



Policy # 69002

FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND EXPRESSION

Effective Date: September 11, 2018

Revised Date: September 11, 2018

Responsible Office: Vice President for Student Affairs

Division: Student Affairs

I. PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

To protect the freedom of speech on the University campus. By virtue of regulating the exercise of free speech on the campus, the University does not sponsor or sanction the messages being stated or the methods of speech being used unless expressly stated otherwise.

II. STATEMENT OF POLICY

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 Grambling State University campus are considered traditional public forum areas. Protests, rallies, demonstrations, and other similar expressive activities are not permitted inside any University building. In support of free expression, the University encourages use of, but does not restrict expressive activities to designated public forum areas.

III. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this Policy, the definitions of key terms and other mandatory provisions shall remain consistent with those in Act 666 of the 2018 Regular Session codified at R.S. 17:3391.31.

“Expressive Activities” include but are not limited to any lawful verbal or written means by which individuals or groups communicate ideas to one another, as provided by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America and by the Constitution of Louisiana, including all forms of peaceful assembly, protest, speech, distribution of literature, carrying signs, and circulating petitions. This expressly excludes commercial activities where individuals or groups are being compensated or attempting to advertise, market, or accrue financial gain to any individual, corporation, business, or organization.

“Outdoor Areas” are outside areas of the University campus generally accessible to the majority of students, administrators, faculty, and staff, such as grassy areas, walkways, or other similar common areas, and do not include areas where access is restricted.

“Public Areas” of the University campus mean all Outdoor Areas.

“Student Organization” means an officially recognized group at the University, or a group seeking official recognition, comprised of admitted students.

IV. POLICY PROCEDURES

Policy

1. The University strives to ensure intellectual freedom and free expression.
2. It is not the proper role of the University to shield individuals from speech protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America and Article I, Section 7 of the Constitution of Louisiana, and other applicable laws, including without limitation ideas and opinions they find unwelcome, disagreeable, or even deeply offensive.
3. The outdoor areas of the Grambling State University campus are considered traditional public forum areas. Protests, rallies, demonstrations, and other similar expressive activities are not permitted inside any University building. Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted as limiting the rights of expression elsewhere on campus.

Non-Affiliated Organizations or Individuals (Non-Commercial Activities).

- Expressive activities by any non-University organization or individual are permitted in the public forum areas. Any rally, protest, demonstration or similar expressive activity conducted by organizations or individuals that are not members of the Grambling State University community must be registered with the University.
- Non-affiliated organizations or individuals must contact the Office of Campus-Wide Activities at 318-274-3298 to register their activity

Public Forum Areas

- Public forum locations for individuals and groups which are not members of the University community include:
 - The fountain area and green space in front of T.H. Harris Auditorium;
 - The green space to the east of Tiger Village Clubhouse, RWE Jones Drive;
- Designated public forum locations are available for use at each campus, via 14-day advance reservation by contacting the Office of Campus-Wide

5. On Public Areas, students and faculty may assemble, distribute literature, and engage in spontaneous expressive activity as long as such activity is not unlawful and does not materially and substantially disrupt the functioning of the

- a. If an individual or group of individuals attracts a group of 20 or more persons, then a representative from the group is encouraged to contact the Student Affairs Office or University Police as soon as circumstances reasonably permit. The University reserves the right to direct a group of 20 or more persons to another available Public Area in order to ensure the safety of campus members, to provide for proper crowd control, and to limit disruption of the academic and other operations of the University. Any relocation must not be based on the content or viewpoint of the expression.
 - i.
- b. The activity does not create unreasonable safety risk to any participant, bystander, or University property;
- c. The activity does not disrupt the academic mission or daily operation of the University;
- d. The activity does not unduly disrupt vehicular or pedestrian traffic;
- e. Restricted areas of the University campus, or those areas not deemed a traditional public forum, may not be used for purposes other than for that facility's purpose.
- f. 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;
- g. The activity does not violate City of Grambling, or other relevant municipal ordinances or state or federal laws;
- h. 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 two designated public forum areas;
- i. The activity does not include expression that is not protected speech. This includes:
 - o Engage in provocations by fighting words or incitements to engage in immediate violence;
 - o Make threats which demonstrate a serious expression of intent to commit an act of unlawful violence to a particular individual or group of individuals;
 - o Interfere with the free and unimpeded flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic on campus or the entry or exit into and out of University facilities, roadways, exterior patios, plazas, walkways, or gathering

regulation, a visible expiration date shall be either a stamped expiration date by the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs or official of the college or department responsible for the area where the sign, notice or poster is posted or a legible date placed in the lower right hand corner of the sign, notice or poster by the person or organization posting the sign, notice or poster. University maintenance personnel or other University officials may remove any signs, notices and posters which do not contain a visible expiration date as defined by this section.

5. The Vice President for Student Affairs may grant permission to post signs, notices and posters for a period longer than ten (10) calendar days where it is shown that there is good reason for the signs, notices or posters to remain in place for a longer period; but in no case shall the signs, notices or posters be allowed to remain posted beyond the end of the academic semester or ten (10) calendar days from the date of posting whichever comes later.

Commercial and Non-University Community Signs, Notices and Posters

1. The Vice President for Student Affairs shall publish rules and regulations governing the posting or distribution of signs, notices, posters, and other materials for commercial purposes or by non-members of the University community. The regulations may include a schedule of fees and limitations upon the areas in which such commercial or non-member of the University community activity may take place.
2. The regulations shall be available for inspection in the office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and a written record of actions taken under the regulations shall be maintained and be open for public inspection.
- 3.

Supplementary Procedures

The Vice President for Student Affairs is encouraged and authorized to develop, publish and disseminate supplementary procedures to further support the implementation of this Policy and any such supplementary procedures shall be consistent with this Policy.

V. Enforcement, Grievance and Appeal Procedures

Any person aggrieved by a violation of this policy may file a written appeal of the decision or action with the GSU Vice President for Student Affairs or designee, within fourteen (14) business days of the decision or action. The University shall