to Property

2.3.2.1 No speech, expression, or assembly may be conducted in a way that damages or defaces property of the University or of any person who has not authorized the speaker to damage or deface his or her property.

2.3.2.2 No person may damage, deface, or interfere with any sign, table, or exhibit posted or displayed by another person or organization acting under the rules in this chapter.

2.3.3 Coercing Attention

2.3.3.1 No person may attempt to coerce, intimidate, or badger any other person into viewing, listening to, or accepting a copy of any communication.

2.3.3.2 No person may persist in requesting or demanding the attention of any other person after that other person has attempted to walk away or has clearly refused to attend to the speaker's communication.

2.3.4 Co-sponsorship

Neither registered student, faculty, or staff organizations, nor individual students, faculty, or staff, may co-sponsor any event on campus with an off-campus person or organization. Only academic or administrative units with authority delegated from the President of the University may co-sponsor events with an off-campus person or organization.

2.3.4.1 An event is a prohibited co-sponsorship if an individual or a student, faculty, or staff organization:

- a. depends on an off-campus person or organization for planning, staffing, or management of the event; or
- b. advertises the event as cosponsored by an off-campus person or organization; or
- c. operates the event as agent of, or for the benefit of, an off-campus person or organization, except for solicitation of charitable contributions under the authority of 2.2.5.2(a); or
- d. distributes any proceeds of the event to an off-campus person or organization, except for
 - A. the proceeds of charitable contributions solicited under the authority of 2.2.5.2(a); or
 - B. payment of a fair market price for goods or services provided to the University person or organization; or
- e. reserves a room or space for the use of an off-campus person or organization; or
- f. engages in any other behavior that persuades the Dean of Students that an off-campus person or organization is in fact responsible for the event, in full or in substantial part.

2.3.4.2 The following facts do not, in and of themselves, indicate a prohibited co-sponsorship:

- a. That a University person or organization endorses an off-campus person or organization or its message;
- b. That a University person or organization sells, distributes, or displays literature prepared by an off-campus person or organization or containing contact information for an off-campus person or organization;
- c. That a University person or organization has purchased goods or services from an off-campus provider;
- d. That a registered student, faculty, or staff organization has invited a guest speaker under 2.10;
- e. That a registered student, faculty, or staff organization has received financial contributions to support the event from an off-campus donor.

2.3.4.3 The purpose of this rule is to preserve the limited space on campus for the use of students, faculty, staff, and members of the public as applicable, and the rule shall be interpreted to serve that purpose. It is not the purpose of this rule to prevent students, faculty, or staff from exercising their right to associate with other persons or organizations holding views similar to their own.

2.3.5 Other Rules with Incidental Effects on Speech

2.3.5.1 Other generally applicable or narrowly localized rules, written and unwritten, incidentally limit the time, place, and manner of speech, but are too numerous to compile or cross-reference here. For example, libraries typically have highly restrictive rules concerning noise; laboratories and rooms containing the electrical and mechanical infrastructure of the University typically have safety rules and rules excluding persons without specific business there; fire and safety codes prohibit the obstruction of exits and limit the constriction of hallways. Speech within classrooms is generally confined to the subject matter of the class; the right to attend a class at all is subject to registration

and payment of tuition; individual professors may have rules of decorum in their classroom. These kinds of rules limit the right of students, faculty, staff, and members of the public to enter and speak in the places to which these rules apply.

2.3.5.2 Reasonable and nondiscriminatory rules of this kind generally control over the rights of free speech guaranteed in this chapter. But even these kinds of rules are subject to the constitutional right of free speech. Such rules must be viewpoint neutral. Such rules cannot regulate speech more restrictively than they regulate other activities that cause the problems to be avoided by the rule. Such rules should not restrict speech more than is reasonably necessary to serve their purpose. Such rules cannot ban unobtrusive forms of communication with no potential for disruption even in the specialized environment subject to the localized rule. Thus, for example, means of silent expression or protest confined to the speaker's immediate person, such as armbands, buttons, and t-shirts, are nearly always protected because they are rarely disruptive in any environment.

