

Policy on External Speakers on Campus

Policy Title	Policy on External Speakers on Campus
Policy #	01.102.1
Policy Owner	Provost and Vice President for Student Affairs
Contact Information	Office of the Provost: (401) 874-4110 Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs: (401) 874-2427
Approved By	Senior Leadership Team
Effective Date	August 5, 2019
Next Review Date	No later than March 31, 2024
Who Needs to Know About this Policy	All University faculty, staff, students, alumni, partner organizations and donors and Sponsored Guests; any Recognized University Organization desiring to invite a Sponsored Guest to University Property.
Definitions	<p>Event: An appearance, gathering, speech, presentation, or performance by a Sponsored Guest.</p> <p>Non-Sponsored Event: An event held by a person or entity that is not a Sponsored Guest or a University Recognized Organization at a University venue under a commercial rental contract.</p> <p>Recognized University Organization: Any organization, academic program, or committee sanctioned by the University Administration or the Faculty Senate, or any student organization recognized by the Student Senate or Graduate Student Association and the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs.</p> <p>Sponsored Guest: Any external group, organization, presenter, speaker, or performer that is not a Recognized University Organization, and that is invited by, or on behalf of, a University Sponsor, to appear, gather, speak, or perform on University Property to a gathering other than a current University class listed in the University Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogue. Current members of the University’s faculty, staff, and enrolled student body are not Sponsored Guests and are not subject to the requirements of this policy.</p> <p>Sponsored Guest Review Committee: A standing committee established in accordance with University Manual Section 6.14.15 and composed of the Provost, the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Director of Public Safety, the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate, and the Presidents of the Student Senate and the Graduate Student Association. The Provost will serve as chair of the Committee. Membership in the Committee is limited to the incumbents of the positions (or the equivalent successor positions) listed, due to their specific responsibilities. Representatives of outside agencies may be invited by the Chair of the Committee to advise the Committee as needed.</p> <p>University Property: Property belonging to the State of Rhode Island and held in trust by the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees; property held by</p>

	<p>the University of Rhode Island or any of its component units in its own name; and property owned by third parties but assigned to, occupied by, or managed by the University or any of its component units.</p> <p>University Sponsor: The following persons, organizations, and organizational units that are members of the University community are eligible to invite and sponsor Sponsored Guests to speak or perform on University Property: (a) University Officers (e.g., the President); (b) academic or administrative units established by or recognized in the University Manual, or otherwise generally recognized as a discrete academic or administrative unit in the University Manual (e.g., the Provost’s Office, the Faculty Senate, the College of Pharmacy, the Office of International Education); or (c) a Recognized University Organization. Such parties shall be referred to herein as “University Sponsors.”</p>
<p>Statutes, Regulations, and Policies Governing or Necessitating This Policy</p>	<p>First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States</p> <p>University Manual, Sections 6.13.10 through 6.14.17</p>
<p>Reason for Policy/Purpose</p>	<p>The purpose of this policy is to reaffirm the University’s commitment to academic freedom and free expression as articulated in Article VII of the URI AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement and Chapter 6 of the University Manual in an effort to enrich the educational and scholarly environment by having access to a broad range of speakers and performers with demonstrated expertise, recognized talent or ability, and compelling, important and/or diverse knowledge, experience, and viewpoints. The enjoyment of the freedom to express points of view on the widest range of public and private concerns, however, is subject to reasonable restrictions to ensure the safety of the University community. This policy governs outside speakers and public events to ensure that University facilities are used in a manner consistent with University policy, to protect University persons and property, and to provide a positive, productive, and safe environment for the University community and speakers to express their ideas and viewpoints.</p>
<p>Forms Related to this Policy</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Policy Statement

The University of Rhode Island is dedicated to preserving academic freedom and the right of freedom of speech under the First Amendment and the facilitation of the exchange of ideas, as set forth in the University Manual, Sections 6.13.10 through 6.14.17. Section 6.13.10 in particular provides that:

“Speakers on Campus. Students and faculty alike may freely select the persons they wish to invite to the campuses of their respective institutions as guest speakers [free of limitations] other than those imposed by state and national law. Obviously, an invitation to a speaker does not imply approval or sponsorship of their views by the University or college or the Board of Governors, nor necessarily by the organization or

person inviting him/her. Both students and faculty possess the same rights as other citizens to hear different points of view and to draw their own conclusions.”

