



Poster Policy

Policy Summary

The George Washington University (“GW” or “university”) encourages free expression and academic freedom, which are central principles to the mission of higher education and GW values. Students, faculty, staff, registered student organizations, and academic and administrative units may desire to display posters that promote an event, exhibit, or activity, recruit, or express an opinion. As such, this policy sets forth the criteria and responsibilities for the temporary display of posters on university-owned or leased property. The term “posters” for purposes of this policy includes but is not limited to banners, flags, sandwich boards, leaflets, and chalking. This policy does not include posters produced by the Office of Communications and Marketing, Events and Venues, or academic research posters. Additionally, the projection of words or images onto the interior or exterior surfaces of any university-owned or leased property to promote an event, exhibit, or activity, recruit, or express an opinion is not permitted. Projections onto surfaces are reserved for use by the university administration for marketing GW events and other special occasions as determined by the administration.

Who is Governed by this Policy

- This policy applies to all university faculty, postdocs, staff, students (student organizations and groups), academic or administrative units, and other individuals and entities including, but not limited to affiliates and visitors (collectively, “GW Community Members”).

Policy

Posters are displayed for multiple reasons such as promoting or marketing an activity, recruiting others with shared interests, or expressing an opinion. Posters may be displayed on GW-owned or leased property by students, faculty, staff, registered student organizations, and academic and administrative units. Students, faculty, and staff acting in their personal capacity unrelated to GW activities are prohibited from displaying posters. Non-university individuals, organizations, and groups, are

also prohibited from displaying posters on GW-owned or leased property unless sponsored by a recognized GW student organization, or academic or administrative unit. Content on posters reflects the views of the respective individual, organization, or unit and not the university.

GW-residential, recreational, academic, support, administrative, or leased buildings may have their own procedures for displaying posters, including posting locations. These procedures shall not conflict with this policy, or any other university policy, but may be more stringent and students, staff, faculty, recognized student organizations, and academic and administrative units interested in displaying posters in those spaces are responsible for obtaining and abiding by such procedures.

This policy establishes the following time, place, and manner parameters in the displaying of posters. GW staff responsible for building operations are authorized to remove posters that violate this policy immediately and without notice.

Time

Since there is limited space on campus to accommodate posters members of the university community may want to post, posters may only be displayed temporarily in order to facilitate varied participant engagement. All posters must include the date that the poster was first displayed. If advertising an event, exhibit, or activity with a designated date, the poster may be displayed at the earliest 15 days before the event and must be removed by the student, faculty, staff, recognized student organization, academic or administrative unit within two business days after the conclusion of the event, exhibit or activity. Posters not related to an event, exhibit, or activity must be removed by the student, staff, faculty, recognized student organization, academic, or administrative unit at the latest 17 days after the date the poster was first displayed. As stipulated above, the university's typical response to posters that violate this policy would be immediately removing them without notice but generally, GW staff responsible for building operations will remove posters on a routine basis in compliance with the stipulated time limitations and at the start of each month and at the conclusion of a semester.

Placement

The hanging of posters on exterior and interior locations on university-owned or leased property is restricted to Identified Display Areas.

Chalking on university or leased property may only be done on horizontal, concrete, granite, or asphalt surfaces where the rain will wash away the residue completely. There may be no promotion of an event, exhibit, activity, recruitment, or expression of opinion written on any organic surface (grass/soil).

Posters are prohibited in corridors (not including bulletin boards in corridors available for general use), common walls, entryway doors (excludes office doors and residential doors if all occupants in the room agree to the posting), windows (on windows or hanging out of windows), and stairwells and may not cover campus signage or wayfinding.