2.4 Distribution of Literature

2.4.1 General Rule on Distribution of Literature

2.4.1.1 Registered student, faculty, and staff organizations, and academic and administrative units, may sell, distribute, or display literature on campus, subject to the rules in 2.4 and to the general rules in 2.2 and 2.3. Individual students, faculty members, and staff members may distribute or display literature but may not sell it. Members of the public may also distribute literature in common outdoor areas of campus but may not sell it. In either case, no advance permission is required.

2.4.1.2 "Literature" means any printed material, including any newspaper, magazine, or other publication, and any leaflet, flyer, or other informal matter, that is produced in multiple copies for distribution to potential readers.

2.4.2 Not-for-Profit Literature Only

2.4.2.1 Except as expressly authorized by the Regents' *Rules and Regulations* or by contract with the University, no person or organization may sell, distribute, or display on campus any publication operated for profit. A registered student, faculty, or staff organization may sell publications operated for profit as part of a fundraiser authorized by, and subject to the limits of, 2.2.5.2(a).

2.4.2.2 A publication is operated for profit if any part of the net earnings of the publication, or of its distribution, inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual.

2.4.3 Limits on Advertising

Literature distributed on campus may contain the following advertising:

- a. advertising for a registered student, faculty, or staff organization, or an academic or administrative unit;
- b. advertising for an organization that is tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code;
- c. paid advertising in a publication primarily devoted to promoting the views of a not-for-profit organization or to other bona fide editorial content distinct from the paid advertising; and
- d. other advertising expressly authorized by the Regents' *Rules and Regulations* or by contract with the University.

All other advertising in literature distributed on campus is prohibited

2.4.4 Clean-up of Abandoned Literature

Any person or organization distributing literature on campus shall pick up all copies dropped on the ground in the area where the literature was distributed.

2.5 Signs and Banners

2.5.1 General Rules on Signs

2.5.1.1 "Sign" means any method of displaying a visual message to others, except that transferring possession of a copy of the message is distribution of literature and not a sign.

2.5.1.2 Subject to the rules in this chapter and to the general rules in 2.2 and 2.3, a University person or organization may display a sign by holding or carrying it, by displaying it at a table (see 2.6 below), or by posting it on a kiosk, bulletin board, or other designated location. Signs may not be staked in the ground, attached to foliage, or posted in any other location.

2.5.2 Hand-Held Signs

2.5.2.1 Students, faculty, and staff may display a sign on campus by holding or carrying it by hand or otherwise attaching it to their person. Members of the public may display a sign in common outdoor areas of campus by holding or carrying it by hand or otherwise attaching it to their person. No advance permission is required. Signs on sticks or poles or otherwise attached to any device are prohibited.

2.5.2.2 Any person holding or carrying a sign shall exercise due care to avoid bumping, hitting, or injuring any other person.

2.5.2.3 Any person holding or carrying a sign at a speech, performance, or other event shall exercise due care to avoid blocking the view of any other person observing the speech, performance, or event. Depending on the venue, this may mean that signs may be displayed only around the perimeter of a room or an audience.

2.5.2.4 A law enforcement officer or the Dean of Students, or an usher or other University employee if authorized by officials responsible for managing the venue, may warn any person that his or her sign is being handled in violation of 2.5.2.2 or 2.5.2.3. If the violation persists after a clear warning, the law enforcement officer, Dean, authorized usher, or other authorized employee may confiscate the sign.

2.5.3 Banner

2.5.3.1 "Banner" means a sign hung from a structure, or between two buildings, structures, or poles.

2.5.3.2 The Dean of Students, with approval from the President of the University, shall designate places where banners may be hung by registered student organizations in outdoor locations.

2.5.3.3 Academic and administrative units, faculty, and staff organizations may hang banners as established in Section VIII - Chapter 7 (Banners) of this Handbook. Individuals may not hang banners.

2.5.3.4 Advance permission is required from the Dean of Students and usually, advance reservations are required. Academic and administrative units advertising official University events or programs may be given priority.

2.5.3.5 In locations administered by the Dean of Students, each banner may be hung for one week. The banner may be renewed from week to week if space is available, but usually, other organizations are waiting their turn and renewal is not possible. Any such time limit shall be applied without discrimination to all organizations, except that academic and administrative units may be given preference.

