



## **Freedom of Expression**

### **I. Introduction**

In the event that any information contained within this policy conflicts with any Board of Regents (BOR) policy, the BOR policy controls.

### **II. Policy**

The rights guaranteed by the First Amendment, including the right to free speech, free expression, free exercise of religion, and the right to assemble peaceably are of the utmost importance, and the University System of Georgia (USG) is committed to protecting those rights.

As public institutions of higher education, USG institutions must promote open ideas and academic freedom on their campuses. To that end, the unrestricted outdoor areas of institutions are deemed public forums for the campus community of each institution. For purposes of this policy, the campus community means students, faculty, staff, and their invited guests. While institutions may need to enact policies to promote campus safety, to ensure the proper functioning of the academic environment and institution activities, or to further other important institution objectives, those policies should not unduly burden the free expression rights of students, faculty, and staff.

Institutions may maintain and enforce reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions narrowly tailored to serve a significant institutional interest. Such restrictions must employ clear, published, content- and viewpoint-neutral criteria, and provide for ample alternative means of expression. Finally, any such restrictions may include reservation requirements, if needed, but must also allow for members of the campus community to spontaneously and contemporaneously assemble or distribute literature.

Institutions can designate accessible, high-traffic locations on campus as public forum areas for individuals or groups who are not members of the campus community and can require these individuals or groups to comply with reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions, including reservation requirements. Institutions may not consider the content or viewpoint of expression when requiring or assigning use of public forum areas.

USG institutions must place their student free expression policies and procedures in the student handbook and make the same publicly available online. These policies and procedures must also be incorporated into student orientation programs. Finally, institutions must develop materials, programs, and procedures to ensure that faculty and staff understand the institutional policies and duties regarding free expression on campus.

### **III. Exceptions**

None unless otherwise officially directed.

#### **IV.     Applicability**

ASU Campus Community  
ASU Faculty and Staff  
ASU Students

#### **V.     Accountability**

Albany State University Legal Affairs

#### **VI.     Contacts**

Albany State University Chief Legal Affairs Officer

#### **Last Update**

July 1, 2022