



Policy of the University of Kentucky Governing Speakers From Off Campus (Approved By the Board of Trustees)

I. Policy

In the historical role of a democratic institution of higher learning devoted to the search for truth, the University of Kentucky is dedicated to maintaining on its campus a spirit of free intellectual inquiry and an open exchange of ideas. It promotes vigorous, uninhibited debate and discussion, as well as critical and objective evaluation of divergent points of view.

The University expects that various speakers who come to the campus will represent different shades of opinion and that some will express controversial and unpopular views. It is essential to free inquiry and the ultimate discovery of truth that all ideas be freely expressed and freely subjected to critical analysis in the University setting. To this end the University has reexamined and reaffirms and makes explicit its traditions in this area.

It is the policy of the University to encourage its administration, faculty and students to invite outside speakers to its campus. The appearance of such speakers does not imply approval or disapproval of them or of their views. They are brought to the campus because it is believed that their discussions will further the educational goals of the University.

The University will act responsibly in inviting speakers and expects its guests to act responsibly. Its policies require that no law or governing regulation of the University be violated by the speech or program. The University also requires that meetings on its campus at which off campus speakers appear be peaceful and orderly and in no way interfere with the proper functioning of the University. Further, the University through the Office of the President may prescribe conditions for the conduct of programs at which off-campus speakers appear. These conditions may include requiring a University official or a senior faculty member to chair the program, requiring opportunity for comments and questions from the floor, or such other practices as may be necessary to preserve order and to insure an atmosphere of open exchange of ideas. In addition, the President may take appropriate action to insure that the University community is provided with a balanced exposure to divergent opinions on controversial issues.

The protection of student freedom of discussion on the campus is a necessary facet of the preservation of the spirit of free inquiry to which the University is dedicated. The faculty must bear the major responsibility for carrying out the University's mission of producing and disseminating knowledge. The conduct of this mission requires an atmosphere of freedom to examine and discuss all ideas, including the novel and sometimes unpopular. The University expects the examination and discussion of ideas to be conducted in a fashion appropriate to the educational function and dignity of the University in accordance with its policies. Subject to this expectation and their own exercise of responsibility and discretion, faculty members, administrators, and registered student organizations are free to bring speakers to the campus of the University, providing that proper arrangements for the use of University facilities have been made.

Revision History

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For questions, contact: [Office of Legal Counsel](#)