2.5.3.6 The Dean of Students shall maintain, on a Web site or on a flyer or pamphlet conveniently available at the Dean's office: a list of outdoor locations where banners may be hung; the academic or administrative unit that administers banners at each outdoor location; and a current description of the rules and procedures for reserving the right to hang a banner in locations administered by the Dean of Students.

2.5.3.7 The Dean of Students may require that the physical work of hanging the banners be performed only by employees of Facility Services or other appropriate University personnel. Actual costs will be charged to the organization or unit making the request.

2.5.4 A-Frames

2.5.4.1 "A-frame" means a movable and self-supporting sign board designed to stand on the ground.

2.5.4.2 A-frames are subject to the rules on exhibits in subchapter 2.7 below.

2.5.5 Signs in Other Designated Locations (Including Departmental Bulletin Boards)

2.5.5.1 Each academic or administrative unit of the University may authorize the posting of signs in spaces that unit occupies and controls. Such authorization may be granted by general rule, by stamping or initialing individual signs, or by longstanding tradition.

2.5.5.2 Signs in spaces occupied by academic or administrative units may be:

- a. confined to bulletin boards or other designated locations;
- b. subjected to viewpoint-neutral rules limiting the size of signs, limiting how long they may be posted, requiring each sign to show the date it was posted and the name of the person or organization who posted it, and similar rules designed to facilitate fair and equal opportunities to post signs;
- c. confined to official statements or business of the unit, or to certain subject matters of interest within the unit, or to signs posted by persons or organizations affiliated with the unit.

2.5.5.3 Each academic or administrative unit shall post on or near each bulletin board or other designated location that it administers:

- a. either the rules applicable to that bulletin board or location, or a particular office or Web site where the rules applicable to that bulletin board or location may conveniently be found; and
- b. if a stamp or initials are required on signs before they are posted on that bulletin board or location, the name and office location of the person whose stamp or initials are required.

This notice shall be posted in the upper left corner of each bulletin board or other designated location for posting signs, or conspicuously in another nearby location. If no such notice is posted, then the only applicable rules are those contained in subchapter 2.2 and 2.3.1 to 2.3.4 above.

2.5.5.4 Within the scope of the subject matters permitted on a particular bulletin board or other designated location, no academic or administrative unit shall discriminate on the basis of the political, religious, philosophical, ideological, or academic viewpoint expressed on a sign.

2.5.5.5 This section does not apply to any enclosed bulletin board or display case that is accessible only to authorized personnel for official University business.

2.6 Tables

2.6.1 General Rule on Tables

University persons or organizations may set up tables from which to display literature and disseminate information and opinions, subject to the rules in this subchapter and to the general rules in 2.2 and 2.3 above. No advance permission is required. Members of the public may not set up tables in the common outdoor areas or in the University's limited public forum areas.

2.6.2 Locations

2.6.2.1 University persons and organizations may set up tables in any outdoor location on the campus and in any large, open, indoor location subject to the rules on disruption of other functions and interference with vehicular and pedestrian traffic (see 2.3.1), and the following restrictions:

- a. tables set up in the Union Plaza must follow the policies listed under Section II-Chapter 3.5;
- b. tables may not be set up inside any library, classroom, laboratory, performance hall, stadium, or office, or in any hallway less than ten feet wide, without permission from the academic or administrative unit that controls the space, or from the faculty member or staff member who controls the space at a particular time;
- c. an academic or administrative unit may further specify these rules by restricting tables to reasonable locations in spaces occupied by that unit. Academic and administrative units are encouraged to clearly state any such rules in writing, and to publish those rules on a Web site or on a flyer or pamphlet conveniently available at the chief administrative office of the unit.

2.6.2.2 If any table is set up in a prohibited or disruptive location, any University employee pointing out the violation shall also point out other locations, as nearby as is reasonably possible, where the table is permitted.

2.6.3 Identification

Each table must have a sign or literature that identifies the University person or organization sponsoring the table.

2.6.4 Clean-Up Around Tables

Any person or organization sponsoring a table shall remove litter from the area around the table at the end of each day.

