

Expressive Activity Policy

G5.02 Expressive Activity Policy

Missouri State University is committed to providing an environment where issues can be openly discussed and explored. The freedom to exchange views is essential to the mission of the university. This policy is in place to provide a community environment in which open discussion can occur without disrupting the academic mission or daily university functions, subject to constitutional time, place, and manner limitations and without unconstitutionally interfering with the rights of others.

All individuals may exercise the right of assembly, free speech, and expression throughout the outdoor areas of campus, when doing so does not disrupt the academic mission or daily university functions, and is consistent with university policy regarding time, place, and manner limitations. Expressive activities will not be limited to any specific outdoor areas on the university campus. However, the right of assembly and expression does not include unlawful activity that endangers the safety of the campus community or that destroys university property. Expressive activities are not to unduly disrupt traffic, either vehicular or pedestrian, or violate other time, place, and manner parameters specified in this policy.

The following three locations on campus are most appropriate for outdoor forums, rallies, demonstrations and other similar activities:

1. The Bear Paw, located in the North Mall
2. Trottier Plaza, located at the northwest entrance to Robert W. Plaster Stadium
3. Strong Hall Amphitheater, located outside the east entrance to Strong Hall

Individuals are not restricted to these outdoor locations for expressive activities. Priority to use the aforementioned locations will be as follows:

1. Members of the university community with a reservation
2. Other individuals or groups with a reservation
3. Members of the university community without a reservation on a first come, first serve basis
4. Other individuals or groups without a reservation on a first come, first serve basis

Any member of the university community may reserve one of these locations through the [Event and Meeting Services Office \(/Conferences/default.htm\)](#) (417-836-5653). All other individuals or groups may reserve one of these locations by registering with the [Office of University Safety \(/Safety/default.htm\)](#) (417-836-5509). The university encourages everyone to coordinate with the Office of University Safety before conducting expressive activity on campus so appropriate arrangements can be made.

Amplification shall be limited to activities held at the Bear Paw and will be permitted only for individuals or groups who have reserved the Bear Paw. Amplification levels must not unreasonably interfere with the university's daily operations, and shall not be permitted during the university's final examination periods.

Time, place and manner parameters

This policy will be construed and applied on a content neutral basis. The following is a list of parameters for the time, place, and manner of activities that apply to all expressive activities on campus:

- The activity may not violate local ordinances or state or federal laws.
- The activity may not unduly disrupt traffic, either vehicular or pedestrian, or interfere with the ingress or egress to or from any building.
- The activity may not create unreasonable safety risks.
- Participants in the activity must not carry or bring to the activity the following items: weapons of any kind (including but not limited to those defined in Missouri Revised Statute § 571.010), ammunition, explosives, body armor, helmets, mace/pepper spray, masks, vehicles (including but not limited to motorcycles, automobiles, all-terrain vehicles, golf carts and bicycles), torches, and any other item identified by the university as increasing the risk of injury to event attendees and the campus community, including without limitation, any item identified in [Op1.01-1 University Rules for Speakers and Facilities Usage](#).
- The activity may not deface or destroy, or create an unreasonable risk of defacing or destroying, university or other property.
- Noise levels are not to interfere with classes, meetings, campus events or operations and activities on campus. Amplification equipment shall be limited to activity held at the *Bear Paw* with a reservation. Moreover, amplification shall not be permitted during the university's final examination periods.
- No event may exceed 8 hours in length in a 24 hour day.
- The location will be left in its original condition at the conclusion of the event, and reasonable charges or deposits may be imposed to enforce this requirement.
- Expression that is obscene, defamatory, or consists of fighting words, threats of physical harm, incites imminent lawless action, or is otherwise not entitled to protection as expression is not permitted.

Generally, indoor university spaces are not appropriate for forums, rallies, demonstrations, or similar activities; however, such activities may be permitted inside university facilities (excluding university residence halls and apartments, Greenwood Laboratory School, and university's entertainment and athletic facilities) to the extent that such activities:

- Are silent demonstrations (e.g., "sit-ins")
- Do not interfere with the reasonable operations of the specific indoor space
- Comply with campus instruction
- Do not extend beyond the business hours of the university's indoor space, or
- Do not otherwise violate any policy of the university, including this Expressive Activity Policy.

Objections to expressive activities

The university recognizes that individuals or groups may be opposed to certain expressive activities or speakers. Disagreement with different opinions is acceptable; however, use of violence or violation of law or university policy is counter to creating an environment where issues can be openly discussed. An individual or group wishing to protest an event is subject to the same standards as the presenters.

Individuals who choose to listen bear the responsibility of recognizing and honoring the right of free speech.

Response to violations

Violations of this policy may result in removal from campus, police arrest, and/or criminal charges. Members of the university community are subject to judicial review and disciplinary sanctions. Students will be subject to procedures established in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Faculty and staff disciplinary procedures will be processed according to guidelines established in the Faculty Handbook and the Employee Handbook. Any police arrest and criminal charges of students, faculty, or staff are separate from university judicial review or disciplinary sanction.

Related policies

All commercial expressive activities will be subject to the restrictions found in this policy and the restrictions found in the [Commercial Advertising, Sales, Solicitation and Facilities Usage Policy](/Policy/Chapter1/Op1_01-commercial-advertising-sales-solicitation-facilities-usage-policy.htm) (/Policy/Chapter1/Op1_01-commercial-advertising-sales-solicitation-facilities-usage-policy.htm).

Line of authority

Responsible administrator and office: President

Contact person in that office: Chief of Staff and Assistant to the President for Governmental Relations


Effective date

Approved by Board of Governors: October 27, 2017




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https://www.missouristate.edu/Policy/Chapter5/G5_02_ExpressiveActivity.htm