



# University of Maine at Presque Isle

## Freedom of Speech and Assembly Policy

### Policy Statement

The University of Maine at Presque Isle encourages and seeks to protect the free and peaceful discussion and advocacy of issues and ideas on University property. As a proponent of free speech, the University recognizes the importance of recognizing all viewpoints and is committed to providing opportunities for mutually respectful discourse and dialogue. The responsibility of the University to operate and maintain an effective and efficient institution of higher education, however, requires the regulation of time, place, and manner of assembly, speech, and other expressive activities. In keeping with this responsibility, students, faculty, and staff are free to exercise the rights to assemble and engage in expressive activity in a constitutionally protected manner, subject to the responsibilities of the University, obligations to its mission, to preserve the rights, health, and safety of others, coordinate multiple uses of limited space, and assure preservation of University property, each in accord with all applicable constitutional rights and protections.

### Application of Policy

This policy applies to all University students, faculty, employees, organizations, sponsored guests, and all other individuals, groups, or organizations using or seeking to use the property of the University. This policy does not apply to official academic and administrative activities and functions of the University.

### Definitions

The following definitions apply for purposes of this policy:

1. Amplified Sound means sound that is increased or enhanced by any electric, electronic, or mechanical means, including handheld devices such as megaphones and sound trucks. Other sound, specifically individual shouting or group chanting/singing is subject to general regulations concerning disruption of official University functions.
2. Campus Grounds means all outside areas owned, leased, or controlled by the University that are common and openly accessible, such as park-like areas, sidewalks, and malls.
3. Designated Areas means property owned, leased, or controlled by the University that may be reserved for expressive activity.
4. Employee means a person currently employed by the University on a full-time, part-time, or hourly basis.
5. Expressive Activity means verbal or symbolic expression of an idea, thought or opinion and may include speeches, assembly, marches, parades, rallies, picketing, distribution of literature, graphic or pictorial displays and other similar activities intended to communicate an idea or opinion. Expressive activity does not include speech that is likely to incite or produce imminent lawless action, expression that consists of fighting words or threats of physical harm or expression that is defamatory or obscene. It does not include commercial speech not constitutionally protected.
6. Facilities means all buildings and structures that are owned, leased, or under the control of the University.

7. Limited Use Areas means those non-public areas specifically designated by the University for Expressive Activity, within the limits set by the University.
8. Literature means any printed or electronic material that is produced for distribution or publication to an audience, including but not limited to flyers, handbills, leaflets, placards, bulletins, newspapers, newsletters and magazines, but does not include the UTimes or official University material.
9. Official University Function means all activities, events, and programs sponsored by an academic or administrative unit of the University.
10. Outdoor Structure or Exhibit means anything built, constructed, or displayed temporarily on campus grounds as part of an expressive activity, including tents used for the facilitation of activities or any camping structures used to sleep outdoors.
11. Public Areas means those areas generally open to the public that do not serve a specific University educational, administrative, research, health, residential, dining, athletic, recreational, or fitness purpose.
12. Non-Public Areas means those areas not open to public activities, including, but not limited to, classrooms, laboratory buildings, libraries, residence halls, cafeterias, health centers, athletic or recreation facilities, fitness facilities, and administrative faculty, staff, and student rooms and offices.
13. Sponsored Activity means any expressive activity that is presented by a sponsored guest under this policy.
14. Sponsored Guest means any person or organization invited to engage in expressive activity on campus grounds by a sponsoring organization in accordance with this policy.
15. Student means any person who is currently enrolled and attending the University of Maine at Presque Isle or another institution within the University of Maine System (UMS).
16. Sponsoring Organization means student organizations or clubs that are registered by the Student Activities Office, or a group of University students or employees who officially represent the University at activities sanctioned or sponsored by the University.
17. Unaffiliated Groups or Individuals means those who are not University employees, students, student organizations, or sponsored guests.
18. University Business Hours means Monday through Friday from 8am to 4:30pm (excluding University sanctioned holidays).
19. University Property includes all campus grounds, facilities, owned, leased, or controlled by the University.

## **1. Use of University Property**

University property is intended to be used first for instructional and research programs, residential living, administrative and University affiliated activities. It is used secondarily for programs sponsored and conducted by University academic and administrative offices or organizations affiliated with those offices, including registered student organizations and student groups.

