



BOSTON COLLEGE

Student Demonstration Policy

Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs

Boston College has a longstanding commitment to protecting the right to free expression, including the right to protest. Discourse is central to the life of the university and we encourage students to engage in dialogue in a spirit of mutual respect, civility and care. At the same time, we prioritize the safety and well-being of students who take part in demonstrations and rallies and of other members of our campus community who are affected by these events. Additionally, we must seek to carefully balance the sometimes competing interests of the University and its community to engage in learning, teaching, research and other University-sponsored activities, and to promote the distinctive mission of Boston College without undue disruption or interference.

To ensure that public demonstrations do not violate directly or indirectly the rights of others by preventing or disrupting the ordinary operation of the University, all activities in the nature of a public speech, rally, demonstration, march, protest or other coordinated event (“demonstrations”) must be registered and approved in advance by the Associate Vice President for Student Engagement and Formation or designee. Boston College reserves the right to condition the time, place and manner of proposed demonstrations, and to withhold approval of proposed demonstrations which reasonably appear to be organized by or on behalf of persons or organizations that are not affiliated with Boston College, or which are intended or deemed likely to disrupt or interfere with University operations, or to adversely impact the mission of Boston College, especially its Jesuit, Catholic dimensions.

Process of Approval:

To ensure they are organized by and for members of the University community, all demonstrations must have a University-affiliated Organizer, whether one or more enrolled students or the authorized officers of a recognized student organization. The Organizer must meet with the Associate Vice President for Student Engagement and Formation or designee to coordinate the event and is encouraged to schedule this meeting well in advance. The planned demonstration may be scheduled no less than 2 business days after this meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to review the details of the proposed demonstration including proposed time, place, manner and size of the event. If the Organizer is planning the event on behalf of a recognized club or organization, the advisor to the club or organization should attend this meeting as well.

Reservation of campus space for any approved event is contingent upon availability. To maintain an academic environment free from disruption during class time, the University has established a policy on amplified sound (which may be found in the [Student Organization Manual](#)). Under this policy, amplified sound may not be used in areas near academic and administrative buildings or worship and reflection spaces - including O'Neill Plaza - until after 5:00 pm. If a student wishes to register a demonstration and use amplified sound prior to 5:00 pm, this request will be considered and, if approved, an alternative location that is not located near academic and administrative buildings or worship and reflection spaces will be identified.

The Organizer of the event is responsible for all costs associated with the event (including security if deemed necessary by the University). If the Organizer believes they may encounter budget limitations, they should reach out to the Associate Vice President for Student Engagement and Formation or designee as early as possible to plan for event costs.

If approved, the event must be conducted in accordance with any special conditions outlined in the approval, the guidelines set forth below, all applicable policies set forth in the Code of Student Conduct, as well as local, state, and federal law. The Organizer is responsible to take reasonable steps to ensure compliance with these requirements by all participants, and may be held accountable for violations of such requirements by any persons involved in the demonstration.

By way of example only, demonstrations involving any of the following activities will be deemed disruptive and unacceptable:

- Obstruction or disruption of the affairs of the University or daily operation of the University including, without limitation, teaching, research, public presentations, administration, conduct procedures, worship activities or events, athletic or dramatic events, special University-wide or alumni events, or placement or recruitment services.
- Unauthorized entry to a University facility or grounds and/or failure to leave a University facility or grounds when requested to do so by a representative of the University.
- Obstruction of the entrance or exit to a University facility or a campus roadway.

Organizing or participating in a demonstration without prior authorization may result in conduct action.