



WINSTON-SALEM
STATE UNIVERSITY

REGULATION ON OUTDOOR ASSEMBLIES AND CAMPING

I. Executive Summary

Freedom of speech is one of the most cherished traditions of the academic community. A community of scholars cannot pursue truth without the ability to orate about or publish critical information. One of the most important responsibilities of Winston-Salem State University is to protect the right of expression in a manner that does not infringe upon the rights of others to pursue their studies or work while adhering to guidelines established by the institution's governing bodies. In guaranteeing free speech, the administration's obligation is to provide reasonable regulations of time, place, and manner, so that disruption of normal educational activities is avoided.

II. Definitions

University Group - an administrative or academic unit within the University, staffed by State employees acting within the scope of their employment.

Student Group - a group that has been accepted by the Office of Student Activities as a "registered student group" under the rules of that office.

Non-University Group(s) - groups other than Student Groups that are legally separated entities from the University, even though some of the members or participants may be University personnel, alumni, or students. The term "Non-University Group" may also refer to an individual.

Peaceful Assembly is the use of university facilities for assembly, rally, or demonstration not involving conduct that would violate the law or policies of the University.

Camping is defined using the terms found in UNC System Policy 700.4.4 - Policy on Campus Gatherings & Related Student Conduct Matters.

III. Regulation Statement

The university encourages assemblies and public addresses by members of the University community (faculty, staff, and students), affiliated student organizations, and affiliated persons or groups at designated "public forum" locations including the Thompson Center Breezeway, the Clock Tower, or other publicly available, outdoor areas of the campus.

Assemblies and public addresses may also be held by non-university persons or groups invited in writing by affiliated student organizations or the University at these designated areas in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Unit Standard on Outdoor Assemblies and Camping related to prior notice and approval.

Expressive Activity

In the "public forum" areas that have been open to public speech by tradition or administrative approval, permission may be contingent upon reasonable time, place, or manner limits, inasmuch as these events are peaceful assemblies and not considered material and substantial disruption per [UNC Policy 1300.8](#) – Policy on Free Speech and Free Expression Within the University of North Carolina System. However, WSSU may not create restrictions based on the lawful content of the speech or material.

University officials reserve the right immediately to terminate any use of University facilities if, in the judgment of those officials, continuation of such use will result in (a) danger to participants or others; (b) unlawful conduct by participants or other; or (c) interference with, disruption or disturbance of the University's educational mission, operations, business, or functions.

Unless sponsored by the University, assemblies and public addresses will not be allowed inside areas or facilities that have not traditionally been open for public speech.

Camping

Actions that constitute "camping" as defined in [UNC System Policy 700.4.4](#) – Policy on Campus Gatherings & Related Student Conduct Matters may be permitted only under the following special circumstances: (a) when expressly authorized by the leader of the Regulation Responsible Division and Unit Standard Approving Authority or (b) in an emergency situation such as times of natural disaster, when approved in writing in advance by the chancellor or the chancellor's designee.

Exclusions

Nothing in this regulation shall prohibit the University from barring solicitation, handouts, assemblies, or public addresses in campus areas that are not public forums or that are otherwise commercial in nature. Areas not traditionally open to the public for speech, such as office space, residence halls, and classrooms, may be limited to University use.

IV. Applicability

This regulation applies to assemblies, public addresses and camping on WSSU Property by faculty, staff, and students, affiliated student organizations, affiliated persons or groups, and unaffiliated persons or groups invited in writing by affiliated student organizations or university units, including those defined as a University Group, a Student Group, and Non-University Groups. The University wishes to be accessible to the public.

At the same time, limitations on activities on University property are necessary so that the University may fulfill its primary missions of teaching, research, and extension while preserving the safety and security of the campus community. The campus shall not be deemed accessible to the public outside of normal hours of operation and/or when not otherwise generally accessible.

V. Roles & Responsibilities

The Director of External Relations is the University's designated "Responsible Officer," charged with ensuring compliance with the University's free speech and expression policies and answering any related questions or concerns, per UNC System Policy 1300.8.

The Chief Operating Officer is the leader of the Responsible Division tasked with putting the provisions of this Regulation and the corresponding Unit Standard into action and overseeing the day-to-day operations of the campus to promote overall safety and security.

VI. Compliance

Students, faculty, or staff who "materially and substantially disrupts" the functioning of the University, or any unit or entity of the University, or who "substantially interferes" with the protected free expression of others, will be considered to have engaged in misconduct and will be subject to the full range of disciplinary sanctions in accordance with applicable procedures consistent with UNC Policy 1300.8, and may face criminal charges under state law. Visitors who engage in such misconduct may be barred from campus and may face criminal charges under state and/or local law.

Responsible Division: Finance & Administration

History: Adopted December 14, 2007

Revised from Free Speech Zone March 28, 2008

Amended: March 25, 2024

Amended: March 12, 2026

Related Resources: UNC System Policy 700.4.4 (Policy on Campus Gatherings & Related Student Conduct Matters)

UNC System Policy 1300.8 (Free Speech and Free Expression)