

Freedom of Expression Guidelines

The exchange of ideas is critical to the University's mission and is central in the University's role to "challenge students to extend their intellectual capacities, interests, and creative abilities; develop their talents; and acquire a lifelong enthusiasm for learning" (Southeast Mission Statement, 2015).

Members of the University community

The University encourages students, faculty, and staff to exercise the right of assembly, free speech and expression throughout the campus. The outdoor areas of the Southeast Main Campus, River Campus, and Regional Campuses are considered traditional public forums areas. Protests, rallies, demonstrations, and other similar expressive activities are not permitted inside any University building. In support of free expression and the University encourages use of, but **does not restrict** expressive activities to designated public forum areas.

Non-affiliated organizations or individuals (non-commercial activities)

Expressive activities by any non-University organization or individual are permitted in the public forum areas. Additionally, public forums are provided on the city sidewalks and right of ways that are adjacent multiple areas of the Southeast Main Campus, River Campus, and Regional Campuses. Any rally, protest, demonstration or similar expressive activity conducted by organizations or individuals that are not members of the University community must be registered with the University. Non-affiliated organizations or individuals must contact the Office of Campus Life and Events Services at 573.651.2280 to register their activity.

Time, place and manner restrictions

The following time, place and manner restrictions apply to public forum location as well as to expressive activities by members of the University community across all other areas of the campus. These restrictions include:

- The activity does not create unreasonable safety risk to any participant, bystander, or University property;
- The activity does not disrupt the academic mission or daily operation of the University;
- The activity does not unduly disrupt vehicular or pedestrian traffic;
- The activity does not damage or destroy University property, including buildings, grounds, vehicles, or equipment. The location(s) must be left in its original condition at the conclusion of the event. The group or individual damaging University property is responsible for costs directly associated with the repair to the damaged property or area;
- The activity does not violate City of Cape Girardeau, or other relevant municipal ordinances or state or federal laws;
- The activity does not utilize amplification equipment that interferes with the educational mission of the University. Any use of amplification equipment is limited to one of four designated public forum areas;
- The activity does not include expression that is not protected speech. This includes expression that is obscene, defamatory, consists of fighting words, represents direct threats of physical harm, or insightful of imminent lawless action.

Public forum areas

Public forum locations for individuals and groups which are not members of the University community include:

- Academic Hall terraces; the green space area to the east of Academic Hall;
- The fountain area and green space in front of Kent Library;
- The green space to the south of Scully Hall;
- The Johnson/Rhodes/Magill quadrangle.

Designated public forum locations are available for use at each campus, via advance reservation by contacting the Office of Campus Life and Event Services at 573.651.2280. Reservation of these spaces is provided on a first come first serve basis and approval is provided on a content neutral basis. Any denial of a reservation will include the reason for the denial.

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