2.6.5 Sources of Tables

University persons and organizations may supply their own tables. In addition, the Dean of Students maintains a supply of tables that may be reserved and checked out for use on campus. The Dean of Students shall maintain, on a Web site or on a flyer or pamphlet conveniently available at the Dean's office, a current description of the rules and procedures for reserving and checking out tables.

2.7 Exhibits and A-Frames

2.7.1 General Rule on Exhibits

2.7.1.1 "Exhibit" means an object or collection of related objects, designed to stand on the ground or on a raised surface, that is not a table, and that is designed for temporary display and is not permanently attached to the ground. An A-frame sign (see 2.5.4) is an exhibit.

2.7.1.2 "A-frame exhibit" means a moveable and self-support sign board designed to stand on the ground and remain overnight in a temporary outdoor exhibit space. A-frame exhibits may not exceed five feet in height or width. Structures that do not meet this criteria will be considered general exhibits and will be subject to the general rules and conditions applicable to exhibits.

2.7.1.3 Academic or administrative units and registered students, faculty, or staff organizations may erect exhibits and A-frame exhibits, subject to the rules in this subchapter and to the general rules in 2.2 and 2.3. Advance permission is required from the Dean of Students, except that an academic unit may authorize indoor exhibits in a space that it occupies and controls. Members of the public may not erect exhibits or A-frame exhibits.

2.7.2 Application Process

An academic or administrative unit or a registered student, faculty, or staff organization desiring to display an outdoor general exhibit or A-frame exhibit shall apply on a form prescribed by the Dean of Students.

2.7.3 Criteria for Approval

2.7.3.1 The Dean of Students shall authorize an exhibit described in a completed application under 2.7.2 unless the Dean finds that use of the proposed space for the proposed exhibit must be denied under the criteria in Section II-Chapter 3.3.

2.7.3.2 The Dean shall specify the location of each exhibit to reduce the hazard to visually impaired pedestrians.

2.7.3.3 The Dean shall advise each applicant how to correct, if possible, any conditions that preclude approval of his or her application. Even if an applicant is entitled to have his or her application approved as submitted, the Dean may give advice about other possible locations, or about modifications to the exhibit, that would avoid potential problems or make the proposed exhibit more workable.

2.7.4 Time Limits

2.7.4.1 In locations administered by the Dean of Students, each exhibit or A-frame may be displayed for fourteen days. The exhibit or A-frame may be renewed for an additional fourteen days if space is available.

2.7.4.2 The exhibit must be removed at the end of each day and may be re-erected each morning. However, the Vice President for Student Affairs or the Dean of Students may authorize overnight exhibits.

2.7.5 Clean-Up Around Exhibits

Any academic or administrative unit or registered student, faculty, or staff organization sponsoring an exhibit or A-frame shall remove litter from the area around the exhibit or A-frame at the end of each day.

2.7.6 Liability

Any registered student, faculty, or staff organization sponsoring an exhibit assumes full responsibility for the exhibit, including all injuries or hazards that may arise from the exhibit. The University shall not be liable for any damage that may occur to the exhibit, and any person or organization sponsoring the exhibit shall indemnify the University for any claims arising from the exhibit's presence on campus.

2.8 Amplified Sound

2.8.1 General Rule on Amplified Sound

University persons and organizations and members of the public may use amplified sound on campus at designated times and locations, subject to the rules in this subchapter and to the general rules in 2.2 and 2.3. Advance permission is required. This subchapter creates limited exceptions to the general rule on disruption in 2.3.1.

2.8.2 Location and Times of Weekday Amplified Sound Areas

Upon reservation subject to availability, amplified sound may be used in the following areas during the times specified:

- a. The Leech Grove Amplified Sound Area is at the corner of University and Wiggins Rd. University persons and organizations may use amplified sound in this area from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- b. The Centennial Plaza Amplified Sound Area is the grass area west of the Union. University persons and organizations may use amplified sound in this area from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- c. The Geology Lawn Amplified Sound Area is the grass area facing east of the Geology Building. University persons and organizations may use amplified sound in this area from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- d. The UGLC Plaza Amplified Sound Area is located under the canopy on the UGLC Plaza. University persons and organizations may use amplified sound in this area from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

2.8.3 Regulation and Scheduling of Weekday Amplified Sound

The Dean of Students may prescribe rules concerning scheduling, sound levels, the location of speakers and direction in which they are pointed, and other rules to facilitate the use of weekday amplified sound areas, to mediate any conflict with University functions and other nearby activities, and to manage environmental impact. All such rules shall be reasonable and nondiscriminatory.

