

# University of Oregon Policy Library

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## Freedom of Inquiry and Free Speech

Last Updated: 07/01/2010

Effective Date: 07/01/2010

Reason for Policy:

To describe University policy and commitment regarding free speech and freedom of inquiry.

[Academic Affairs \(http://academicaffairs.uoregon.edu/\)](http://academicaffairs.uoregon.edu/)

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Policy Statement:

The University of Oregon values and supports free and open inquiry. The commitment to free speech and freedom of inquiry described in this policy extends to all members of the UO community: Faculty, staff, and students. It also extends to all others who visit or participate in activities held on the UO campus.

Free speech is central to the academic mission and is the central tenet of a free and democratic society. The University encourages and supports open, vigorous, and challenging debate across the full spectrum of human issues as they present themselves to this community. Further, as a public institution, the University will sustain a higher and more open standard for freedom of inquiry and free speech than may be expected or preferred in private settings.

Free inquiry and free speech are the cornerstones of an academic institution committed to the creation and transfer of knowledge. Expression of diverse points of view is of the highest importance, not solely for those who present and defend some view but for those who would hear, disagree, and pass judgment on those views. The belief that an opinion is pernicious,

false, and in any other way despicable, detestable, offensive or "just plain wrong" cannot be grounds for its suppression.

The University supports free speech with vigor, including the right of presenters to offer opinion, the right of the audience to hear what is presented, and the right of protesters to engage with speakers in order to challenge ideas, so long as the protest does not disrupt or stifle the free exchange of ideas. It is the responsibility of speakers, listeners and all members of our community to respect others and to promote a culture of mutual inquiry throughout the University community.

Access to UO facilities and space is governed by a complementary policy, [Scheduling Use of UO Facilities. \(/policy/by/1/04000-facilities/scheduling-use-facilities\)](/policy/by/1/04000-facilities/scheduling-use-facilities)

Exclusions and Special Situations:

*The UO recognizes the contribution made by the University of Michigan policy statements and practice guides in this formulation of UO Policy.*

Forms/Instructions:

[Scheduling Use of UO Facilities. \(/policy/by/1/04000-facilities/scheduling-use-facilities\)](/policy/by/1/04000-facilities/scheduling-use-facilities)

Who is Governed by this Policy:

All staff, faculty, students, and visitors at the University.

Who Should Know This Policy:

Anyone who visits or participates in activities held on the UO campus.

Reviewed and Approved By:

Richard W. Lariviere, President

Date: 12/28/2010

Issued by:

Senior Vice President and Provost

Date: 06/07/2010

Revision History:

January 2010 - the Provost charged a work group, led by Russ Tomlin, to review and revise the current Campus Speakers policy. The work group included representatives from the faculty (Margie Paris-Law, Tim Gleason-SOJC), administration (Brian Smith-VPFA, Kathie Stanley-VPFA, and Beverlee Stilwell-Provost Office) and General Counsel (Randy Geller). The workgroup was also supported administratively by Pam Palanuk and Marilyn Skalberg.

The workgroup developed a draft policy that was discussed with the Faculty Advisory Council, the Deans, and Leadership Council. The draft policy was posted for comment on both the Provost's and Senate websites.

The final version incorporating revisions based on the ensuing feedback was reviewed and adopted by the Senate with minor revisions at its last meeting of May 26, 2010.

7 June 2010 - Approved by the Executive Leadership Team

28 December 2010 - Approved by the university president. [signature document](/files/policy-library/uploads/Lariviere_12-28-10_approval.pdf) ([/files/policy-library/uploads/Lariviere\\_12-28-10\\_approval.pdf](/files/policy-library/uploads/Lariviere_12-28-10_approval.pdf))

Original Source:  
UO Policy Statement

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Office of the Secretary

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