

STUDENT AFFAIRS OP 91.304: Free Speech and Assembly Policy

Date: April 14, 2009

Policy

Mississippi State University will protect the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition, and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U. S. Constitution.

Procedure

Reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions will be enforced. However, the enforcement will not depend, in any way, on the subject matter involved in an expressive activity. It is strongly suggested that all activities be registered with the Dean of Students' office 48 hours in advance in order to make adequate arrangements for safety and security and to insure the space desired is available. Registration should be completed at the Dean of Students' office located in 112 Lee Hall.

Mississippi State University provides forums for the expression of ideas and opinions, such as the following:

1. Traditional public forums include the university's public streets, sidewalks, parks, and similar common areas such as the Drill Field. These areas are generally available for expressive activity, planned or spontaneous, for the individual or small group at any time without the need for reservation or prior approval.
2. Designated public forums include other parts of the campus that may become temporarily available for expressive activity as designated by the university. Examples of designated forums include parking lots and athletic fields.
3. Non-public forums are areas that are not traditional public forums or designated public forums. These locations will be restricted to use for their intended purpose and are not available for public expressive activity. Examples include, but are not limited to, classrooms, residence hall rooms, faculty and staff offices, academic buildings, administration buildings, medical treatment facilities, libraries, research and computer labs, and private residential housing on campus. Additionally, security considerations may affect the availability of spaces that would otherwise be available.

Guidelines

1. Registered university organizations and university departments may display signs and banners at designated locations on campus. For information regarding these designated locations, contact the Dean of Students' office located in 112 Lee Hall.
2. Literature can be distributed in public forums. However, the party distributing the literature is responsible for cleaning up any discarded paper and restoring the campus to its previous condition. Literature may not be distributed in non-public forums.
3. No amplification equipment may be used.
4. Use of campus land is on a temporary basis.
5. Flyers may be placed on open bulletin boards inside or outside university buildings.

6. No activity will be permitted that blocks access to university buildings, streets, sidewalks, or facilities, defaces property, injures individuals, unreasonably interferes with regular or authorized university activities or functions, or disrupts the free flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
7. Private business or commercial solicitation on campus is generally prohibited. (Refer to OP 91.110: Campus Solicitation.)

Review

The Vice President for Student Affairs is responsible for the review of this operating policy every four years or as needed.

**DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS
OPERATING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

O.P. 91.304: Free Speech and Assembly Policy

REVIEWED BY:

/s/ William Kibler
Vice President for Student Affairs

04-14-09
Date

/s/ Don Zant
Internal Auditor

04-20-09
Date

/s/ Charles Guest
General Counsel

04-23-09
Date

APPROVED BY:

/s/ Mark E. Keenum
President

05-08-09
Date