2.8.3.1 Persons or organizations wishing to use a weekday amplified sound area must reserve a particular area at a particular time. Reservations must be made with the Dean of Students on a form prescribed by the Dean. The Dean shall approve a properly completed application to reserve an amplified sound area, unless the application must be denied under the criteria in 2.8 or under rules promulgated by the Dean under the authority of this chapter.

2.8.3.2 The Dean of Students may limit the number or frequency of reservations for each person or organization to ensure reasonable access for all persons and organizations desiring to use amplified sound on weekdays.

2.8.3.3 Persons and organizations using amplified sound are responsible for maintaining a passageway for pedestrians that is adequate to the volume of pedestrian traffic passing through the area. Should the size of the assembly exceed the maximum number of participants that is safe for a given location, participants will be directed by campus authorities to relocate to a space that is better suited to the size of the assembly.

2.8.3.4 Any designations of additional areas, any additional rules regulating the designated areas, and the rules and procedures for reserving the right to use a designated area, shall be clearly stated on a Web site or on a flyer or pamphlet conveniently available at the Dean of Students' office.

2.8.3.5 When amplified sound areas are not reserved for use for an assembly including amplified sound, they are available for use, for permitted expressive activity, without reservation as part of the common outdoor areas. Any person or organization using or occupying the space without a

reservation must yield control of the space in time to permit any user with a reservation to begin using the space promptly at the beginning of its reserved time.

2.8.4 Amplified Sound on Evenings and Weekends

2.8.4.1 With advance permission, Persons and organizations may use amplified sound in the amplified sound areas designated in 2.8.2, after 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and after 8:00 a.m. Saturday and Sunday, except for the early morning hours excluded in 2.8.4.2 below.

2.8.4.2 If amplified sound is authorized for an event on a Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday evening, the sound must be turned off by 1:00 a.m. on the following day. If amplified sound is authorized for an event on a Friday or Saturday evening, the sound must be turned off by 2:00 a.m. on the following day.

2.8.4.3 The Dean of Students may prescribe reasonable and nondiscriminatory rules concerning scheduling, sound levels, the location of speakers and direction in which they are pointed, and other rules to facilitate the use of amplified sound on evenings and weekends, to mediate any conflict with University functions and other nearby activities, and to manage environmental impact.

2.8.4.4 Use of amplified sound on evenings and weekends requires advance permission from the Dean of Students. Persons and organizations shall apply on a form prescribed by the Dean. The Dean shall authorize amplified sound as described in a completed application unless the Dean finds that the application must be denied under the criteria in 2.8 or under rules promulgated by the Dean under the authority of this section. The Dean shall advise each applicant how to correct, if possible, any conditions that preclude approval of its application. Even if an applicant is entitled to have its application approved as submitted, the Dean may give advice about other possible locations, or about modifications to the proposed event, that would avoid potential problems or make the proposed event more workable.

2.8.5 Amplified Sound Indoors

Amplified sound sufficient to be heard throughout the room may be used in any room in any building, but the Dean of Students may limit or prohibit sound that would be disruptive outside the room.

Reservations may be required. Rules concerning use of University buildings are contained in Handbook Section II - Chapter 3.

2.9 Public Assemblies without Amplified Sound

2.9.1 General Rule on Public Assemblies

2.9.1.1 "Publicly assemble" and "public assembly" include any gathering of persons, including discussions, rallies, and demonstrations. The rules of 2.8 apply to any use of amplified sound at a public assembly.

2.9.1.2 Persons and organizations may publicly assemble on campus in any place where, at the time of the assembly, the persons assembling are permitted to be. This right to assemble is subject to the rules in this subchapter, to the general rules in 2.9.1.1 and 2.2 and 2.3, and to the rules on use of University property in Handbook Section II-Chapter 3. No advance permission is required.

