



# Protests, Demonstrations, and Gatherings on University Property

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## Policies and Requirements

The University of Virginia is a community in which the ideals of freedom of inquiry, thought, and expression are respected and sustained. The University is committed to supporting the exercise of constitutionally protected expression in University-controlled facilities and property while maintaining a safe atmosphere free from disruption.

The University has established requirements for use of its facilities and property in order to: (1) focus on its mission; (2) provide a safe environment where free expression can occur; (3) ensure that the Grounds are accessible and open to all members of the University community; and (4) preserve the aesthetics of the Grounds.

### Using University facilities and property

For the full policy, please see: [PRM-017: Duties Toward Speakers and Use of University Facilities and Property](#).

#### **Who may use outdoor University facilities and property?**

- Affiliated persons (students, faculty, staff) may utilize outdoor University property for public speaking and distribution of literature so long as they do not impede normal University operations, obstruct pedestrian or vehicular traffic, restrict equal access to the University's outdoor spaces, or violate University policies or law.
- No outdoor events are permitted between the hours of 2 am and 6 am.
- Unaffiliated persons may utilize designated outdoor locations only with advance reservation.
- The Upper Lawn may be reserved only for activities and official events sponsored by the University. Student groups/organizations or University schools and departments are permitted to reserve the Lower Lawn/Homer Flat and Gardens for events and activities consistent with University policies. They also may use tables on the Lower Lawn/Homer Flat only by advance reservation with the Division of Student Affairs, Event Management and may not use tables for a period of time that exceeds three consecutive calendar days.
- Aside from authorized use of the Upper Lawn, Lower Lawn, and Gardens, no other outdoor locations in the Academical Village may be reserved. The Academical Village includes property bounded by University Avenue to the north, Hospital Drive to the east, McCormick Road to the west, and including the Lower Lawn/Homer Flat to the south (thereby including the Rotunda, Lawn and Range rooms, hotels, gardens and pavilions) as noted on the map of the Academical Village.

### **May I engage in public speech indoors?**

- Non-verbal and non-audible expressive activity is permitted in public indoor spaces subject to the provisions of University policies, normal building hours, and occupancy limits. Non-verbal public speech must not impede normal operations or obstruct ingress/egress.
- No person may disrupt an invited or permitted speaker or hinder the ability of other attendees to see or hear a speaker.

### **May I put up a tent or other structure?**

**(see also Tent FAQ below)**

- Aside from authorized use of the Upper Lawn, Lower Lawn, and Gardens, no structures of any kind (including but not limited to tables, tents, stakes, etc.) are permitted in the Academical Village. Structures may be permitted subject to University policies on the Lower Lawn and Gardens only with advance reservation and approval from Student Affairs Event Management.

### **May I camp on University property?**

- Camping is prohibited in outdoor University facilities and on outdoor University property. Camping includes taking up temporary quarters utilizing a tent or other sheltering equipment, including but not limited to sleeping bags. In addition, sleeping outdoors, with or without sheltering equipment, is prohibited between the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.

### **Are projections permitted on University buildings or property?**

- At no time shall any person project images onto the exterior of a University facility or on University property (unless part of an activity or official event endorsed by the President and sponsored by the Office of Major Events, another University office, or a University-Associated Organization).

## **Amplified Sound**

For the full policy and approval process, please see: [SEC-041: Use of Amplified Sound on Outdoor University Property.](#)

### **What is amplified sound?**

- Amplified sound is any sound that is broadcast through electronically amplified equipment.
- Use of amplified sound on outdoor University property requires prior approval by the relevant administrative department.

### **When may I use amplified sound?**

- Amplified sound will generally be approved only on Fridays, 6 pm – 10 pm and Saturdays and Sundays from 10 am to 10 pm. It is limited to three hours per day per outdoor area.

- Amplified sound will not be permitted where it disrupts student education, academic activities, research, patient care, scheduled events, University functions, residences, or the faculty/staff work environment.

## Posting and Chalking on University property

For the fully policy, please see: [PRM-008: Exterior Posting and Chalking](#).