## **2. Use of Campus Grounds**

Students, employees, and sponsoring organizations may engage in expressive activity on campus grounds during University business hours without the need for prior registration except as set out in this and other applicable University policies. Expressive activity may not block access to Facilities, create a vehicular or other safety hazard or constitute disruptive activity, defamation, riotous conduct or obscenity as those terms are defined by federal or state law and may not impede access to other expressive activity, such as blocking the audience's view or preventing the audience from hearing a speaker. Outdoor sleeping structures are prohibited on campus grounds.

Students, employees and sponsoring organizations that wish to organize parades, marches, or rallies in areas that cross thoroughfares, or would stop or slow traffic, must submit a registration form as set forth below.

### **3. Use of University Facilities**

University facilities are reserved solely for activities designated or expressly approved by the University. Given their limited purposes, restricted activities and functions, they do not serve as public areas and are not intended as public areas open to expressive conduct unless designated or expressly approved by the University.

- a. Signs, Flags, and Banners, attached to a pole or similar device – are not allowed in confined indoor areas unless they are being used during a University sanctioned activity, e.g., Convocation or Commencement. Signs, flags, and banners may be affixed to poles for outside use. Signs, flags, and banners are not allowed to be affixed to walls, doors, or windows, except the walls of private residence hall rooms or personal offices subject to all other applicable University policies.
- b. Parading, marching, and demonstrating within a facility is prohibited in order to assure the health and safety of persons, property, and to promote the educational mission of the University. Entrances and exits to the building and work or conference rooms may not be blocked or obstructed.
- c. Amplified sound is not permitted.
- d. Entrances, walkways, and roadways may not be obstructed or otherwise blocked.
- e. Literature and other information are limited to the bulletin boards designated for expressive activity.
- f. Any group reserving a table on campus may speak with any individual who approaches them and chooses to engage, however, they may not actively approach or solicit participation.

### **4. Limited Use Areas**

Certain areas within a University facility may be open at the sole discretion of the University for limited expressive activity subject to the restrictions necessary to preserve the nature and purpose of the facility, provide for health and safety, the protection from damage to the premises, prevent obstruction of access or egress, and provide for unobstructed flow of persons using the area. Limited use areas may be used by students, faculty, employees, University organizations, and any sponsored guests upon approval through the registration process on a content-neutral basis.

Please contact the Director of Campus Security for more information about the registration and approval process. (207) 768-9580

### **5. Limited Time Usage**

In order to provide opportunities for all requesting individuals or groups to utilize UMPI's spaces, e.g., the Flag Court, for expressive activities, individuals and groups may request the use of space no more than two (2) times in a calendar month (i.e. September, October, etc.) and no more than three consecutive days (i.e. September 29, 30 and October 1). The Flag Court area will be available from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on approved days.

Additional information on how to submit a registration request is available at the end of this document.

\*In the event that an individual or group has violated the terms of use for the limited use area, they will be denied approval on future registrations for 6-12 months based on the severity of the situation. In extreme cases, the outcome of a violation could also result in consequences up to, and including, a permanent ban from future approvals.

### **6. Requirements for the Use of Campus Grounds**

Campus grounds generally are open to students, employees, University groups, and sponsoring organizations for expressive activity during university business hours on a first come, first served basis. Under certain circumstances restrictions may be placed on the usage of a designated area, such as time, place and manner, coordination of multiple uses of limited space, to preserve the rights and health and safety of others and to assure the preservation of personal and University property, and in those circumstances, a registration form will be required to engage in the expressive activity. Registration forms are approved by the Director of Safety and

Security. Registration may not be assigned to others; only the individuals, University groups or sponsoring organizations that reserve a Designated Area may use the area for expressive activity during the approved period. A registration form is required for the use of amplified sound and/or to create an outdoor structure. Sponsoring organizations are required to register for the use of a designated area for expressive activity by a sponsored guest. A registration request for the space must be submitted no fewer than three days in advance of the activity.

In order to allow reasonable access by all students, employees, and sponsoring organizations to campus grounds these locations may be reserved for no more than three consecutive days and no more than twice in a calendar month. Exceptions to this three consecutive days rule may be made on a case-by-case, content-neutral basis with approval by the Director of Safety and Security. (See reason for denial of registration request below–6C).

