



Northwestern University

Responsible University Officials: Executive Vice President; Provost; Vice President for Student Affairs; Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer
Responsible Office: Office of the Provost; Office of Human Resources; Dean of Students Office
Origination Date: Prior to 1980

University Disruption and Demonstration Policy

Policy Statement

This policy addresses the parameters for free expression and peaceful demonstration by members of the Northwestern University community.

Reason for Policy/Purpose

Northwestern University supports freedom of speech, freedom of inquiry, freedom of dissent, and freedom to demonstrate in a peaceful fashion. University community members have a corresponding responsibility to welcome and promote this freedom for all, even in disagreement or opposition. University community members also share a responsibility to maintain an atmosphere conducive to scholarly, creative, and educational pursuits; to preserve the dignity and seriousness of University ceremonies; and to respect the rights of all individuals. In order to promote these interests and to ensure the safe and effective operation of University business, this Policy describes the parameters University community members must adhere to when engaging in free expression and peaceful demonstration.

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Who Approved This Policy

Executive Vice President; Provost; Vice President for Student Affairs; Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer

Who Needs to Know This Policy

All members of the University community, including faculty, students, and staff.

Website Address for This Policy

<http://policies.northwestern.edu/docs/university-disruption-and-demonstration-policy-final-012717.pdf>

Contacts

If you have any questions about this policy, you may contact:

1. For faculty issues: Associate Provost for Faculty, Lindsay Chase-Lansdale, at (847) 491-7040 or assoc-prov-faculty@northwestern.edu
2. For student issues: Dean of Students at (847) 491-8430 or dos@northwestern.edu
3. For staff issues: Associate Vice President, Human Resources, Dana Bradley, at (847) 467-5629 or dana.bradley@northwestern.edu

If you have any questions about arranging police presence or security for an event, you may contact Assistant Vice President and Deputy Chief of Police, Gloria S. Graham, at (847) 467-5376.

If you have any questions about media presence at an event, you may contact Storer (Bob) Rowley, Director of Media Relations, University Relations, at (847) 491-4889.

Definitions

Disruption and demonstration:

For purposes of this Policy, disruption and demonstration refers to engaging in assemblies, demonstrations, picketing, protests, counter-protests, sit-ins, or any other exercise of free expression on or near the University campus.

Policy/Procedures

To allow for freedom of expression and peaceful demonstration on campus while also respecting the University's operations, the following guidelines for **disruption** and **demonstration** are in place:

- No member of the University community may cause or allow to continue any loud, unnecessary, or unusual noise that disturbs the peace of others, including violations of residence hall quiet hours or Evanston noise ordinances.

- No member of the University community may deprive others of peace, comfort, or participation in a University activity; threaten use of force against any community member; or otherwise interfere with the function of others within the University.
- No member of the University community may disrupt (i) the regularly scheduled activities of the University, such as classes, research, learning, meetings, interviews, ceremonies, emergency services, or University business; (ii) co-curricular activities; or (iii) University or public events. Similarly, no member of the University community may use or occupy campus facilities so as to impede the carrying forward of such activities or events.
- Unless authorized by the University, no member of the University community may obstruct movement around the campus, including but not limited to the entrance to or egress from any campus building, facility, University street, or pathway.
- All events are subject to the requirements and limitations of the event's location, including [room occupancy](#). All events must comply with applicable [building safety codes](#).
- Placards, banners, and signs are usually allowed. However, if they obstruct the view of those assembled or if a University official finds these items to be endangering other members of the community, the carrier of the item will be asked to relocate or remove their item.
- While the University recognizes the right to voluntary assembly, members of the University community must recognize that pickets, demonstrations, mass assemblies, and protests shall be confined to campus areas. Private property adjacent to University campuses (e.g. Medical Center facilities, Northwestern Memorial Hospital, residential property, etc.) is not appropriate for such activities and may be subject to other restrictions by third parties and/or police.

Furthermore, all members of the University community have an obligation to leave a University location when instructed to do so by a University officer or designee and/or University Police. Students and other members of the University community have an obligation to identify themselves when requested by a University officer or designee and/or University Police in connection with enforcing the guidelines above.

Consequences of Violations of this Policy

If any faculty, staff or student of Northwestern violates the terms of this Policy, such individual may be subject to disciplinary action. In addition, violations of law or city ordinances may result in legal action or criminal proceedings.

Event Registration and Oversight

Students must follow [procedures](#) in the Student Code of Conduct to register a demonstration, protest, or similar event, and must ensure participants adhere to the Student Code of Conduct when conducting such events.

Members of the University community must follow applicable guidelines for seeking permission to utilize University space to conduct demonstrations, protests, or similar events. All outdoor

events/activities are subject to the requirements outlined in Northwestern's [Outdoor Event Request Portal](#).

Members of the University community planning an event may need to request police presence or security, especially if there is a possibility of protest or dissent. University Police can assist with security planning; [special event security](#) requires advance notice.

Members of the University community planning to invite media other than Northwestern student media to cover an event should contact [University Relations](#) in advance of the event. Since the Northwestern campus is private property, external media are not allowed on campus without an invitation.

Counter-protest

A protest, demonstration, or event on campus may cause further dissent resulting in a counter-protest. When such an occasion arises, it is the responsibility of the University as well as all involved to allow for freedom of expression from all individuals. A separate protest area may be designated by a University officer or designee. In order to ensure the safety of all participants, University Police may require the attendance of one or more officers. University Police presence at events is aimed at ensuring the safety and security of all participants, including those exercising their right to protest and dissent.

Forms/Instructions

Appendices

Related Information

[Student Code of Conduct](#)

[Northwestern Outdoor Event Request Portal](#)

[University Police Special Event Security Request](#)

History/Revision Dates

Origination Date: Prior to 1980

Last Amended Date: January 27, 2017

Next Review Date: January 27, 2020