2.9.2 Reservation of Space

2.9.2.1 University persons or organizations who wish to publicly assemble in a particular room or space at a particular time may reserve the room or space under the provisions in Section II – Chapter 3.3. Members of the public may take similar steps to reserve space in common outdoor areas.

2.9.2.2 An organization with a reservation has the right to the reserved room or space for the time covered by the reservation. Any person or organization using or occupying the room or space without a reservation must yield control of the room or space in time to permit any organization with a reservation to begin using the room or space promptly at the beginning of its reserved time.

2.9.2.3 Reservations are not required but are strongly encouraged. A person or organization planning to use a room or space without a reservation may find the facility locked or in use by another person or organization. The University Police rely on a list of scheduled events, and a large group without a reservation is likely to attract their courteous but inquiring attention.

2.9.3 Notice and Consultation

Persons or organizations who are planning a public assembly with more than fifty participants are strongly encouraged to notify and consult with the Dean of Students and are encouraged to provide advance notice of no less than two weeks to help the University improve the safety and success of the expressive activity. If there is uncertainty about applicable University rules, the appropriateness of the planned location, or possible conflict with other events, persons and organizations are encouraged to consult the Dean of Students. The Dean has much experience in helping student organizations structure events in ways that both comply with the University's rules and achieve the organization's goals for the event. The Dean can help identify appropriate space and potentially conflicting events. The Dean can help the planners avoid unintended disruption or other violations that may result in subsequent discipline or subsequent interference with the assembly by campus authorities.

Registered student, faculty, and staff organizations are afforded privileges not available to individual faculty, staff, and students. Individual persons and organizations may take steps to reserve space in common outdoor areas.

2.10 Guest Speakers

2.10.1 Definitions

"Guest speaker" means a speaker or performer who is not a student, faculty member, or staff member.

2.10.2 Who May Present

Registered student, faculty, and staff organizations, and academic and administrative units, may present guest speakers on University property. In the case of registered student organizations, advance permission from the Dean of Students is required.

2.10.3 Location and Form of Presentation

2.10.3.1 A guest speaker may present a speech or performance, or lead a discussion, at a time announced in advance, in a fixed indoor location, or in a fixed outdoor location approved by the Dean of Students. A guest speaker may distribute literature to persons who attend the speech, performance, or discussion. Student, faculty and staff organizations may not invite the public at large to events in University buildings or facilities.

2.10.3.2 A guest speaker may not:

- a. accost potential listeners who have not chosen to attend the speech, performance, or discussion; or
- b. distribute literature to persons who have not chosen to attend the speech, performance, or discussion; or
- c. help staff a table or exhibit set up under 2.6 or 2.7.

2.10.4 Application

A registered student organization that wishes to present a guest speaker shall apply to the Dean of Students, on a form prescribed by the Dean, at least two weeks prior to the scheduled event or any planned advertising for the event, whichever is earlier. The application shall be combined with an application under Section II-Chapter 3.3 to reserve the use of a University room or space for the event. The Dean shall approve an application properly made under subsection (a) unless it must be denied under the criteria in Section II-Chapter 3.3.

2.10.5 Obligations of Presenting Organization

A student, faculty, or staff organization that presents a guest speaker must make clear that:

- a. the organization, and not the University, invited the speaker; and
- b. the views expressed by the speaker are his or her own and do not necessarily represent the views of the University, the University of Texas System, or any component institution.

2.11 Responding to Speech, Expression, and Assembly

2.11.1 General Rule on Responding

Persons and organizations may respond to the speech, expression, or assembly of others, subject to all the rules in this chapter.

2.11.2 Applications

2.11.2.1 Responders may not damage or deface signs or exhibits, disrupt public assemblies, block the view of participants, or prevent speakers from being heard.

2.11.2.2 Means of response that are permitted in many locations and without advance permission or reservation, such as signs, tables, distribution of literature, and public assembly without amplified sound, may be used immediately and in any location authorized in this policy.

