

University Weapons Policy

Purpose and Values

Students and other members of our community expect to be able to live, work and study in an environment free from weapons or the threat of violence. When we commit to living in community with one another, we necessarily agree to accept limitations on our own actions for the benefit of all, with the parallel expectation that we will not be injured, maligned, or otherwise negatively affected by the actions of others.

Scope and Application

This policy applies to all students (undergraduate, School of Theology and other graduate students), participants in the Summer Music Festival and the Sewanee Writers Conference, all employees of the University, whether full-time or part-time.

This policy excludes weapons used for instructional or University-sanctioned ceremonial purposes as well as weapons carried by an officer of the Sewanee Police Department. It also excludes weapons allowed for participation in University sponsored events, such as the deer cull.

This policy excludes lawful weapons stored safely and securely and owned by employees or students living in residential leaseholds on University property.

Under Tennessee law, employees and visitors who have valid handgun carry permits are allowed to bring a weapon covered by that permit onto University parking lots during their scheduled work hours, provided that the permitted weapon is kept in a locked vehicle owned by the employee, is not handled by the employee while on University property and the weapon is not visible and is locked in the trunk, glove box, or gun safe. The weapon may never be removed from the employee's vehicle while it is on University property. This exception does not apply to students; students are prohibited from having a handgun on University property at any time.

Students are not permitted to have weapons on campus except for the following limited exceptions: (1) for ceremonial or instructional purposes; (2) for hunts where a student has registered and received certification to participate in a hunt on University property; (3) when stored with the Sewanee Police Department in compliance with Police Department procedures for storage of student weapons to be used for the purpose of hunting. Information for students to register and store a weapon on campus may be found at the Sewanee Police Department website.

At specified times and locations, the University permits students, employees and visitors to hunt on campus. Hunting on campus is explicitly limited to those times and locations identified by the University and only to individuals who register and meet University requirements to participate in a hunt. Only those individuals who register, meet all requirements, and receive confirmation of a permit to hunt on University property will be permitted to have a hunting weapon during the period of the hunt, including archery equipment, centerfire, shotgun and muzzle-loader. The University will designate the type(s) of weapons allowed for the particular hunt. Those designated weapons will be allowed on campus during the hours of the hunt. Individuals who are approved to participate in a University hunt should print the confirmation and carry it with them during the hunt. Students are not allowed to store weapons allowed for hunts in vehicles or in University residence halls or other University buildings.

Definitions

Weapon means any device, instrument, or substance that is designed to, or reasonably could be expected to, inflict a wound, incapacitate, or cause serious bodily injury or death, including, but not limited to, firearms (loaded and unloaded, real and replica), ammunition, electronic control devices (such as tasers and stun guns), devices designed to discharge an object (such as bb guns, air guns, pellet guns, potato guns, and slingshots), explosives, dangerous chemicals (such as tear gas) or chemicals designed to incapacitate, martial arts weapons, bows and arrows (longbows, recurves, compound and cross-bows), artificial knuckles, nightsticks, blackjacks, dirks, daggers, swords, and knives with fixed blades longer than four (4) inches. Objects that, while not designed as a weapon, but are in the moment used as one (e.g., a student who strikes another with a baseball bat), will be considered a weapon under this policy. Excepted from this definition of “weapon” is chemical repellents available over-the-counter for self-defense and used solely as self-defense, or instruments used solely for personal hygiene.

Policy Statements

The University prohibits possession of weapons of any kind on University property (excluding weapons lawfully owned and maintained on commercial and residential leaseholds), with the limited exceptions noted in the Scope and Application section of this policy. Threatening to use a weapon, regardless of whether a weapon is present, will also be considered a violation of this policy.

Employees and students who bring weapons onto University property will be subject to sanctions which may include discharge, suspension, or expulsion. Furthermore, employees, students, contractors, and others who bring weapons onto University property are subject to arrest. Weapons brought onto campus property in violation of this policy will be confiscated.

Any employee who intends to have a permitted weapon in his or her vehicle while on a University parking lot must complete [a disclosure form](#), available at the Sewanee Police Department, and provide proof that the employee has a valid handgun carry permit and owns the vehicle in which it will be stored. Employees who fail to abide by these carry permit rules will be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge.

Consequences

Possessing or threatening to use a weapon in violation of this Policy is a serious issue and as such, the likely outcome of such an incident is separation from the University. Referral to local law enforcement and the application of criminal charges is also likely. Possession of a weapon on University property in violation of this policy is a Class E Felony and may be subject to prosecution. The weapon and any ammunition will also be forfeited.

Responsibilities

This policy is a safety policy, which is overseen by the Sewanee Police Department. Policy enforcement is a shared responsibility between the Sewanee Police Department and the dean of students office. Policy changes are reviewed by risk management and legal counsel and approved by the Provost’s office.

Procedures

Weapon violations are enforced by the Police Department, and student violations are also enforced under the EQB Guide by the appropriate dean’s office, most commonly the dean of students office.

Effective Date

August 2019