

SEWANEE

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH
Peaceful Assembly Policy

I. Purpose and Values

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for peaceful and respectful exercise of freedom of expression and assembly on The University of the South's property, while minimizing disruptions to the normal activities of the University and maintaining the safety of all individuals involved.

B. Values

The University of the South is deeply committed to fostering a culture of academic freedom and free expression. As a community that values openness and inclusivity, we recognize that freedom of expression can manifest in various forms, including peaceful assemblies. We affirm that such expressions are a vital part of the rich tapestry of our campus life, and we strive to create an environment that respects and supports diverse perspectives and opinions of all members of our Sewanee community.

We are committed to upholding the principles of free expression and free speech. As such, students, faculty, and staff are afforded the freedom to express their opinions both publicly and privately, and to engage in expressive activities in support of their chosen causes, as long as these activities do not disrupt the normal functioning of the institution.

II. Scope and Application

This policy applies to all students, faculty, and staff of The University of the South who wish to engage in peaceful assembly on University property or at University sponsored events.

III. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, an assembly is defined as the action of gathering together as a group for the common purpose of public expression or demonstration of opinion, including, but not limited to:

- Public demonstrations, protest, rallies, sit-ins, or other forms of collective gathering
- Marches or processions
- Picketing University buildings and facilities

IV. Policy

Students and community members have the right to peacefully assemble on campus, provided that their actions do not cause harm to others or compromise their health and safety. However, any person who engages in disorderly conduct will be held accountable for their actions, including but not limited to preventing full access and egress to institutional facilities, interrupting classes and events, damaging property, or disrupting other institutional operations.

In cases where expressive activities become disorderly or pose a threat to safety, the University reserves the right to contact the Sewanee Police Department to assess, resolve or disperse a disorderly, disruptive, threatening or dangerous assembly.

V. Procedures

A. Notification

Students wishing to organize a peaceful assembly must provide written notice to the University's Office of Student Involvement at least 72 hours in advance as well as reserve space on the Event Management System. Faculty and staff members must provide written notification to the Office of the Provost.

- The name of the persons and organization (where applicable) submitting the notice
- The purpose and scope of the peaceful assembly
- The date, time, and location of the peaceful assembly
- The expected number of participants
- A list of any planned activities, such as speeches, performances, and/or distributions.

The University recognizes that some peaceful assemblies arise in response to events of the day and do not allow for a 72 hour notification and reservation of areas through the Event Management System. In those instances, the organizers, if any, of the peaceful assembly should contact by email or phone the University's Office of Student Involvement or the Office of the Provost and the Sewanee Police Department to notify them of plans for the peaceful assembly. Organizers and participants at peaceful assemblies that occur without notification are expected to follow guidelines related to permitted and prohibited zones, and the University reserves the right to adjust plans for peaceful assembly as needed to ensure the normal operation of the University.

B. Review and Approval

The University will review each notification to ensure that the proposed protest does not interfere with University operations, disrupt normal activities, or pose a threat to safety. This also provides the University with the opportunity to provide appropriate assistance or measures to ensure that participants are able to gather safely. The University reserves the right to approve, deny, or modify the peaceful assembly plan if necessary. Approval of a peaceful assembly plan does not

imply the University's agreement with, endorsement of, or support for the ideas presented at the assembly. The University does not condone expression that is obscene, indecent, or grossly offensive and will act as it deems necessary to promote further education.

C. Designated Zones

In an effort to maintain a conducive environment for learning and to respect the ongoing operations of the University, peaceful assemblies are permitted within and prohibited from designated zones.

1. Permitted Zones: Peaceful assemblies are permitted in designated zones that are a distance of 20 feet or more from University buildings. Peaceful assemblies that persist for more than 24 hours shall be confined to either: the quadrangle in the area of Spencer and duPont Library or the space in front of Gailor Hall between McClurg Dining Hall and Snowden Hall.

2. Prohibited Zones: Any location that is less than 20 feet from University buildings or interferes with emergency services access, which includes, but is not limited to stairwells, roofs, and roads.

D. Other Policies

Organizers of a peaceful assembly must comply with all other applicable University policies including, but not limited to, Posting Policy, External Speaker Policy, Code of Conduct and Staff Handbook.

VI. Consequences for Non-Compliance

Non-compliance with this policy and guidelines may lead to disciplinary consequences, as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and Staff Handbook depending upon the status of the person alleged to be non-compliant. The specific outcomes that may be imposed will depend on the severity of the violation(s) in line with the procedures outlined in the respective document.

VII. Non-Affiliates on University Premises

A. Non-affiliates are individuals who are not students, faculty or staff. A non-affiliate must leave University property if instructed to do so by University personnel, following a reasonable determination that their presence or actions may disrupt the conduct of the University's activities, functions, or operations or if they have entered the University property with the intent to do so.

B. Non-affiliates on University property shall not:

1. Interfere with the conduct of activities or any University students, faculty, staff or any other person on the University's property by intimidation, threats, harassment, or other obstruction.

2. Use the University's property that is not open to the public, including, but not limited to, residence halls, offices, study areas, or recreational facilities, without proper authorization from the University.

VIII. Policy Revisions

The University reserves the right to update and amend this Peaceful Assembly Policy to address changing and unforeseen circumstances.

IX. Responsible Department

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Office of the Provost.