2.11.2.3 Means of response that require advance permission or reservation, such as banners, A-frames, exhibits, and amplified sound, may be used as soon as the needed permission or reservation may be arranged. Banner space and some amplified sound areas may be unavailable on short notice because of earlier reservations, but the Dean of Students shall expedite approval of A-frames, exhibits, and available banner space and amplified sound areas where necessary to permit appropriate response to other speech, assembly, or expression.

2.11.2.4 Means of response that are confined to authorized locations, such as banners and amplified sound, may be used only in those locations. It is not possible to respond to amplified sound with amplified sound in the same location; similarly if an exhibit or public assembly is in a location where amplified sound is not permitted, it is not possible to respond with amplified sound in that location. In either case, it is possible to respond with amplified sound in another location and to use signs or distribution of literature to advertise the response at the other location.

2.12 Enforcement and Appeals

2.12.1 Police Protection

2.12.1.1 It is the responsibility of the University to protect the safety of all persons on campus and to provide police protection for speakers, public assemblies, persons staffing or viewing exhibits, and other events. The normal patrolling of officers during regular duty in the area of such events will be at the cost of the University. When the magnitude, timing, or nature of an event requires overtime hours from police officers (including contract hours for officers hired from other departments or private security agencies), the University will, to the extent specified in 2.12.12 and 2.12.13, charge the cost of overtime or contract officers to the person or organization sponsoring the event or exhibit that requires overtime police protection. The purpose of 2.12.12 and 2.12.13 is to charge for police overtime where reasonably possible, but not to charge for police overtime made necessary by the content of speech at the event or by the controversy associated with any event.

2.12.1.2 A reasonable and nondiscriminatory fee for overtime police work will be charged for events that require overtime police protection, and charge a price for admission, or pay a speaker, band, or other off-campus person or organization for services at the event.

Persons or organizations planning such events should budget for the cost of police protection.

2.12.1.3 The University shall have the sole power to decide, after reasonable consultation with the person or organization planning the event, whether and to what extent overtime police protection is required. No fee shall be charged for officers assigned because of political, religious, philosophical, ideological, or academic controversy anticipated or actually experienced at the event. All fees shall be based on the number of officers required for an uncontroversial event of a similar size, type, location, time of day, and other similar considerations.

2.12.1.4 Nothing in this section applies to any interdepartmental charge or transfer among units or accounts funded by the University.

2.12.2 Response to Violations

2.12.2.1 A student who violates a prohibition in this chapter may be disciplined under the procedures in chapter 1.

2.12.2.2 A faculty member who violates a prohibition in this chapter may be disciplined under applicable procedures provided by other rules. If no such procedures exist, violations by faculty members shall be referred to the Office of the Provost.

2.12.2.3 A staff member who violates a prohibition in this chapter may be disciplined under applicable procedures provided by other rules. If no such procedures exist, violations by staff members shall be referred to Human Resource Services.

2.12.2.4 Authorized University personnel may prevent imminently threatened violations, or end ongoing violations, of a prohibition in this chapter, by explanation and persuasion, by reasonable physical intervention, by arrest of violators, or by any other lawful measures. Alternatively or additionally, they may initiate disciplinary proceedings under 2.12.2.1, 2.12.2.2, or 2.12.2.3. Discretion regarding the means and necessity of enforcement shall be vested in the chief of police, or in University personnel designated by the President, as appropriate, but such discretion shall be exercised without regard to the viewpoint of any speaker.

2.12.2.5 Persons and organizations on the campus shall comply with instructions from University administrators and law enforcement officials at the scene. A person or organization that complies with an on-the-scene order limiting speech, expression, or assembly may test the propriety of that order in an appeal under 2.12.3.

2.12.2.6 Members of the public or organization(s) on the campus who violate a prohibition of this Chapter may be subject to criminal trespass charges, arrest, or other lawful measures.

2.12.2.7 Individuals or organizations wishing to make a grievance regarding a violation of Texas Education Code § 51.9315 may report it by submitting a complaint at: <https://www.reportlineweb.com/Welcome.aspx?Client=utep> (<https://www.reportlineweb.com/Welcome.aspx?Client=utep>), or may report through the compliance helpline at 1-888-228-7713.