### **Where may I post flyers and what are the requirements?**

- Exterior posting on University property is permitted on designated kiosks. Materials may not be placed on areas or surfaces not intended for posting including, but not limited to: trees, columns, lampposts, bollards, walls, trash receptacles, railings, newspaper racks, construction fences, and bicycle racks.
- Postings are limited to one per individual/organization per kiosk on a first-come, first-serve basis.
  - Flyers should not exceed standard letter-size paper (8 ½ x 11 inches).
  - All materials posted shall clearly indicate the name of the sponsoring University department, office, student organization, independent group or outside organization.

### **Is there somewhere I can put up a display?**

- No structures (e.g., sandwich boards, installations, exhibits, signs) may be placed on Grounds for display purposes, or to provide space for posting flyers or other announcements, unless pursuant to official University business including but not limited to school/department/unit activities.
- The Amphitheater may be reserved by student organizations for temporary display purposes not to exceed one display per organization each semester. No Amphitheater display may remain overnight or exceed one day in duration. Designated Amphitheater banner locations are not subject to this policy and may be reserved by student organizations and University departments through Student Affairs Event Management.
- Small wire flags or small rocks/stones may be placed as a display on the Lower Lawn by reservation with Student Affairs Event Management. One display per day (10 am to 10 pm) is permitted and may not be higher than 2 feet.

### **What are the rules for chalking?**

- Chalk may be used on exterior concrete or asphalt sidewalks or walkways. Use of chalk on brick, slate, other stone surfaces, buildings, or other structures of any kind - with the exception of the University Remembrance Garden Wall - is strictly prohibited.

- Only non-permanent sidewalk chalk may be used. No paint, spray/adhesive chinks, markers, or inks are allowed.
- Only one chalked message is permitted per sidewalk area (for example: one each to the north, west, and east of the amphitheater; one each on the sidewalks surrounding the Lower Lawn).

## Tents

For the full policy and permitting information, please see: [SEC-013: Tent Use on University Property](#).

### May I put up a tent on University property?

- Tents are defined as a structure, enclosure, or shelter, with or without side-walls or drops, constructed of fabric or pliable material supported by any manner except by air or the contents that it protects.
- All tents and/or sites must be permitted by the Department of Safety and Security (DSS), Office of Fire Safety prior to being erected. Permits issued by the DSS, Office of Fire Safety will indicate an approved time window for tent use; permits for tents that are not for official University, School, or University Affiliated Organization sponsored events may not be up for more than 18 hours and are prohibited between the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.
- Permit applications are to be obtained from the [DSS, Office of Fire Safety website](#). Any event utilizing both a tent and a temporary stage also must comply with permitting requirements administered by the Office of the University Building Official.

## Candles

For the full policy and permitting information, please see: [SEC-032: Open Burn and Open Flame Operations at the University of Virginia](#).

### May I use candles for a vigil or other gathering on University property?

- No candles or open flames are permitted on University property unless approved by the [Department of Safety and Security](#).

## Prohibited Items

For the full policy and full definitions of weapons, lists of prohibited items, and exceptions to the policy, please see: [SEC-030: Regulation of Weapons, Fireworks, Explosives, and Other Prohibited Items](#).

### Are weapons allowed on University property?

- Weapons, fireworks, and explosives are prohibited on University property (with some limited exceptions as noted in the policy).

- Weapons include firearms, ammunition for firearms, knives, and other weapons as defined in the policy.
- The University may expand the list of prohibited items during occurrences (i.e., incidents or planned events) on University property. Expanded items may include, but are not limited to, lumber, rocks, bricks, glass containers, mace/spray, poles, sticks, tents, and backpacks among other items.

## Masks

For the full policy, please see: [SEC-008: Concealment of Identity](#).

### May I wear a mask on Grounds?

- Consistent with Va. Code § 18.2-422, any individual who is present on University property, in a University facility, or attending a University function who is wearing a mask or other device whereby a substantial portion of the face is hidden or covered so as to conceal the identity of the wearer, must present an identification document when requested by an authorized University official or otherwise establish their identity to the satisfaction of the authorized University official.
- Authorized University officials include all University police and security officers, Division of Student Affairs officials, Provost's Office officials, and any other University official authorized by the Associate Vice President for Safety & Security to enforce this policy.
- Ordinarily, identification will not be requested from individuals who are:
  - Wearing costumes on holidays.
  - Engaged in professions, trades, employment or other activities and wearing protective masks which are deemed necessary for the physical safety of the wearer or other persons.
  - Engaged in any theatrical production.
  - Wearing a face covering as part of a religious or cultural observance or tradition.

