

Policy Title: Expression, Demonstration and Gathering Policy

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Division Responsible for Policy: Student Engagement

Effective Date: July 1, 2024

Contact(s): Elizabeth Fedec, AVP and Dean of Students, Title IX Coordinator

Minority Impact Statement: This policy does not have any disproportionate or unique impact on North Park's students or employees who identify as a minority.

Who Should Read the Policy: All students, administrators, faculty, and staff members.

Policy review cycle: Every 2 years or as needed

POLICY

Reason for Policy

North Park University believes in the rights of its community members to pursue their academic and career objectives without unreasonable obstruction or hindrance. We also believe that members of the University community are free to communicate, by lawful demonstration, the positions that they support on vital issues of the day. The University welcomes speakers from a variety of viewpoints and will provide them platforms from which to express their views in an unconstrained manner.

The University, through its teaching, research, and co-curriculum, engages community members in the broadening of knowledge. Freedom of expression is critical to the process of learning, and North Park University values in its members a diversity of thought. Peaceful protests and/or rallies present our community with the opportunity to further share information; what they cannot do is endanger community members or disrupt University operations. University administrators may choose not to permit a rally or demonstration if safety or the performance of University business become compromised.

Scope:

This policy applies to all students, faculty, and staff at North Park University. Failure to abide by the policy may result in disciplinary action through the appropriate student or employee conduct process. Student, staff and faculty process may be found in respective handbooks. Invited guests are expected to adhere to this policy and any applicable University policy.

Non-campus community members are not protected by this policy and may be subject to federal, state and city ordinances and laws. The University reserves the right to ask non-campus members to leave campus property and facilities.

Classroom Speakers/Invited Guests

Speakers invited by the faculty of the University and sponsored by faculty through their departments, programs, or as part of a class, and presenting in an academic space (classrooms and lecture halls), enjoy the benefits of academic freedom as long as the intended audience is the University community.

Speakers or presenters invited by faculty instructors for the purposes of instruction within an individual course curriculum can do so with department/college approval.

An individual member or group of members of the North Park University community may also invite any person to address the community as long as the procedures in this document are followed.

Planned Protests, Rallies, or Demonstrations

Protests, rallies, or demonstrations under this policy are classified as any event planned with the express purpose of gathering multiple people to raise awareness about, or express a viewpoint on, any issue or cause. These events require advance arrangements with the University as outlined below (Advance Arrangements).

Spontaneous Events

A spontaneous event is permitted involving University members only. These include responses to world or local events, vigils, and/or celebratory gatherings (e.g. Cubs win the World Series, North Park wins a championship, prayer vigil for a national disaster). Recognizing that there are times when things happen that preclude the ability to plan an event, the University has designated areas on campuses where these events may occur (see section below). Restrictions to these spontaneous events include: any construction; amplified speech; disruption of the business of the University and blocking traffic. Generally, these events should take place between the hours of 9:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m.

Counter Protests

Planned protests, rallies, or demonstrations may result in protests by persons or groups whose ideas lie in contrast. Student organizations and University departments are required to plan for the possibility of counter protests when organizing events. In cases where dissenting views are likely to be expressed, the University will reserve the right to identify areas designated for counter protest to protect the freedom of expression of all parties.

Fixed Exhibits

Free expression may also take the form of fixed exhibits, such as ribbons or banners temporarily tied to trees or lamp posts; or flags, crosses, signs, or other items temporarily planted in the ground. Fixed exhibits may only remain displayed for five (5) or fewer consecutive business days and may not be displayed during University holidays.

Fixed Exhibits may be permitted when part of classroom project or academic requirement.

Fixed Exhibits may not include structures, walls, barriers, sculptures, or other objects on university property without prior permission from the Dean of Students Office, Office Intercultural Student Affairs, Office of the Provost and/or Human Resources. This would include tents and other shelters around which participants would congregate, organize protests, cook, sleep and/or for personal hygiene.

Fixed Exhibits require advance arrangements with the University as outlined below (Advance Arrangements).

Free Expression

The university values free expression and supports the right to advocate for causes and critique policies. However, this must be balanced with maintaining a respectful, non-hostile campus environment. Obstructive or non-peaceful demonstrations that disrupt access to facilities or events are not allowed. All campus communications must identify their authors and comply with posting regulations to foster accountability and dialogue.

Policy Elements

The University reserves the right to stop or limit the demonstrations that are unlawful or violate other student, faculty or staff policies, such as the University's Community Standards. It is the organizers' responsibility to familiarize themselves with related policies that could impact the success of their rally, protest, fixed exhibit or demonstration. Please see Related Laws, Regulations, Statutes, and Policies below.

