

Auburn University Expression and Demonstration Policy

Responsible Office: Division of Student Affairs

I. POLICY STATEMENT

Auburn University recognizes and supports the university as a marketplace of ideas. The primary function of a university is to discover and disseminate knowledge by means of research and teaching. Auburn University supports the right of students, employees, and visitors to speak in public and to demonstrate for or against actions and opinions with which they agree or disagree. Freedom of expression is vital to the shared goal of the pursuit of knowledge. Such freedom comes with a responsibility to welcome and promote this freedom for all, even in disagreement or opposition. In doing so, however, students, employees, and visitors must comply with this policy and others found here: <http://www.auburn.edu/policies>.

II. POLICY PRINCIPLES:

A. General Guidelines

Auburn University is committed to providing an educational environment that is conducive to the development of each individual. As a public institution, the university provides formal and informal forums for the expression of ideas and opinions as long as it is done within the context of university policies and does not impede pedestrian and/or vehicular traffic, disturb or interfere with normal academic, administrative or student activities, or involve coercive behavior.

B. Formal Forum Area: Open Air Forum

To facilitate robust debate and the free exchange of ideas, the university has established a high visibility area on campus as an “Open Air Forum.” This area may be used by any person, including non-students and other campus guests. This use may be without prior permission from the university so long as:

- The area has not been previously reserved or scheduled for a particular function.
- No sound amplification is used.
- Participants do not violate university policies.
- Guidelines outlined in Section II.A. are followed.

The Open Air Forums are located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Mell Street and Roosevelt Drive and at the northeast corner of the intersection of South Donahue Drive and the West Thach Concourse.

Although it is not necessary for a person using the designated Open Air Forum to obtain prior permission from the university, such persons are encouraged to contact the Student Center Reservations Office for scheduling purposes to minimize possible conflicts. That Office may be reached at: 334-844-1320 during the hours of 7:45 a.m. until 4:45 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Nothing in this section shall be interpreted as limiting the right of a student's free expression elsewhere on campus so long as the expressive activities or related conduct do not violate any other applicable university policies. A complete listing of policies can be found here: www.auburn.edu/policies.

C. Guidelines for Organized Student Demonstrations

A student's right of freedom of expression at the university includes organized demonstrations or events. At the same time, the university has long recognized that this right does not include the right to engage in conduct that disrupts the university's operations or endangers the safety of others. Accordingly, the university requires any student or student organization planning a large-scale event to and contact Division of Student Affairs Reservations in advance of the activity. Large-scale events are defined as events that include invited speakers, use of amplified sound, marches, parades and other events such as protests and demonstrations that are expected to attract 50 or more people. The form can be found here: http://www.auburn.edu/communications_marketing/events/. A representative of the Campus Events committee will work with the requesting person to either meet the request or find a suitable time and location.

The purpose of this policy is to promote and facilitate free expression while allowing the university to ensure such activities do not interfere with the university's mission and operations or with the rights of others. The university may require the requesting party to provide a parade route, hire security, ensure egress to facilities, or take other steps to maintain the safety of campus. All participants must follow university policies as well as the guidelines outlined in Section II.A.

If an outside group or individual wishes to conduct an organized demonstration or to demonstration in an area other than the Open Air Forum, the group should seek the sponsorship of a Registered Student Organization.

III. EFFECTIVE DATE

September 2017

IV. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all students, staff, faculty, and visitors of Auburn University.

V. POLICY MANAGEMENT

Responsible Office: Division of Student Affairs

Responsible Executive: Vice President for Student Affairs

Responsible Officer: Director of Student Conduct for activities involving Auburn University students;

Director of Student Center for activities involving non-Auburn
University students

VI. DEFINITIONS

Coercion is an attempt to intimidate or badger a person into viewing, listening to, or accepting a copy of communication; persistently requesting or demanding the attention of a person after that person has attempted to walk away or has clearly refused to attend to the speaker's communication.

Demonstration is any process of showing individual or group cause by speech, example, group action or other form of public explanation.

Debate is a discussion involving opposite viewpoints in which opposing sides of an issue are advocated and/or presented by differing speakers.

Expression is the presentation of ideas.

Open Air Forum is a designated area on campus (two locations: at the northeast corner of the intersection of Mell Street and Roosevelt Drive and at the northeast corner of South Donahue Drive and West Thach Concourse) not confined by walls or a roof. Within this designated area, individuals or groups are encouraged to openly discuss, express, and/or exchange ideas on topics in accordance with university policies.

VII. POLICY PROCEDURES

See policy principles above.

VIII. SANCTIONS AND ENFORCEMENT

Campus visitors and all other non-students violating university policies including those contained in this document will be subject to immediate removal from the campus grounds, without prior warning, by appropriate university agents or officials and may be subject to appropriate legal action.

Auburn University students and/or student organizations violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action by the Office of Student Conduct.

IX. EXCLUSIONS

Not applicable.

X. INTERPRETATION

These regulations shall be interpreted, administered and enforced by the Vice President for Student Affairs.