Nevertheless, requests for identification may be made by an authorized University official in the above situations if doing so is necessary to determine compliance with Va. Code §18.2-422.

- When asked by an authorized University official for identification, an individual may:
  - Present their identification: University of Virginia-issued ID or government-issued ID.
  - Otherwise establish their identity to the satisfaction of the authorized University official.
  - Provide a note from a physician requiring/recommending a face covering for health reasons.
  - Remove their face covering.
  - Leave the University property, facility, or function.

## Policy Violations and Consequences

### Why does the University have these policies?

- The University unequivocally affirms its commitment to free expression and free inquiry. All views, beliefs, and perspectives deserve to be articulated and heard free from interference.
- At the same time, the University has an obligation to ensure that public speech activities do not disrupt regular University operations, including classroom instruction, other scheduled events and activities, research, patient care, student residential life, employee work routines, and the physical integrity of University facilities and property. The University also has an obligation to ensure that the Grounds are accessible and open to all members of the University community. Accordingly, the University may impose content-neutral time-place-manner policies to regulate activities on its property.
- The University has an obligation to protect the physical safety of all community members. If the University identifies a serious threat of imminent physical harm, it may take appropriate action to protect against that threat. In such cases, it is the safety risk, not a speaker's message, that is the basis for a decision to act.

### What are the consequences for violating University policies or the Standards of Conduct?

- Students, faculty, and staff who violate University policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination and expulsion in accordance with relevant University policies and procedures. For more information:
  - [Students](#)
  - [Faculty](#)
  - [Staff](#)
- Students, faculty, staff, and unaffiliated individuals who violate University policies are also subject to trespass warnings (also known as "No Trespass Orders") in accordance with University policy [PRM-018: Issuance of Trespass Warnings](#). Failure to abide by the trespass warning will result in arrest. In addition, students may receive interim suspension.
- Students, faculty, staff, and unaffiliated individuals who violate federal, state, or local laws are subject to arrest and criminal prosecution.

### What happens when a University official engages a student who is violating a policy or the Standards of Conduct?

- A University official who observes a policy violation will notify the student of the violation and advise that the behavior must stop or result in disciplinary consequences. If the behavior

continues, the official will request the student's identity for disciplinary follow-up. Failure to provide identification and comply with policy may result in the issuance of an interim suspension by Student Affairs and a trespass warning by law enforcement. Failure to abide by the trespass warning will result in arrest. Every reasonable effort will be made to resolve the matter at the lowest possible level without the involvement of law enforcement.

- A student issued an interim suspension also will receive a trespass warning prohibiting them from accessing University property. If a suspended student lives on-Grounds, they must vacate their residence hall. Unless the interim suspension is modified on appeal, the student will be disenrolled from classes. Charges will be filed by Policy, Accountability, and Critical Events (PACE) in Student Affairs with the University Judiciary Committee (UJC) and the suspension will remain in place until the underlying standard of conduct violation is investigated and adjudicated by the UJC. Adjudication is not an immediate process and requires appropriate time for investigation (including interviewing relevant parties) and a subsequent trial. Given obligations associated with affording due process and depending on the timing of the interim suspension during an academic semester, there is high likelihood that a suspended student will not be able to return within the same semester they are suspended even if the UJC ultimately lifts or modifies the suspension. In any event, once disenrolled from classes, a student would need to re-enroll based on course availability and the policies of their school. No tuition or fees will be refunded to a student who receives interim suspension. For additional information regarding interim suspensions, please see [STAF-003: Statement of Students' Rights and Responsibilities](#). Please note that the interim suspension policy has not changed and remains consistent with past practice.
- For disciplinary follow-up, the student will be referred to PACE in Student Affairs. Upon referral to PACE, if an interim suspension has not already been issued, staff may consider this suspension if the misconduct represents a threat to self or to the health or safety of other members of the University, to University property, or to the educational process. In these circumstances, PACE will issue the interim suspension with a trespass warning. A suspended student may appeal the suspension within 48 hours. Students under suspension will have associated conduct charges filed by PACE with the University Judiciary Committee. The UJC retains final disciplinary authority over the student (subject to an appeal process with the Judicial Review Board.) See [STAF-003: Statement of Students' Rights and Responsibilities](#) (including Standards of Conduct, UJC, and Interim Suspension).
- Misconduct that does not result in interim suspension also is addressed by a PACE official. The PACE official will require a meeting with the student to discuss the student's involvement in the matter, thought process before, during, and after the misconduct, impact to the student and community (e.g., those harmed), any sincere learning or remedial measures since the misconduct, and appropriate next steps. In low level matters (i.e., first-time, less serious violations), the PACE official may resolve the matter informally through the advisory meeting and any additional educational programs, advising, or parental notification (in appropriate instances). For more serious or recurring misconduct, the PACE official will typically refer the matter to the UJC for formal adjudication.