Glue, poles, stakes, ropes, cables, or permanent fixtures are prohibited to hang a poster unless authorized in writing by Facilities Planning, Construction, and Management. Pushpins can be used to hang a poster on a bulletin board and tape, preferably kinds that do not leave behind residue, should be used to hang all other posters. Students, faculty, staff, registered student organizations, and academic or administrative units will be responsible for any damage caused by their poster. Posting is limited to one poster on any allowed posting location and may not overlay other materials. Any banners must be mounted by Facilities Planning, Construction, and Management or their contracted vendor.

Manner

Posters are prohibited that display true threats, discrimination, harassment, intentional false advertising, invasion of privacy, or any other message that violates or encourages violation of law or GW policy. The name and contact information for the staff, faculty, staff member, or student organization, academic or administrative unit responsible for the poster is required on the poster and must be visible to the reader.

Posters may not be printed on orange paper, as this color is reserved exclusively for university emergency notices. Additionally, any and all uses of the GW name, wordmarks, logos, seal, and colors must comply with the University Licensing and Trademark Policy and the George Washington University Name, Logo, Seal, and Color Usage Policy. The following are the allotted size dimensions for printed materials:

- No larger than 8.5" by 11" for flyers (allotted size for bulletin boards)
- No larger than 11" by 17" for posters
- No larger than 24" by 36" for sandwich boards

- No larger than 36" by 72" for banners

While the university encourages and supports free expression and academic freedom, staff, faculty, students, recognized student organizations, and academic and administrative units are encouraged to consider the impact that their posters may have on the GW culture and the experience of their fellow GW community members.

Enforcement

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary or conduct action up to and including removal from the university community. Additional consequences include but are not limited to, denial of permission to display a poster or the removal of a poster.

As stipulated above, GW staff responsible for building operations will remove posters on a routine basis in compliance with the stipulated time limitations at the start of each month and at the conclusion of a semester. Any additional concerns of noncompliance with this policy may be submitted to the university's hotline reporting feature, [EthicsPoint](#).

The university does not have the authority to remove posters displayed on non-university-owned or leased property. Accordingly, should there be a concern related to the continued display of a poster on non-university-owned or leased property, complaints should be reported to the Department of Public Works (DPW) via the [hotline](#) or [online portal](#). While the university has no authority to remove the posters, the university reserves the right to take appropriate action with respect to students, faculty, or staff who are responsible for such posters to the extent that they violate other university policies.

Consistent with the [Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination, Anti-Harassment, and Non-Retaliation Policy](#), the university is committed to the equitable application of this policy and related procedures in a manner that does not discriminate based on the protected characteristics, such as age, color, disability, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital or familial status, national origin (including shared ancestry and ethnic characteristics), pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, and/or other characteristics protected by applicable law. In addition, university officials will apply this policy in a nondiscriminatory manner in making determinations under this policy, including but not limited to university conduct proceedings and/or arrests in response to violations of City ordinances and/or State or local law.

Related Information

[Code of Ethical Conduct](#)

[Demonstrations Policy](#)

[Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination, Anti-Harassment, and Non-Retaliation Policy](#)

[George Washington University Name, Logo, Seal, and Color Usage Policy](#)

[Student Organization Policies and Resources](#)

[University Licensing and Trademark Policy](#)

Contacts

Contact	Phone Number	Email Address
Division for Student Affairs	202-994-6555	students@gwu.edu
Campus Operations	202-994-6706	talktogw@gwu.edu

Responsible University Official(s): Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students and Associate Vice President of Campus Operations

Responsible Office(s): Division for Student Affairs and Campus Operations

Origination Date: December 1, 2023

Last Material Change: May 21, 2025

Last GW Community Comment Period: March 6, 2025 - April 18, 2025; see a thematic

summary of feedback [here](#).

Next Scheduled Review: Academic Year 2027-2028

To provide feedback on this policy, please contact the Responsible Office(s) listed above or the Office of Ethics, Compliance, and Risk. More information describing university policies is outlined in the [University Policy Principles](#).

Noncompliance with this policy can be [reported](#) through this website.

Office of Ethics, Compliance, and Risk

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