



Freedom of Expression

Freedom of Expression

Philosophy



Tulane University's purpose is to create, communicate, and conserve knowledge in order to enrich the capacity of individuals, organizations, and communities to think, to learn, to act, and to lead with integrity and wisdom. In service to this purpose, Tulane recognizes and commits to the essential role freedom of expression, thought, inquiry, speech, and lawful assembly serve in protecting and upholding our University purpose. From global, national, state, and local human rights to the values of our shared Tulane community, freedom of expression leads to collective evolution and the common good.

Freedom of expression is often the catalyst for change. Our ability to practice the free exchange of ideas – even when we disagree – and stay in the discussion is a hallmark of a quality education. Freedom of expression includes the ability to engage with each other through expression or to choose not to engage, but it does not provide a right to disrupt someone else's expression or to prohibit others from engaging. Disturbance becomes antithetical to freedom of expression when it disrupts the rights of others. Therefore, Tulane is committed to creating and sustaining an environment in which we welcome and practice the



Tulane Protocols are intended to protect freedom of expression, protest, and demonstration (Freedom to Demonstrate: Campus Demonstration Protocol), as well as promote the safety of all members and operations of the university community from disruption to learning, teaching, research, administrative procedures, and other activities (Freedom from Disruption: Campus Disruption Protocol). In order to create this environment, Tulane's framework explicitly restricts expression that is unlawful, defamatory, or threatening, and includes reasonable regulations of time, place, and manner of expression.

Community members who disrupt individuals' freedom of speech and/or the university's ability to carry out its mission will be held accountable as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and the Staff Handbook.

Protocols and Procedures

Tulane University Freedom to Demonstrate



Campus Demonstration Protocol

The following Campus Demonstration Protocol is intended to support and protect Tulane community members' freedom of expression, protest, and demonstration, while ensuring the safety of all members and operations of the university community from disruption to teaching, research, administrative procedures, and other activities.

Privileges and Responsibilities



property is reserved for Tulane students and associated
Recognized Student Organizations. Non-affiliates are not allowed
to have or participate in demonstrations or counter-
demonstrations on university-owned property.

- This privilege may not be passed onto or conferred to an unaffiliated group, organization, or individual. For example, students or Recognized Student Organizations, may not reserve a facility on behalf of, or for use by an outside/unaffiliated group, organization or individual. This conduct constitutes “fronting” and is prohibited. Students who engage in fronting may be subject to disciplinary action.
- Recognizing multiple personal, health, and religious reasons for wearing masks or face/head coverings, university administrators may request Splash Cards to confirm that attendees are Tulane community members. Per university Splash Card policy, university representatives may request to review the Splash Card of any individual on university property at any time. (Edited on March 25, 2025 for clarification.)
- Registering: Demonstrations may be registered during the fall and spring semesters, with the exception of university closures and the study and final examination periods. In order to provide space, safety, and support for demonstrations and demonstrators, events must be registered at least two business days prior to the proposed demonstration date via the **Demonstration Registration Form** on WaveSync. The earlier an event is registered, the more time we have to meet to support



- **Definition and Types of Demonstrations:** A demonstration is a coordinated act of individuals to initiate the explicit use of a space to draw attention to and express a point of view to others. Campus demonstrations include various activities including but not limited to: protests, art installations, vigils, on-campus marches, sit-ins or study-ins. (Definition and Types of Demonstrations was edited on November 14, 2024 for clarification of these protocols following events in the Howard Tilton Memorial Library.)
- **Locations:** Demonstrations are approved on the uptown and downtown campuses, permitting the activities do not interfere with a current reservation. Demonstration locations on the uptown campus include the Academic Quad, Berger Family Lawn, McAlister Plaza, and Pocket Park. Downtown demonstration locations will be determined with the organizer on a case-by-case basis.
- **Marches:** Marches may occur on campus and/or within the Tulane University Police Department perimeter patrol. On-campus marches must begin and end in registered campus demonstration locations.
 - Please note, if organizers desire to march on city streets, there is a City of New Orleans Special Permit Application required by the City at least 3 weeks in advance. NOPD parade fees are determined and agreed upon prior to the event taking place by the City of New Orleans, and the demonstration organizer is responsible for all NOPD



Sound: Amplified sound such as microphones, music, and bullhorns may be used for registered demonstrations as guided by the locations, dates, times, and decibel level outlined in the **University's Amplified Sound Policy**. The university has a microphone and speaker sound system for organizers of registered events to use if they wish.

- **Signs:** Placards, signs, and banners constructed from poster board or of other similar paper material are all allowable. Participants may not use placards constructed from material of a hard substance. RSOs and students may check availability for supplies to create and hang banners and signs in the Student Organization Center (SOC). Signs may be affixed by painter's tape or string and remain in place for the duration of the demonstration so long as they do not cause damage to University property and are removed and disposed of immediately after the demonstration or protest.
- **Care for Property:** Demonstration participants should take reasonable care to reduce damage to University property and to the property of others. At the conclusion of any demonstration, demonstration organizers are expected to make a reasonable effort to return the grounds/area to the condition it was in before the event. Property damage related to a demonstration may result in the assessment of fees for cleaning, repairs, and replacement of property to the organization and/or individuals responsible.
- **Freedom from Disruption:** In order to create and promote a university environment in which a variety of ideas can be freely



Protocol is aligned with our Freedom from Disruption Protocol, including but not limited to:

