

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION & ASSEMBLY STUDENT POLICY & PROCEDURES

PURPOSE

The State University of New York (SUNY) respects and fully supports the rights of free speech guaranteed by the constitutions of the United States and the State of New York. SUNY values the free expression of ideas and supports individuals' right to assemble.

SUNY Potsdam promulgates this policy to provide meaningful opportunities for members of our community to express their views and to ensure that the time, place, and manner of such expression does not interfere with the safety and security of our campus community or disrupt the regular operations of the campus.

SCOPE

This content-neutral policy is applicable to all SUNY Potsdam students. In addition, SUNY Potsdam has a ["Use of Facilities by Third Parties for Free Speech Policy"](#) that applies to all third parties who are not sponsored by SUNY Potsdam and/or a recognized student organization who want to use the SUNY Potsdam's designated public form for free speech purposes.

POLICY

SUNY Potsdam students are guaranteed the rights of free inquiry and expression. Subject to applicable content-neutral policy, students are guaranteed the right to hold public meetings and engage in peaceful and orderly assemblies—including, but not limited to, protests, demonstrations, rallies, vigils, marches, and picketing—in and upon designated public areas of campus grounds and buildings.

A "Public Area" is space designated by SUNY Potsdam as open and not requiring a reservation for use. At the College, public areas are limited. These areas are often reserved for particular events and activities but are otherwise open for general use by students. For information or questions about public areas, please contact the Campus Life Office, (315) 267-2013.

SUNY Potsdam will not interfere with orderly assemblies in designated public areas of grounds and buildings unless participants engage in any of the following:

1. Conduct that prevents the orderly administration of College classes, lectures, meetings, interviews, ceremonies, and other campus events or College operations;
2. Conduct that obstructs the free movement of vehicles or of persons, including, but not limited to in any building or facility, inclusive of blocking hallways and doors;

3. Engage in conduct that could foreseeably cause injury or damage to persons or property;
4. Operation of audio amplification equipment in a manner that conflicts with normal College operations (classes, college events/activities, etc.) or that is deemed injurious to health and safety, or that is in violation of the Village of Potsdam or other ordinances;
5. Constructing or erecting structures, whether or not they are anchored, inclusive of screens and/or objects requiring penetration in concrete or grass, or camp on College grounds without prior authorization from Campus Life, Physical Plant, and Environmental Health and Safety Offices, and indoor and outdoor encampment is generally prohibited ([see campus policies on tents/camping]);
6. Possession and/or ignition of an open flame of any type, including, but not limited to, torches;
7. Assemblies with a duration not to exceed 6 hours in a one-day period, and assemblies between the hours of 10 p.m. and 8 a.m. are prohibited;
8. Activities that violate the provisions of [SUNY Policy 3653, Rules for the Maintenance of Public Order](#); and
9. Activities that violate the provisions of any other applicable campus policy.
10. Activities that jeopardize the safety and security of others.

In addition, the following activities are strictly prohibited:

1. Entry into any private office of an administrative officer, member of faculty, or staff member, or entry into any other college area that is not authorized, without permission;
2. Occupation of a building after it is normally closed without prior authorization from Campus Life or University Police Offices; and
3. Obstruction of any roadways running through or adjoining the University's campus grounds.

All individuals participating in protests and demonstrations are required to provide a form of College issued or government issued identification upon request from a College official.

SUNY Potsdam takes compliance with this policy very seriously. Students should expect that violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action under the College's

Student Code of Conduct, up to and including interim suspension, suspension, and expulsion.

PROCEDURES

SUNY Potsdam respects and supports students' efforts to exercise their rights to free speech and assembly. SUNY Potsdam has designated the Office of Campus Life to provide the appropriate support for the successful implementation of these events. Following College procedure will ensure a safe and effective assembly activity. The College will make every effort to respond affirmatively to all requests to engage in assembly activity. However, content-neutral consideration must be given to the time, place, and manner of the assembly activity to ensure the health and safety of the participants and the noninterference with authorized College business, activities, or events.

Services: To help ensure the safety of participants and the protection of the rights of all members of the campus community, the College can provide services to recognized student organizations and enrolled students (such as location, safety, crowd control, sound equipment (unless prohibited in certain areas as per Campus rules), site preparation/cleanup, and/or other such facilities or services it deems necessary ("Services").

Request for Services

1. For assemblies where the need for Services is reasonably foreseeable, event organizers shall, within two (2) business days prior to the planned event, submit a written Request for Services, as follows:
 - A. The written request should contain the name of the sponsor/organizer, the proposed location and any other Services sought, the date and time of the planned assembly, and the number of persons expected to participate.
 - I. Due to limited space at the College, when it is anticipated that participants for a particular assembly will equal or exceed ten (10) students, the sponsor/organizer must submit a request for Services.
 - B. The request should be submitted to The Campus Life Office, (315) 267-2013.
 - C. A professional staff member from Campus Life will promptly respond to the request for Services after receipt of the written request.
 - D. A professional staff member will review the request and work with the sponsor/organizer to accommodate requests and determine a reasonable time, place, and manner for the assembly activity.
 - E. While every attempt will be made to accommodate all requests, some modifications to the assembly activity request may be

required due to the availability of the proposed time and place of the activity. A Campus Life professional staff member will inform the sponsor/organizer of these modifications and provide guidance as the assembly activity is planned.

- F. In the event that the proposed assembly activity is planned in direct response to a current event, the Office of Campus Life realizes that it may not be possible to submit a request in advance. In such cases, the event organizer should contact the Office of Campus Life as soon as possible in order to promptly coordinate the assembly activity, where reasonably possible.
2. No Services Required: Assemblies requiring no Services (when it is anticipated that participants will not exceed 10 students), or for which the need for Services is not reasonably foreseeable or necessary as described above, may take place without any prior notification by the sponsors and/or organizers. However, conformity with the specific campus rules noted above is required. Organizers who are unsure of whether their planned assembly requires Services are encouraged to contact the appropriate office designated in sub-paragraph (1)(c) above for guidance. Event organizers who do not request necessary services that were reasonably foreseeable as being needed may be subject to discipline.