

9.0 Free Speech and Assembly

Free Speech and Assembly

The following statement of policy with respect to free speech and assembly has been adopted by the Council of Colleges and has been given administrative approval.

- A. The primary purpose of an academic community is the search for truth. Indispensable in that search is the freedom to think as one wishes and to speak as one thinks. Therefore, in keeping with the purposes of the University of Maine, there shall be no restrictions, on any of the campuses, placed on the fundamental right to free speech and assembly except those necessary to protect the rights of others and to preserve the order necessary for the University to function as an institution of higher learning.
- B. The entire campus of the University of Maine at Orono (except corridors and inside areas and facilities not available on a scheduled basis for reasons of public safety) is open to any form of expression by students, faculty, staff, and invited guests. The only limitations are that normal University functions may not be disrupted, and the rules of public safety may not be contravened.
- C. Individuals and groups wishing to use outdoor areas and facilities shall notify the chief of campus police, a reasonable time in advance, of the nature, the time, and the place of the proposed activity.
- D. Individuals and groups wishing to use indoor areas and facilities must schedule such areas and facilities with the proper scheduling authorities a reasonable time in advance of their use, and must indicate the nature, the time, and the place of the proposed activity, except that space may not be scheduled for the distribution of leaflets, broadsides, and other forms of literature unless table space is requested. Distribution of such literature shall be governed by all other provisions of this policy.
- E. Both outdoor and indoor areas and facilities are to be made available on a non-discriminatory basis.

Review Board

F. Since no policy statement can foresee all eventualities that might arise in connection with a right to exercise freedom of speech and assembly, as well as with the University's efforts to preserve those rights, a review board of free speech and assembly shall be established. This board shall consist of six members: two faculty members, two students, and two administrative members. All members shall serve for two-year terms. The student senate shall select each year a junior to serve for two years. Faculty members (to be selected by the faculty Council of Colleges) and administrative members (to be appointed by the President) shall not serve concurrently on the committee on discipline.

G. The functions of the review board shall be:

1. To advise those whose responsibilities concern implementation of the policy;
2. To serve as an appeals board for those who feel that by the establishment of prior restraints to free speech and assembly the spirit of the policy has been violated; and
3. To review cases of alleged improper use of and response to the right of free speech and assembly and to make recommendations to the appropriate individual or body.

By keeping a record of its determinations and reporting to the faculty Council, the review board will serve as a source of guidance for the future.