

Expressive Activity Policy

East Central University is committed to providing an environment where issues can be openly discussed and explored. The freedom to exchange views is essential to the mission of the University. This policy is in place to provide a community environment in which open discussion can occur without disrupting the academic mission or daily University functions, subject to constitutional time, place, and manner limitations and without unconstitutionally interfering with the rights of other members of the University community.

I. Members of the University Community

A. All members of the East Central University community, which includes students, faculty, and staff, are encouraged to exercise the right of assembly, free speech and expression throughout the campus, when doing so does not disrupt the academic mission or daily University functions. Expressive activities shall not be limited to any specific location on the University campus. However, the right of assembly and expression does not include unlawful activity that endangers the safety of the campus community or that destroys University property. Forums, rallies, demonstrations, and other similar expressive activities also are not to occur within academic or other University buildings including University residence halls and apartments. Expressive activities are not to unduly disrupt traffic, either vehicular or pedestrian or violate other time, place and manner parameters specified in this policy.

B. All University community individuals and organizations wishing to participate in forums, rallies, demonstrations, and other similar limited public forum activities should make a request in advance to the Vice President for Student Development or his/her designee (580-559-5208). A request should contain the name of the requestor and how he/she can be contacted; the proposed date, time, and location for the contemplated activity; the expected size of the audience; the topic(s) or subject(s) to be addressed (optional); and any other information which may be necessary to accommodate the needs associated with the activity. The request should be made at least one (1) working day prior to the event.

C. The mall area, extending from Science Hall to the Memorial Student Union, is a location conducive to forums, rallies, demonstrations, and other similar limited public forum activities. While members of the University community are not restricted to this particular area for expressive activities, any member of the University community may use the mall area without prior reservation on a first come, first served basis. Once a request is granted by the Vice President for Student Development or his/her designee, the mall area may be reserved through the Bill S. Cole University Center Information Desk (580) 559-5741/5742. Organizations or individuals who reserve the mall area have priority.

D. Members of the University community also may reserve other locations on campus (excluding academic and other University buildings including residence halls and apartments, and once a request has been granted by the Vice President for Student Development or his/her designee) for expressive activities through the Bill S. Cole University Center Information Desk or Office of Academic Affairs. To ensure priority use and to avoid possible conflict with scheduled University activities, reservations are

required. Use of amplification equipment is not permitted, except in exceptional circumstances and with prior approval from the Vice President of Student Development or his/her designee.

II. Outside Organizations or Individuals

A. Organizations or individuals not affiliated or connected with the University shall make a request to the Office of the Vice President for Student Development [Administration Building, Room 103, (580) 559-5208] when the use of said facilities or area is for the purpose of expression. Once a request is approved by the Vice President for Student Development or his/her designee, an outside organization or individual will contact the Bill S. Cole University Center Information Desk (580) 559-5742 (non-academic facilities) or the Office of Academic Affairs (580) 559-5203 (academic facilities) for the purpose of reserving any University facility or area. Such requests shall be governed by applicable federal, state, and University policies, procedures, and other relevant regulations.

B. A request shall contain the name of the requestor and how he/she can be contacted; the proposed date, time, and location for the contemplated activity; the expected size of the audience; and any other information which may be deemed necessary to accommodate the needs associated with the activity. The request should be made at least one (1) working day prior to the event.

III. Time, Place, and Manner Parameters

A. Expression may be limited or restricted with respect to time, place or manner only as provided for in this policy statement and other related statements of policy such as the Code of Student Conduct, Faculty Handbook, and Employee Handbook. Such limitations shall be narrowly tailored to serve a significant interest (such as avoiding disruption of regular classes, avoiding the scheduling of two events at the same time in the same facility, and the protection of the public order) and to assure compliance with applicable local, state and federal laws. Any limitations must be both reasonable and content-neutral, the latter term meaning that the limitations shall be applied without regard to the content of the expression or the purpose of the assembly.

B. Limitations may include requiring (a) scheduling and planning with the appropriate authorized designee, (b) restricting or prohibiting the use of certain areas, (c) limiting certain forms of expression in specific areas, and (d) reimbursing the University any cost associated with the use of a facility, area, or medium.

C. The following time, place, and manner parameters apply to expressive activities of members of the University community.

- The activity does not violate local ordinances or state or federal laws.
- The activity does not unduly disrupt traffic, either vehicular or pedestrian.
- The activity does not create unreasonable safety risks.
- There shall be no defacement or destruction to University property.

- Use of amplification equipment shall not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances and with prior approval from the Vice President of Student Development or his/her designee.
- No event may exceed 8 hours in length in a 24 hour period.
- The location will be left in its original condition at the conclusion of the event, and reasonable charges or deposits may be imposed to enforce this requirement.
- Expression that is obscene, defamatory, or consists of fighting words, threats of physical harm, incite imminent lawless action or otherwise not entitled to protection as expression is not permitted.

IV. RUSO and State Policies

Employees of the University should be aware of and in compliance with RUSO policy 5.9 regarding political activities of employees, the Ethics Commission rule related to the use of public funds, property, time, and personnel to influence elections, and Oklahoma State Statute 26 O.S. 16-119 which prohibits campaigning in regard to any state question unless there is a specific authorization to support or oppose an initiative or referendum. It should be noted that violation of the principles outlined in RUSO policy 5.9 may be considered cause for dismissal. Violation of O.S. 16-119 through the expenditure of public funds is a misdemeanor and cause for removal from office.