The Director of Safety and Security will respond to registration requests for a parade, march, rally, or demonstration no later than two business days after a properly submitted request is received in the Safety and Security Office. If the Director of Safety and Security denies a request, possible alternatives may be recommended. When the basis for denial is due to an earlier request for the same location and time, the Director of Safety and Security will inform the individual or organization whose request is denied of other dates, times, and locations that are available.

- a. Parades, marches, rallies, and demonstrations are not permitted indoors, and must not block or obstruct entrances or exits to buildings.
- b. Signs, flags and banners may be affixed to poles for outside use.
- c. Walkways and roadways may not be obstructed or otherwise blocked.
- d. Literature and other information are limited to the bulletin boards designated for expressive activity.
- e. Any individual or group on campus may speak with any individual who approaches them and chooses to engage, however, they may not actively approach or solicit participation.

Appeals of a denial are made to the Vice President of Student Affairs. (207) 768-9618

### **A. Use of Amplified Sound in Outdoor Areas**

Advanced notification is required before amplified sound may be used on campus grounds. Students, employees, sponsoring organizations, and sponsored guests may use amplified sound on campus grounds only at locations and times determined by the Director of Safety and Security.

Amplification in Designated Areas cannot exceed 92 decibels on the “A” scale at 50 feet from the source of amplification. Amplification will not be approved for any period during the seven calendar days preceding finals week and the week of finals for each fall and spring semester.

### **B. Parades, Marches or Rallies**

Students, employees, and sponsoring organizations that wish to organize parades, marches, or rallies in areas that cross streets or thoroughfares or that would stop or slow traffic must have an approved registration form issued by the Director of Safety and Security at least three days in advance of the activity to ensure that the proposed route does not substantially interrupt the safe and orderly movement of traffic or create a safety hazard.

### **C. Reason for Denial**

Requests to reserve a Designated Area, to use amplified sound, or to register a route for a parade, march or rally may not be denied based on the content of the proposed expressive activity. Registration requests may be denied only for the following reasons:

- a. An earlier request to reserve the same location and time has been made;
- b. The Designated Area or adjacent area has been reserved for an official University function or the Designated Area is no longer suitable for use due to a conflict with a nearby official University function;
- c. The registration form is incomplete;
- d. The proposed route of a march, parade or rally will cross space that has been reserved in accordance with this policy or the proposed route will substantially interrupt the safe and orderly movement of traffic or create a safety hazard;
- e. The request was submitted by an individual or organization that is not permitted to reserve space on campus under this policy;
- f. The organization has a prior bill for damages that occurred at a previously sponsored event; or
- g. The speaker/organization has violated the terms of this policy in the past.

#### **D. Relocation of Expressive Activities**

Individuals and organizations engaged in expressive activity on campus may be required to relocate to other areas or end expressive activity if not other appropriate location exists at the time, which will be determined by the Director of Safety and Security when immediate action is necessary, under the following circumstances:

- a. The noise generated by the activity disrupts an official University function or substantially interferes with resident housing life and activities (e.g. the activity is too close to an academic, administrative or residential building);
- b. The location does not safely accommodate the number of participants;
- c. The number of individuals participating in or attending the activity creates unsafe conditions for vehicular or pedestrian traffic, parking, or blocks the ingress or egress to buildings or official university activities;
- d. The activity creates a health or safety hazard, such as interfering with fire, police, or emergency services.
- e. The activity is causing damage to campus property.
- f. The individuals or organizations facilitating the activity are approaching campus community members, instead of allowing community members to choose their level of engagement.

Appeals due to the relocation of expressive activities may be made to the Vice President of Student Affairs.  
(207) 768-9518

#### **E. Responsibility for Costs and Damages**

As constitutionally permissible the individual(s) and/or sponsoring group will be responsible for any costs incurred by the University due to the expressive activity. These costs may include, but will not be limited to the need of extra security, cleaning costs, damages, etc. Failure to pay these charges will result in the disapproval of future registration requests.

#### **F. Chalking/Graffiti and Campus Postings**

Chalking and/or Graffiti is prohibited on campus ground and in campus facilities unless given approval by the Marketing and Communications Office. Please contact their office for additional information: (207) 768-9452

For additional information about guidelines related to other forms of campus postings, please review our Campus Public Posting and Advertising Policy: [www.umpi.edu/security/public-posting-policy](http://www.umpi.edu/security/public-posting-policy)

#### **7. Responsibilities of Individuals, Sponsoring Organizations, and Sponsored Guests**

Sponsoring organizations are responsible for ensuring that sponsored guests read and understand all obligations set out in this and all other applicable University policies. Members of the University community may be held

individually responsible and sponsoring organizations may be held collectively accountable for any violations of this policy and other University policies, including the Code of Student Conduct and personnel policies, as applicable.