Building Occupancy

North Park community members hosting protests, rallies, fixed exhibits or demonstrations must do so in a manner consistent with established building occupancy codes. Doing so is but one measure of ensuring the safety of participants. Building occupancy will be determined by the Physical Plant and Campus Safety based on square footage requirements, current furniture configuration and proper egress. Building opening and closing times will be determined by Campus Safety based on regularly scheduled usage, which varies depending on the time of year. Building occupancy and opening/closing times can be obtained from Campus Safety.

Restriction from Buildings (individuals and groups)

The University may deny individuals access to all or some University property, if a person(s) is known to have or has engaged in inappropriate activity, suspicious activity, or other behavior that is or is likely to be threatening, violent, or disruptive to University operations and activities. North Park University may restrict access to buildings and outdoor areas during both business and nonbusiness hours.

Disorderly Conduct

Conduct which is disorderly; breach of peace; or aiding, abetting, or procuring another person to breach the peace on University premises or at functions sponsored by, or participated in by, the University is prohibited. This applies to all students, faculty and staff at North Park University. Failure to abide by

the policy may result in disciplinary action through the appropriate student or employee conduct process. Student, staff and faculty process may be found in respective handbooks.

Those that are not a North Park University student, staff, or faculty member whose actions are deemed disorderly conduct, as described above, may be subject to be banned from campus and/or have a No Trespass Order issued.

Disruption and Obstruction

The following actions are prohibited:

- Intentional or unintentional obstruction of the free flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic on University premises or at University-sponsored or supervised functions.
- Participation in any behavior which disrupts the normal operations of the University and infringes on the rights of other members of the University community is also prohibited.
- Actions that endanger, either intentionally or unintentionally, students, other members of the University community, or the academic process.
- Unauthorized entry, use, or occupancy of University facilities and properties.
- Refusal to vacate a University event, facility, or property when directed to do so by a University official.
- Damage to persons or property, or any other criminal conduct.

This applies to all students, faculty and staff at North Park University. Failure to abide by the policy may result in disciplinary action through the appropriate student or employee conduct process. Student, staff and faculty process may be found in respective handbooks.

Noise Levels

While amplified sounds (voices, music) may be part of a protest, rally, or demonstration, those that impact the operations of the University may need to be lowered at the discretion of the University official on site. When amplified sound is appropriate, it may only be used during the hours of 9am and 10pm. Examples of noise levels that may impact University operations are as follows but not limited to:

- Amplified sound that disrupts classes or exams.
- Noise that prevents staff from conducting meetings or phone calls.
- Music or chanting that makes it difficult for students to concentrate in nearby classrooms or academic areas.
- Sound that violates local noise ordinances.

Special Circumstances

The University recognizes that some demonstrations may occur over a period of hours or days (i.e. late night into morning events). Similarly, some protests, rallies, fixed exhibits or demonstrations may draw large attendance warranting the need for an increased presence among University officials including Campus Safety. Any such events will require the approval of the Dean of Students, Chief Financial Officer, Senior Director of Human Resources, Provost, or designee, who will consult with the Campus Security, Physical Plant and other campus departments as necessary. It will also be necessary that the

faculty or staff advisor associated with the club or organization be present throughout the duration of the event when it occurs over a period of hours or days, is expected to draw a large crowd, or when a counter protest should be anticipated.

Definitions:

Demonstrations, classroom speakers, spontaneous events, fixed exhibits and counter protests are defined above in the Policy Element section.

For the purpose of this document the terms public speech, rally, march, demonstration, and protest are used interchangeably.

Suspicious behavior or activity can be any action that is out of place and deviates from the usual day-to-day activity of our campus community. Examples are, but not limited to, leaving packages or bags behind, abruptly changing behavior or direction when seen, some paying unusual attention to a building, facility or group of people.

Disruptive behavior refers to any actions that hinder an instructor's ability to teach or a student's ability to learn. It also encompasses behavior that disrupts other college activities, such as college-sponsored events or accessing buildings for university business or instruction. Disruptive behavior can be overt or passive and may include, but is not limited to, physical violence, verbal abuse, threats, refusal to follow instructions given by a university official within their responsibilities or displaying uncooperative attitudes during routine activities.

Campus Environment refers to the physical, digital, and social settings—both on-site and online—that are managed or endorsed by the university to support learning, collaboration, and community engagement. This includes facilities, buildings, and outdoor spaces; university-sponsored events; official websites and digital platforms; and licensed online tools such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom.

Procedures:

Community Notification

Whenever possible, the North Park University community will be notified to the extent possible that a protest or demonstration will be, or is, taking place.

Advance Arrangements

Individual students, recognized student clubs and organizations and employees may organize protests, rallies, fixed exhibits or demonstrations in concert with the Dean of Students Office, Office of Intercultural Student Affairs, Office of the Provost and/or Human Resources. Working with these offices as they would for the planning of any community program, students and clubs/organizations must submit a request no less than 14 business days prior to the date of the proposed protest, rally, fixed exhibit or demonstration. This will ensure that University officials can assist students in the planning of their event, and to help anticipate the possibility of counter protests (see Counter Protests). North Park University staff or faculty will be present during protests, rallies, or demonstrations to monitor the event's safety and to ensure the event does not interrupt University operations.