- The UJC has full sanctioning discretion from issuing no sanction up through expulsion. The UJC practices a restorative philosophy focused on repairing any harm done by the student and educating the student to prevent future recurrence. The UJC may issue more punitive sanctions in cases where a student does not approach the matter constructively or presents an ongoing concern for future misconduct and/or harm to the community. A UJC finding of guilt results in a reportable disciplinary record for a student while informal resolution by a PACE official does not.

For more information regarding the UJC, please visit: <https://ujc.virginia.edu/> or contact the UJC Chair at [ujc-chair@virginia.edu](mailto:ujc-chair@virginia.edu).

- Students also may be referred directly to the UJC for investigation and adjudication by any aggrieved party (including faculty, staff, students, and unaffiliated individuals).
- For more information regarding PACE and the accountability process, please visit: <https://studentaffairs.virginia.edu/subsite/pace>.

## Resources and Referrals

For affiliated persons planning a protest, demonstration, or gathering (PDG) on University property, the information below may be useful to consider. In addition, please carefully review all appropriate policies and requirements - including the potential consequences for policy violations - when planning a PDG.

For additional information, please view the University's free speech website at <https://freespeech.virginia.edu/>.

### 1. Preliminary questions to consider:

- Who will be involved (e.g., students, faculty/staff, community members)?
- Where will the event occur? Is a reservation necessary or desired?
- What time will the event take place? What is the duration of the event?
- What are the planned activities of the group? How will demonstrators choose to express their views (e.g., signs, chanting, etc.)? Do all participants understand the restrictions on certain activities (see policies below)?
- Is there any likelihood of counterdemonstrators?
- What is the safety plan?
- Organizers should meet with University officials for guidance and support in planning their activity (see below).

### 2. Review, understand, and follow University policies related to space use and protests/expressive activity.

- [PRM-017: Duties Towards Speakers and Use of University Facilities or Property](#)
- [SEC-039: Protests, Demonstrations, and Other Expressive Activity during Official University Ceremonies and Events held at the Academical Village.](#)
- [SEC-041: Use of Amplified Sound on Outdoor University Property](#)
- [PRM-008: Exterior Posting and Chalking](#)
- [STAF-003: Statement of Students' Rights and Responsibilities](#) (including Standards of Conduct)
- [SEC-032: Open Burn and Open Flame Operations at the University of Virginia](#)
- [SEC-030: Regulation of Weapons, Fireworks, Explosives, and Other Prohibited Items](#)
- [SEC-013: Tent Use on University Property](#)
- [PRM-018: Issuance of Trespass Warnings](#)

- [SEC-040: Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems \(“UAS” or “Drones”\)](#)
  - [SEC-008: Concealment of Identity](#)
  - [Student Affairs Event Management](#)
  - [University Guidelines for Hosting a Public Event](#)
3. Meet with relevant (based on your plans) University staff for appropriate facility reservations, policy approvals, security/safety assistance, and/or general guidance and support.
- Outdoor Facility or Space Reservations
    - Student Activity Spaces: [Event Management](#)
    - Schools: [Relevant School Scheduling Office](#) (see The Source)
  - Policy/Process Questions: [Student Affairs: Policy, Accountability, and Critical Events \(PACE\)](#)
  - Safety/Security Needs: [University Police Department](#)
  - Open Flame Request: [Department of Safety and Security](#)
  - Resources/Advising: [Student Engagement](#)  
[Multicultural Student Services](#)