Sponsored guests who do not comply with this or other applicable University policies automatically forfeit their registration and must immediately vacate University property.

## **8. Unaffiliated Groups and Individuals**

Individuals and groups that are not affiliated with the University may distribute literature on campus grounds without a permit and may reserve and use certain Designated Areas of University property for any lawful purpose on a space-available basis through the registration process for that area. All restrictions placed upon students, faculty, employees, university groups, or sponsoring organizations apply to unaffiliated groups or individuals. Priority is given to university-affiliated groups.

## **9. Security Presence**

When available, security staff will be on the scene to watch for compliance. If security staff is not available, individuals witnessing violations of this policy should report their observations to the Safety and Security Office in the Campus Center or the Vice President of Student Affairs Office in Emerson Annex.

## **10. Campus Notification**

The Director of Safety and Security will notify the campus prior to the use of facilities, as outlined above. This notification will come in the form of an email to the Student List and to the Everyone List. Notification should be provided at least one business day prior to the event and should contain the following information:

- a. The name of the lead person for the event;
- b. The affiliation of the individual or group;
- c. The location where the individual/group will be; and
- d. The date and time the individual/group will be on campus.

An example may look like this:

**(First Name) (Last Name)** from the **Organization of XXX** will be utilizing **insert campus facility, i.e., the free speech area in the Flag Court** on **day and date** between the hours of **time, i.e., 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.** They plan on bringing 3 other individuals. This is not a university-sponsored or affiliated event, this communication is purely for notification purposes.

## **11. Filing a Complaint**

Individuals wishing to file a complaint regarding a violation of this policy should contact one of the following offices:

Director of Safety and Security, Campus Center, 207-768-9580  
Vice President of Student Affairs, Emerson Annex, 207-768-9518

Individuals may also file a written report by going to [www.umpi.edu/security/](http://www.umpi.edu/security/) and clicking the “Incident Report Form” tab.

## **12. Policy Administration**

The Director of Safety and Security is responsible for administration of this policy, including:

- a. Identifying locations and establishing times for use as Designated Areas and identifying locations and establishing times for use of amplified sounds;
- b. Managing requests for registration to use campus grounds under this policy, with coordination of Conferences and Special Programs when appropriate;
- c. Relocating expressive activities as allowed under this policy;
- d. Developing procedures for areas where expressive activity registration is granted, managing use of amplified sound, and registrations of parades, marches and rallies;
- e. Managing registration process for Designated Areas, using amplified sound, and registering for parades, marches and rallies;
- f. Publishing the locations, times, procedures and forms required under this policy at the beginning of each academic year;
- g. Determining costs based on the need for safety and security personnel; and
- h. Coordinating with the Director of Facilities, the development of any bills for damages caused by the event and will also regularly review and update this policy.

Approved by President Raymond Rice, November 2024



Joey Seeley  
Director of Safety and Security  
Campus Center  
University of Maine at Presque Isle  
181 Main St., Presque Isle Me, 04769  
[joey.seeley@maine.edu](mailto:joey.seeley@maine.edu)  
(207) 768-9580

This registration form must be completed and returned to the UMPI Safety and Security Office no fewer than three business days in advance of the activity

**OFF-CAMPUS USER INFORMATION**

Name of Requestor: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated number of other individuals who will be in your party, including anticipated number of attendees: \_\_\_\_\_

UMPI Affiliated Org/Dept: \_\_\_\_\_ UMPI Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) Requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Setup Start Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Start Time: \_\_\_\_\_ End Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location Requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide an overview of the proposed activity or event:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

YES NO Will you or your group be distributing any materials? (If yes, please attach a copy of the materials for institution records)

YES NO Does your group anticipate the need for safety and/or security precautions? (If yes, please elaborate on the group or individual concerns) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**By signing, I agree that I have read and will abide by the UMPI Free Speech Policy**

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For office use only: Approved by:

Director of Safety and Security: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Vice President of Student Affairs: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Registration Number: \_\_\_\_\_