

Oregon State University - Office of Student Life

Quick reference guide to supporting protest

Freedom of Expression

At Oregon State University, differences and dissenting viewpoints are not only tolerated but encouraged as part of the educational process. As a community, we recognize that from time to time, freedom of expression is a right that may raise strong emotional responses when put into practice. Please view the full statement on Freedom of Expression at OSU here: <http://main.oregonstate.edu/freedom-expression>

Philosophy

As a land grant institution, Oregon State University is an incubator of innovative thought and perspectives as diverse as our state. Protecting and promoting freedom of speech and expression is the very bedrock of learning and should be at the center of university experience. Generating and exploring innovative ideas and realities requires us to advance multiple perspectives at once and engage in dynamic discourse. We will always strive to create and maintain active communication with protesters, both during and after an event.

We commit to respecting freedom of speech and expression, while also advancing our values of equity for all community members. In instances where the content of a protest contrasts with our institutional values, a counter speech response from the university may be appropriate. As an institution, we reserve the right to speak against messages that are contrary to our educational mission and values, encourage more dialogue, and continue to provide opportunities for learning.

Priorities

Our institutional priorities when responding to protest are:

1. Attend to the physical safety of demonstrators and the campus community
2. Engage with demonstrators about their issues of concern
3. Commit to working with demonstrators and follow up on any of their issues of concern that are identified as being directed at the University

Intention of the procedures

Oregon State University is committed to being a campus community that supports the right to assemble for many reasons, such as: to express differing opinions, to communicate dissent, or to request certain actions from the University. We believe that supporting these rights requires that we have a fully transparent plan.

The Procedures for Response to Protest is the document that supports those rights and helps us come to an understanding as a community about our shared approach and priorities. This document also allows us formally and broadly share our expectations (e.g. to use the lowest level of response that is appropriate) and philosophical structure (seeking to engage with demonstrators and recognizing express as an important value of our institution) across all levels of leadership and those working to respond to demonstrators on the ground. This document should be used in conjunction with OSU's Time Place Manner Policy, as well as the University's Freedom of Expression statement.

We intend for this document to provide guidance to university representatives at every level, so that we all understand how our engagement with protest must be consistent with our shared priorities and institutional values.

Your role pre-activism

If a member of the OSU community comes to you requesting support on plans to assemble (demonstrate, protest, etc.), the Office of Student Life maintains tools and resources designed to help facilitate and support peaceful protest. The Dean of Student Life, or designee, can meet with representatives, as requested, to help think through the planned protest and address issues of safety, goals, and potential concerns. This is never required, but offered freely as one tool in our toolkit.

If you become aware of a protest in progress, contact the Dean of Student Life at 541-737-8748. The Dean of Student Life will initiate the response plan, as needed. Your responsibilities are to:

- Know OSU's statement on Freedom of Expression and exhibit values consistent with that statement.
- Know OSU's statement and institutional priorities in supporting protest and exhibit values consistent with that statement.
- Remain calm, supportive, and content neutral.
- Contact the Dean of Student Life for support and guidance: 541-737-8748