Protests, rallies, fixed exhibits or demonstrations slated to occur on an adjacent street or sidewalk (see Approved Locations) may require city permits and/or adherence to city ordinances. Students proposing such events will need to work within the parameters as set forth by local and state government.

Failure to abide by the policy may result in disciplinary action through the appropriate student or employee conduct process. Student, staff and faculty process may be found in respective handbooks.

Protests, rallies, fixed exhibits or demonstrations are required to have a staff or faculty member present during protests, rallies, or demonstrations to monitor the event's safety and to ensure the event does not interrupt University operations.

For a complete resource on how to plan an event and policies surrounding event planning, please reference the Registered Student Handbook.

Approved Locations for Outdoor Demonstrations Include:

- The Green Space in front of the Johnson Center
- The Front Lawn in front of Old Main and Wilson Hall
- The circular drive in front of Old Main
- Christiana Ave in front of Brandel Library and Sohlberg Hall
- The Hump

Protests and demonstrations may not take place in classrooms, corridors, or in or near administrative offices, but may take place inside designated University event spaces if approved in advance.

To request to use a space on campus, please use the 25Live system. The Dean of Students Office, Office of Intercultural Student Affairs, Human Resources or Office of the Provost can reserve a campus space for the event.

As part of advanced planning, event organizers can work with the Dean of Students Office, Office of Intercultural Student Affairs, Office of the Provost and Human Resources to identify an indoor campus space that could serve as a location in inclement weather or other location that would meet an extenuating need of the event.

The Dean of Students and/or Provost must approve any structure (stage, tent, etc.) to be erected for use during a protest, rally, fixed exhibit or demonstration. Necessary consultation will occur with Campus Security and Physical Plant.

All University-owned buildings are private property. The public spaces include the following public streets; Foster Avenue, Kedzie Avenue, Sawyer Avenue, Argyle Avenue, Carmen Avenue, Spaulding Avenue and the bordering sidewalks.

Solicitation and Distribution of Information

Handbills, pamphlets, flyers and quarter-sheets may be distributed on any location on campus except in classrooms or offices in use. When handbill distribution is associated with a particular event, whether indoor or outdoor, the locations of distribution may be restricted to preserve safety and security but

material distribution may not be wholly prevented or unnecessarily restricted (e.g. at a campus event-commencement etc.). Solicitation must be in accordance with University policy for approval for distribution of posters, handbills, pamphlets, flyers and quarter-sheets as well as the Social Media Guideline.

Posters, Placards, Banners and Signs

Students, student organizations, faculty, staff, and employees commonly post signs and flyers to inform the University community of upcoming events or expressing their opinions. The University allows this practice within regulations designed to reasonably govern what, when and where the event takes place for the protection of the students, University property, and appearance of the campus.

Banners and/or signs must be approved in accordance with University Policy found in the student, staff and faculty respective handbooks.

Placards, banners, and signs used during a protest, rally, fixed exhibit or demonstration may not impede upon the operations of the University and thus should not block sidewalks, entryways, or the like. While allowed, if found to impede upon the operation of the University, placards, banners, and signs may be relocated at the request of University officials.

Media/Public Relations

The University Marketing and Communications is responsible for communications including media relations, public relations, publications, advertising/marketing, and web sites for the University. All communications with the media should be coordinated through the University Marketing and Communications. Students are encouraged to contact the University Marketing and Communications with items that might be of interest. Faculty, staff, and students may not speak on behalf of the University unless previously approved.

Forms: none

Related Laws, Regulations, Statutes, and Policies:

It is the organizers' responsibility to familiarize themselves with related policies that could impact the success of their rally, protest, fixed exhibit or demonstration, including but not limited to the following:

- Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation
- Community Standard 1.4: Failure to Comply
- Community Standard 2.6: Disruptive Behavior
- Community Standard 2.8: Noise/Quiet Hours
- Community Standard 2:11: Actions that endanger
- Community Standard 3.14: Unauthorized entry
- Late Night Events and Chaperones guidelines
- RSO Handbook

The Student Handbook can be found online at: www.northpark.edu/studenthandbook

Stakeholder review:

- Legal Review: July 2, 2024
- Senior Team members: July 2024, July 2025
- DOS Leadership Team: June 2024, May 2025
- Director of Campus Safety: June 2024, May 2025
- Student Engagement Leadership June 2024, May 2025
- Student Government Association: June 2024, June 2025
- Registrar: July 23, 2024, June 2025
- DEII Council: May 2025

Document History:

- Policy established: August 2020
- Converted and Updated to Policy Template: May 2024
- Last Reviewed: June 2025
- Next Review: June 2027, or as necessary