

Policy Approval/Review Form

This form is used for the approval, amendment, removal or review of a Gordon State College policy. Once authorized with the President’s Signature, the policy will be posted to the Gordon State Website. This approval form will be filed in the Office of the President with Cabinet minutes noting approval.

Policy Title *	Freedom of Expression and Academic Freedom Policy
Department/Organization	Academic Affairs
Policy Editor	J. Ardovini, Ph.D.
Request Type	New <input type="checkbox"/> Amended/Edited <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Removed <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed Only <input type="checkbox"/>

OBJECTIVE (Briefly state your purpose.)

To publicize the accepted policies and procedures related to Academic Freedom.

RESOURCES AND CONSULTATION (Briefly describe the resources (i.e. website, link) used in developing, amending, removing, or reviewing the policy. Include names of other individuals who assisted with this change.)

Board of Regents Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom from the American Association of University Professors

BOR Policy 6.5 Freedom of Expression and Academic Freedom https://www.usg.edu/news/release/board_of_regent

COMMUNICATION PLAN (Identify how information about how the policy will be communicated to the college as well as training plans if applicable.)

GSC Policy Website:
<https://www.gordonstate.edu/departments/institutional-effectiveness/policies/academic-affairs-policies/index.htm>
 |
 Academic Catalog

Authorizations

Chair/Dean/or Supervisor Signature and Date: _____

Cabinet Sponsor (VP) Signature and Date: J. Ardovini, Ph.D. Digitally signed by J. Ardovini, Ph.D. Date: 2023.06.02 14:29:54 -04'00'

President Signature and Date: Donald Green Digitally signed by Donald Green Date: 2023.06.08 10:28:40 -04'00'

***Policy Template must be submitted with this form.**



POLICY TEMPLATE

A separate "Policy Approval/Review Form" must be included with any policy submissions to Cabinet.

Policy Name:				
Responsible Cabinet Member:		New		
Responsible Office:		Amendment/Revision		
Contact:		Review Only		

1. **Policy Statement**

2. **Reason for Policy**

3. **Who Should Read this Policy**

4. **Resources**

5. **Definitions**

6. **The Policy (or “See Attached”)**

GORDON STATE COLLEGE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION PROCESS

A. GENERAL OVERVIEW

Gordon State College (“GSC”) recognizes and upholds the rights protected by the First Amendment, including the rights of free speech and free expression, and the right to assemble peaceably. Demonstrations, assemblies, and dissemination of information can be valid expressions for dissenting opinions provided they do not disrupt academic and administrative functions of the institution. This process in no way prohibits individuals enrolled at or employed by GSC (“members of the College Community”) from engaging in conversations on campus and does not apply to College-sponsored activities, but rather only establishes a designated public forum on GSC’s campus for outside speakers. This process shall apply to all non-commercial speech on the Gordon State College campus and any other Gordon State College facilities.

The opinions expressed by organizations, groups or individuals using GSC facilities do not necessarily reflect the position of GSC. The College affirms its commitment to freedom of speech, assembly, and expression even though the language or ideas of those seeking a venue for free expression may contradict the Colleges ideals and policies or the personal views of GSC employees and students. By placing reasonable limitations on time, place, and manner of speech, GSC does not take a position on the content or viewpoint of the expression, but rather allows for a diversity of viewpoints to be expressed in an academic setting.

B. DESIGNATION OF PUBLIC FORUM ON GSC’S CAMPUS FOR OUTSIDE SPEAKERS

To better facilitate the free exchange of ideas, GSC has designated the Amphitheater on West Campus and the concrete patio at the Student Activity and Recreation Center (SARC) on East Campus as public forum spaces on GSC’s campus (“Public Forum Areas”). The Public Forum Areas are generally available from 8am – 5pm, Monday - Friday, provided that the Public Forum Areas have not previously been reserved. Reservations will only be processed on days that GSC’s Administrative Offices are open for business (“college business days”). Though reservations to use the Public Forum Areas are only required as set forth in Section C and Section D below, GSC recommends that all parties interested in using the Public Forum Areas submit a formal reservation request to the Office of Student Affairs so that the College may minimize scheduling conflicts, accommodate all interested users, and provide for campus safety.

C. MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE COMMUNITY

Members of the College Community include students, faculty, staff, and their invited guests. Members of the College Community who plan to engage in expressive activity on campus may

utilize all unrestricted outdoor areas of Gordon State as Public Forums Areas and reservations are not required. Groups that are expected to consist of 30 or more persons are encouraged to submit a formal reservation request to the Office of Student Affairs prior to the scheduled activity. Prior notice is only requested to ensure that there is available and sufficient space for the large group event, that necessary College resources are existing for crowd control and security, and that the academic and other operations of the College are not disrupted. However, please note, reservations are not required.

D. PERSONS WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE COMMUNITY

Individuals or groups of persons who are not enrolled at or employed by GSC may only engage in expressive activity on GSC's campus in the Public Forum Areas and only after submitting a completed reservation request to the Office of Student Affairs at least two college business days prior to the scheduled expression and obtaining approval in writing from a Student Affairs official pursuant to the procedures set forth in Section E below. Organizers are encouraged to submit their requests as early in the planning stages of the event as possible. This provision does not apply to classroom instruction or College-sponsored events.

E. PROCEDURES FOR FORUM RESERVATION REQUESTS AND APPEALS

Completed reservation requests should be submitted at least two college business days prior to the scheduled expression. Reservation requests will be processed on a first-come, first-serve basis without regard to content or viewpoint of the expression.

The Office of Student Affairs will respond to all requests as soon as possible, but in no event more than one college business day after receipt of the request, either authorizing the reservation and noting any special instructions, if applicable, or setting forth the reason for denial of the reservation. The Student Affairs official may only deny a reservation request for one of the following reasons:

1. The Reservation Request is not fully completed;
2. The Reservation Request contains a material falsehood or misrepresentation;
3. The Public Forum Areas have been previously reserved, in which case the College will designate another appropriate date, time, or location to accommodate the expression;
4. The use or activity intended by the applicant would conflict with or disturb previously planned programs organized and conducted by the College;
5. The Public Forum Areas are not large enough to accommodate the expected or actual number of persons engaging in large group expression, in which case the College must provide a reservation for the applicant at an alternate location that can safely accommodate the expression provided that the applicant is a member of the College Community and that such a location exists on the GSC campus;
6. The use or activity intended by the applicant would present a danger to the health or safety of the applicant, other members of the College Community, or the public; or

7. The use or activity intended by the applicant is prohibited by law, GSC policy, or Board of Regents policy.

When assessing a reservation request, the Student Affairs official must not consider or impose restrictions on the expression based on the content or viewpoint of the expression.

All appeals must be made in writing to the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs within one week of being denied a reservation request. The Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, or their designee, must respond to the appeal in writing within one college business day.

F. GENERAL PROVISIONS

In addition to the requirements set forth above, all individuals expressing themselves on GSC's campus must comply with the following guidelines and provisions:

- There must be no obstructions to and from buildings, no interference with other authorized and scheduled College activities, no impediments of passersby, or any disruptions of normal activities of the College.
- Sound amplification (including microphones and bullhorns) is not permitted due to the disruption of classes and other academic and administrative functions of the College.
- Gordon State College equipment will not be available for assemblies, demonstrations, or protest activities.
- Events may not present a threat to public safety as determined by the Office of Public Safety or another College official.
- Open flame devices and bonfires are prohibited.
- Items may not be affixed to permanent structures.
- Camping and the use of temporary shelters as such activities are prohibited.
- Non-commercial written materials may be distributed. The Campus Solicitation Policy covers the distribution of commercial materials.
- The individuals or groups engaging in expression are required to remove signs, placards, litter, and all other materials when the approved activity period ends.
- Any activity that results in damage or destruction of property owned or operated by the College or property belonging to students, faculty, staff, or guests of the College is prohibited.
- In the case of inclement weather, the assembly, demonstration or protest activity will be postponed until the next available assembly date that the group would like provided that the Public Forum Areas are available during that date and time.
- Compliance with the Gordon State College Student Code of Conduct regulations, Gordon State College policies and procedures, University System of Georgia policies and procedures, Barnesville city laws, Georgia state laws, and federal law is required.

The College reserves the right to deny individuals or groups the ability to assemble, demonstrate, or protest if the individuals or groups refuse to abide by the administrative procedures and guidelines. The authorized representative and/or person in charge of the expression is required to acknowledge, in writing, compliance with these administrative procedures and guidelines and to agree to make restitution for any litter or damage that occurs due to the expressive activity.

To access the Public Forum Areas reservation request form, go to the Office of Student Affairs [website](#) and click on “Public Forum Reservation Requests” tab in the Student Affairs Information section. For more information, please review the Board of Regents Policy Manual – 6.5 Freedom of Expression.