Public Expression Policy  {Adopted 2/15/12}

Interpretive Notes:

(a) These policies and guidelines refer to non-educational activities on University property and not to the conduct of academic or co-curricular activities that are governed by their own policies and standards. These policies do not refer to other officially approved University events that must follow established University event protocols.

(b) These policies and procedures are in addition to and supplement the Public Speakers, Programs, and Events policies in the Employee Handbook. In the event of a conflict between those policies and this policy, the stricter policy shall be followed.

(c) These policies and procedures apply to off-campus activities sponsored by the University or a University department or organization. The term ‘on-campus’ shall be interpreted broadly to include such activities.

A. Definition of public expression

Freedom of inquiry is encouraged at Oklahoma Christian University. However, in order to ensure an atmosphere in which open communication can occur without disrupting the academic mission or the daily functions of the University, this policy shall govern all forms of public expression activity on Oklahoma Christian University property, defined for this purpose as including activities such as, but not limited to: campus meetings and forums; public assembly and demonstrations; public speeches; and the distribution and/or posting of written materials or other forms of communication carried out in connection with these activities. As a private, nonprofit organization, Oklahoma Christian University enjoys certain rights regarding free speech and the University vigorously supports and defends those rights.

B. Definition of members of the on-campus college community

For the purpose of this policy, “members of the on-campus college community” are defined as currently enrolled students, current trustees and currently employed members of the faculty, administration, and staff.

C. Definition of visitors

Individuals who do not belong to any of the above identified groups are considered campus visitors. Except for visitors invited by a specific faculty member to speak in a specific academic class or activity, visitors who wish to speak on campus must be invited and approved by a vice presidential level administrator.
D. Public expression by members of the on-campus college community

Oklahoma Christian University encourages dialogue and opposing points of view and affords all members of the on-campus university community -- students, faculty and staff -- with substantial privileges with respect to freedom of public expression. This privilege, however, is subject to reasonable restrictions of time, place and manner so that the activities do not intrude upon or interfere with the academic mission and daily functions of the University, or with other rights of members of the on-campus college community as defined by University policies. Additionally, certain forms of speech that promote lawlessness, endanger others, are inflammatory, pornographic, or profane will not be allowed.

E. Procedures for public expression activities by members of the on-campus University community

1. Students must apply to the Office of the Dean of Student Life at least two business days prior to their requested date of activity. Employees must apply to the Director of Human Resources within that same time frame. Office hours are between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. When possible greater advance notice of the request is helpful to provide adequate consideration and make appropriate arrangements.

2. The Dean of Student Life or Director of Human Resources has one business day in which to (a) act on a request and communicate a decision to the person or organization making the request, or (b) request additional information necessary to make an informed decision, and then to act and communicate a decision after receiving such information. Decisions will take into account both any special circumstances that may relate to University activities and/or the burden the requested activity may place on the University's safety and administrative staffs. Any special conditions that attach to the requested activity must be stated in writing.

3. Public expression activities are authorized to occur only at one or more of the following three locations, if available, as assigned by the Dean of Student Life or the Director of Human Resources:

   • Student Center patio or in a designated inside common area
   • Lawson Commons
   • Brick courtyard area outside of Williams – Branch Center for Biblical Studies
   • The University may assign an indoor facility depending on need, weather or other factors.

4. The number of occasions on which specific individuals or groups will be permitted to engage in public expression activities will be limited to three times during a calendar year.
5. The total number of people engaging in public expression activities at any one location on campus may be limited by the Executive Vice President or his designee, or by any University vice president according to concerns related to space capacity, safety or potential disruption of the University’s other daily activities.

6. Any signs, placards or banners that are displayed must not be inflammatory to a reasonable person, may not use profanity or other defaming language, and in general must be in the spirit and meet the standards related to the treatment of others as described in the University’s Covenant.

7. Only microphones, bullhorns, or other amplification devices suitable for the area may be used. For some areas or times, none of these are suitable.

8. No sidewalks, building ingress and egress, campus traffic or parking or athletic facilities may be blocked, nor may normal University operations be impeded.

9. Physical or verbal harassment of members of the University community, or public expression activities in violation of this policy or outside of the hours or locations for which permission has been granted, will be cause for the immediate revocation of privilege for those involved. Any act of disorderly conduct will result in intervention by authorized campus personnel.

10. The time frames for notice and response may be waived by the University in cases of emergency, but such waivers shall be in the sole discretion of the University.

F. Campus visitors do not share the same privilege as members of the on-campus University community to participate in public expression activities on Oklahoma Christian University property.

1. Specifically, campus visitors are not permitted to be involved in public expression on University property except as invited participants at official, approved University events, or at events approved by a senior official of the University, and in a manner consistent with the intent of the event as approved by officials of the University. Furthermore, visitors’ presence on campus is not only contingent upon their compliance with standards maintained by the University, and as such, visitors may be asked to leave the campus at any time by an authorized official of the University. Visitors wishing to engage in public expression on the campus must submit to the Events Coordinator or to the Executive Vice President’s office a detailed, accurate, and complete written request of the nature, purposes, and content of the proposed public expression a minimum of five (5) working days in advance of the event, the approval of which must be in writing and shall be in the sole discretion of the University. The University shall have two (2) business days in which to (a) act on a request and communicate a decision to the person or organization making the
request, or (b) request additional information necessary to make an informed decision, and then to act and communicate a decision after receiving such information.

2. Visitors may not engage in activities which hinder or obstruct approved public expression or affect the University’s ability to provide a quiet, contemplative educational environment for its members. Any approved public expression by campus visitors must at a minimum meet the standards and limitations set forth above in paragraphs IV and V, as well as the “OC Covenant” and other campus regulations. Visitors acting in violation of this policy and/or the related guidelines or failing to accept the directions of authorized University authorities will be required to leave campus and may be referred to the local public authorities in the event of violations of applicable laws. Any police arrests and criminal charges are separate from judicial actions at Oklahoma Christian University.