- Demonstration participants may not attempt to coerce, intimidate, or harass any other person into viewing, listening to, or accepting a copy of any communication. Demonstration participants may not obstruct or restrict the free movement of persons, including on sidewalks, roads, pathways, driveways, hallways, doorways, stairs, and exits from University facilities.
- Observers and/or Counter-Demonstrators shall not in-person or virtually disrupt, damage, shout down, block or suppress a protest or demonstrators' right to speak, or impede others' ability to listen/view the demonstration.
- If registered demonstrations or counterdemonstrations become disruptive, Assistant Vice President for Campus Life or their designee will approach and explain which activities are in violation of the guidelines and advise them on how to continue their demonstration/counter protest in a manner which is not disruptive.
- Counter-Demonstrations: Counter-demonstrators are permitted to be present and voice their perspective, but cannot disrupt the demonstration as outlined in the Freedom from Disruption Protocol.
- Care for Safety: A physical threat to persons and/or property may require immediate Tulane University Police response as well as



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- Tulane affiliates who disrupt individuals' freedom of speech, safety, and/or the university's ability to carry out its mission will be held accountable as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and the Staff Handbook.

Tulane University Freedom from Disruption



Freedom from Disruption

The following Campus Disruption Protocol is intended to protect both invited guests' and Tulane community members' freedom of expression, protest, and demonstration, in addition to protecting the safety and operations of the university community from disruption to teaching, research, administrative procedures, and other activities.

The Campus Disruption Protocol promotes and protects the free exchange of ideas through prohibiting the physical or virtual disruption, shouting down, blocking or suppressing a protest, demonstration, or invited speakers' right to speak; simultaneously, no one may attempt to coerce, intimidate, or harass any other person into viewing or listening to any communication.

Privileges and Responsibilities



University departments. As hosts, Tulane affiliates should follow all **Tulane Event Registration policies**.

- Invited speakers have the ability to express their message and Tulane affiliates have the privilege to receive it safely and without disruption that interferes in either's ability to deliver and/or receive the message.
 - Disruption is the process of physical or virtual shouting down, obstructing, suppressing, or impeding the speaker's ability to deliver their message and others' ability to listen;
 - The Tulane community should be able to view or listen to invited speakers without disruption;
 - Invited speakers should be able to perform or speak without disruption.
- Tulane affiliates must not be coerced, intimidated, or harassed into viewing, listening to, or accepting a copy of any communication in-person or online.
 - No one may attempt to coerce, intimidate, or harass any other person into viewing, listening to, or accepting a copy of any communication in-person or online.
- Tulane affiliates should have free movement on sidewalks, roads, pathways, driveways, hallways, doorways, stairs, and exits from University facilities.
 - No one may obstruct or restrict the free movement of persons on sidewalks, roads, pathways, driveways, hallways, doorways, stairs, and exits from University facilities.
- Unregistered counter demonstrations that emerge in reaction to a speaker or demonstration are allowed, however, with exception to registration, they must adhere to time, place, and manner



Examples of allowed disturbance versus not allowed
disruption include but are not limited to:

- Allowed:
 - Holding paper or poster board signs in front of one's body that do not block the view of others.
 - Asking questions during an invited Q&A session.
 - Wearing clothing with words or images on it, unless those words or images are themselves unprotected speech.
 - Symbolic and/or silent acts such as kneeling or turning away.
 - Holding a counter-demonstration in an approved location that does not disrupt the protested event.
 - Distribution of literature in an approved location separate from the protested event.
- Not Allowed:
 - Deliberately blocking the audience's view of the speaker or presenter.
 - In-person or virtual shouting down or producing noise with the intent to prevent the speaker or presenter from being heard.
 - Intentional distraction through use of alarms, phones, lights, pointers, etc.
 - Zoom bombing or using online, virtual resources to distract or shut down event



demonstration.

- Creating in-person or virtual barriers to entry or access to the event.
- Destructive or disorderly conduct.
- Inciting violence, intimidating, or threatening others.
- Care for Safety: an immediate physical threat to persons and/or property may require immediate Tulane University Police response, as well as situations in which a warning may not provide adequate protection for persons or property.
- Tulane affiliates who disrupt individuals' freedom of speech and/or the university's ability to carry out its mission will be held accountable as specifically outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and the Staff Handbook.

University Response Team



University Response Team

The University Response Team (URT) is a cross-campus university team of faculty and staff who recognize and embrace the importance and complexity of upholding Tulane's Freedom of Expression Philosophy, Protocols, and Procedures. As part of this team, they uphold Tulane's commitment to Freedom of Expression across the diversity of views within our Tulane community.

Specifically, URT members educate and uphold, with content neutrality, the university's Freedom of Expression Philosophy, Protocols, and Procedures through campus-wide educational programming as well as attendance at: demonstrations, protests, invited campus lectures, and university programs. Members of the URT receive training and support



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Student Affairs Assistant Vice President for Campus Life and Executive Director of the LBC, Leadership, & Engagement. In addition to regularly scheduled training and development meetings, URT members gather after events to debrief and process in order to gain learnings and evolve processes as needed.

The URT is the response team for registered and/or lawful assemblies. Unlawful assemblies or when a registered/lawful assembly shifts in scope to unlawful, the URT is deactivated. University community members may request the presence of the URT at their events and programs if needed.

Demonstration Registration Form



Demonstration Registration Form



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**Hours of Operation
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