2.12.3 Appeals

2.12.3.1 A person or organization that is denied permission for an activity requiring advance permission under this chapter may submit a written appeal of the denial of permission to the Dean of Students.

2.12.3.2 A person or organization that complies with an on-the-scene order limiting speech, expression, or assembly may, on or before the fifth weekday after complying with the order, file an appeal in writing with the Dean of Students to determine the propriety of the order limiting the speech, expression, or assembly. The question on appeal shall be whether, under the circumstances as they reasonably appeared at the time of the order, the appellant's speech, expression, or assembly should have been permitted to continue. Such an appeal may be useful to clarify the meaning of a rule, or to resolve a factual dispute that may recur if the appellant desires to resume the speech, expression, or assembly that was limited by the order.

2.12.3.3 An appeal authorized by this section shall be heard under the procedures set out in Section II - Chapter 3.6.

2.12.3.4 Members of the public who wish to submit a complaint or report an incident or order which denied their right to engage in expressive activities in a common outdoor area of campus, may submit a complaint through the compliance reporting system at: <https://www.reportlineweb.com/Welcome.aspx?Client=utep>

(<https://www.reportlineweb.com/Welcome.aspx?Client=utep>), or may report through the compliance helpline at 1-888-228-7713. Anonymous complaints are available as an option for either reporting method.

SECTION 2: STUDENT AFFAIRS

Chapter 1: Student Conduct and Discipline ([student-conduct-and-discipline.html](#))

Chapter 2: Speech, Expression, and Assembly ([speech-expression-and-assembly.html](#))

Chapter 3: Use of University Facilities ([use-of-university-facilities.html](#))

Chapter 4: Regulations Relating to Student Organizations ([student-organizations.html](#))

Chapter 5: Student Media and Publications ([student-publications-policies.html](#))

Chapter 6: Educational Records ([educational-records.html](#))

Chapter 7: University Student Identification Card ([university-student-identification.html](#))

Chapter 8: Centralized Student Job Placement Policy ([centralized-student-job-placement-policy.html](#))

Chapter 9: Student Participation and Monitoring of Food Service Contractors ([student-participation-and-monitoring-of-food.html](#))

Chapter 10: Policy on Requirement for Vaccination Against Bacterial Meningitis For Entering Students ([policy-on-requirement-for-vaccination.html](#))

Chapter 11: Student Travel Policy for University Organized or Sponsored Events ([student-travel-policy-for-university-organized.html](#))

Chapter 12: Student Travel Policy for Registered Student Organizations ([student-travel-policy-for-registered.html](#))

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MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES ([HTTPS://WWW.UTEP.EDU/STUDENT-AFFAIRS/RESOURCES/MENTAL-HEALTH-RESOURCES-FOR-UTEP-STUDENTS.HTML](https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/resources/mental-health-resources-for-utep-students.html))

PUBLIC COURSE INFORMATION ([HTTPS://WWW.UTEP.EDU/RESOURCES/PUBLIC-COURSE-INFORMATION.HTML](https://www.utep.edu/resources/public-course-information.html))

REPORT FRAUD ([HTTP://SAO.FRAUD.STATE.TX.US/](http://sao.fraud.state.tx.us/))

REQUIRED LINKS ([HTTPS://WWW.UTEP.EDU/REQUIRED-LINKS/](https://www.utep.edu/required-links/))

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TEXAS VETERANS PORTAL ([HTTPS://VETERANS.PORTAL.TEXAS.GOV](https://veterans.portal.texas.gov))

TITLE IX REPORTING ([HTTPS://WWW.UTEP.EDU/TITLEIX/FILING-A-COMPLAINT.HTML](https://www.utep.edu/titleix/filing-a-complaint.html))

TITLE IX SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY ([HTTPS://WWW.UTEP.EDU/HOOP/SECTION-6/CH-3.HTML](https://www.utep.edu/hoop/section-6/ch-3.html))

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WEB PRIVACY POLICY ([HTTPS://WWW.UTEP.EDU/INFORMATION-RESOURCES/ISO/POLICIES/WEB-PRIVACY-POLICIES.HTML](https://www.utep.edu/information-resources/iso/policies/web-privacy-policies.html))

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