



University of Massachusetts Lowell

Policy Title:	Demonstration Policy
Policy Number:	PS-6-101
Responsible Office:	University Police
Responsible Position:	Director of Public Safety/Chief of Police

I. Policy Statement:

The primary function of a university is to discover and disseminate knowledge by means of research and teaching. To fulfill this function, a free interchange of ideas is necessary not only within the university but also with the larger society. At UMass Lowell, freedom of expression is vital to our shared goal of pursuing knowledge. Such freedom comes with a responsibility to welcome and promote this freedom for all, even in disagreement or opposition.

The right of freedom of expression at the University includes peaceful protests and orderly demonstrations. At the same time, the University has long recognized that the right to protest and demonstrate does not include the right to engage in disruptive conduct.

Faculty, staff, students, contractors, and visitors of the University Community who engage in disruptive conduct will be subject to appropriate administrative actions, which may include disciplinary action as well as civil and/or criminal penalties.

II. Purpose:

This policy has been created to govern the demonstration, assembly, and or picketing by individuals and groups on University Property.

III. Scope:

This policy applies to all persons participating in assemblies and/or demonstrations on University property or property under the control of the University. Application of this policy does not preclude the application of other University policies or regulations or any other state or federal laws or regulations that may be warranted by a given situation.

IV. Definitions:

Disruptive Conduct:

Disruptive Conduct is conduct that substantially obstructs, impairs, or interferes with the teaching, study, research, or administration of the University.

V. Procedures:

Advance Arrangements:

Individuals and/or organizations should make advance arrangements with the University Police for any activity covered by the scope of this policy.

To ensure its successful execution, the notification should be submitted via email (police@uml.edu) at least two business days before the start of the event. The requester will provide their contact information so that professional staff can follow up with any additional information. All protests or demonstrations in any building where such activity is allowed pursuant to the terms of this policy requires prior permission by University Police.

Building Occupancy:

For a protest or demonstration, attention must be paid to the occupancy limits and general safety of the University community in the space used. Adherence to normal building operating hours is expected of people participating in a protest or demonstration within a University building. University officials will require that protestors or demonstrators leave at the time of building closure. Residence halls, faculty and administrative offices, libraries, utilities, emergency/communication facilities, classrooms, labs, and other instructional facilities are not appropriate areas for protests or demonstrations.

Counter-Protest:

A protest, demonstration, or event on campus may invite another form of protest. When these occasions arise, the expression of all parties is important. Please note that a separate protest area may be designated by University Police for those persons with views that differ from the views held by the event organizers. To ensure the safety of all participants, the University Police may require the attendance of one or more officers. Free speech zones may be designated for demonstrators or counterdemonstrators depending on the event's size, scope, and complexity.

Identification:

All persons participating in protests and demonstrations are expected to provide a form of university-issued or government-issued identification upon request from a University official.

Noise Level:

All protests and demonstrations held outdoors must be conducted in a manner that does not disrupt University operations or adjacent businesses and residences.

Placards, Banners, and Signs:

Placards, banners, and signs are generally allowed, but may not be dangerous for others or impede their participation in university life. If the use of any placard, banner, or sign is deemed to be dangerous or impede the participation of others, University officials will require the individuals carrying the placard, banner, or sign to move to a different location or remove their material(s).

Protest and Demonstration Duration:

Properly requested protests and demonstrations are normally permitted until or unless University officials determine that University operations have been compromised and/or the rights of others have been significantly infringed. Interference with instruction, study, and research is viewed as particularly disruptive to the University.

Restrictions:

To provide the rights of the University's community the freedom of assembly and speech and to provide an atmosphere in which these rights may be expressed without disrupting the College's curricular programs, UMass Lowell places the following restrictions on the time, place, and manner under this policy. No person/organization shall:

- Impede the progress of passersby.
- Harass, detain, or otherwise try to coerce anyone to take material or make transactions.
- Interfere with, impair, or impede the flow of vehicular or pedestrian traffic, classes, events, or normal and essential college operations.
- Solicit donations of money through direct requests for funds, sales, or otherwise.
- Solicit or provide information for the purpose of requests for funds, sales, or otherwise.
- Assemblies and/or demonstrations are limited to appropriate public forums, which do not include, among other locations, residence halls, faculty and administrative offices, libraries, utilities, emergency/communication facilities, classrooms, labs, and other instructional facilities. To the extent that a public forum exists within the University building, any demonstrations within that forum shall occur only during the building's normal operating hours and subject to prior permission by University Police pursuant to the terms of this policy.
- The University's prior permission must be obtained to erect any structures, whether permanent, semi-permanent or temporary, as part of the use of any space at the University. Such structures include but are not limited to information tables, standing signs or banners, barriers, fencing, canopies, and tents.

If determined by the University, staff, and police may be present throughout to ensure public safety and adherence to applicable University policies.

VI. Responsibility:

Civil Disobedience:

Some groups use civil disobedience—nonviolent unlawful conduct engaged in intentionally—as a form of protest. The First Amendment does not protect civil disobedience. If this tactic is chosen to draw attention to the cause, consequences can ensue, including arrest and/or referral to the student conduct process.

Policy Management:

The Chief of Police will be primarily responsible for applying and implementing this policy. The Office of Student Affairs, Emergency Management Team Members, and/or the University Police may be called upon to be present at and monitor protests, demonstrations, and other events on or adjacent to University property. If called upon, the

professional staff will work actively to preserve an environment of spirited and open discourse and debate; allowing for the opportunity to have all participants contribute to intellectual exchange and full participation in an event. In instances of disruptive behavior or violations of University policies, the Campus Demonstration Assessment and Response Team (C-DART) and/or University Police will be notified and take appropriate action.

With the appropriate advance notice, University Police, together with the C-DART and/or Office of the Dean of Students will engage with student protestors and demonstrators during the event to help assure participants' safety and to assist organizers in seeing that the demonstration does not disrupt the normal functioning of the University. For events occurring on public sidewalks and streets adjacent to the University, demonstrators should adhere to city ordinances and applicable state and federal laws.

VII. Attachments:

- Demonstration Notification Form
- Guidelines for Responses to Demonstrations on University Property

VIII. Related Policies, Procedures and Announcements:

- Student Code of Conduct, # SA-7-101
- Campus Demonstration Assessment and Response Team (C-DART)

Effective As Of:	April 2019
Revised As Of:	October 2024
Next Review Date:	October 2027