The purpose of this policy is to reaffirm the University’s commitment to freedom of speech and to establish the mechanism by which adequate provision is made for the preservation of the civil rights of every person involved and the safety and security of the University community and University Property.

The presence of a Sponsored Guest on the campus of the University of Rhode Island does not imply approval or endorsement by the University of the views expressed by the Sponsored Guest or by anyone else present at the event.

Applicability of the Policy

This policy applies to Sponsored Guests invited to any one of the URI campuses to present, speak, and/or perform. It covers Sponsored Guests regardless of whether remuneration or other consideration is offered to the Sponsored Guest for the requested appearance. Any Sponsored Guest must have a University Sponsor that is a Recognized University Organization.

This policy shall not apply to (1) an invited speaker in a class that is part of a duly approved course, or (2) external speakers invited for official University or departmental programs, colloquia, or speaker series.

External groups, organizations, presenters, speakers, or performers without a University Sponsor may not use University facilities except to the extent that they either (a) arrange to hire a University venue under a commercial contract through the Office of Conference Services and Special Program Development, the Memorial Union, the Ryan Center, or Boss Arena (See “Non-Sponsored Events at University Venues”, below), or (b) adhere to the policies and procedures described below pertaining to “Unaffiliated Speakers.”

A University vendor that is selected in accordance with the purchasing rules and regulations of the University or its agents, the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees, or the State of Rhode Island is not a Sponsored Guest.

Priority of Use

University academics, research, and activities will have priority for use of University facilities, grounds, and equipment. Subject to the requirements of this policy, and to Federal, State, and campus regulations and policies applicable to specific facilities, University facilities may be made available for use by Sponsored Guests provided those facilities are not otherwise needed by the University at that time and provided that such use by the Sponsored Guest does not disrupt campus business or activities; however the University reserves the right in its sole discretion to make space assignments in accordance with the University’s needs and priorities. In accordance with Section 6.14.12 of the University Manual, University control of campus facilities shall not be used as a device of censorship.

In accordance with Section 6.14.14 of the University Manual, if a formal protest or demonstration is held, it shall not—and persons, or signs or other devices used to express the protest shall not—block sight, hearing, access, or egress, or otherwise interfere with the orderly conduct of the event being protested or of normal University activities. In certain cases, where it is deemed reasonably necessary to ensure proper order, non-disruption, roadway access, and/or public safety, the University may require that the protest or demonstration be confined to a certain designated area of campus, or conversely to designated areas where the protesters or demonstrators may not go (e.g., must stay 25 feet or more from the stage where the speaker is speaking), so long as such area designation or limitation does not unreasonably diminish the ability of the protesters or demonstrators to reasonably convey their message to their intended audience(s).

Event Sponsorship

Any proposed Sponsored Guest must be sponsored by a University Sponsor, which must give notice of the Event to the Office of Public Safety no less than thirty (30) calendar days prior to the Event in order for the University to make adequate provision if needed for the Event. The Student Entertainment Committee may be granted an exception to the 30-day prior notice requirement for Sponsored Guests at the discretion of the Vice President for Student Affairs or designee. Other Sponsors may request an exception in writing to the Sponsored Guest Review Committee to the 30-day notice period for Sponsored Guests who become available on short notice. In inviting a Sponsored Guest to campus, University Sponsors must be aware that they have a responsibility to the University community to ensure that the Sponsored Guest's presence on campus will not threaten the security and safety of the University community or endanger University Property.

Controversial Sponsored Guests

If a Sponsored Guest is a highly placed government official, a celebrity, or a highly controversial person or organization, special arrangements for the Event may be required. Any such arrangements shall be made by the University. While more general rules and procedures relating to the invitation of controversial speakers will be devised by the Sponsored Guest Review Committee (which rules and procedures shall be consistent with other applicable University rules and regulations and shall be guided in part by considerations of community safety and well as the civil liberties of all involved), in all cases the University shall maintain final discretion and control over the specific "special arrangements" it deems appropriate in specific cases, consistent with University rules and regulations.

Conduct

Any Sponsored Guest present on or using University Property must during the period of presence or use adhere to applicable University policies and procedures and to federal, state, and local statutes, regulations, and ordinances, as well as special conditions established by the University in accordance with Section 6.14.15 of the University Manual for that Sponsored Guest. Failure to adhere to these policy conditions, including without limitation payment of amounts due, may result in suspension or termination of eligibility for presence on or use of University Property.

If as a result of the presence or behavior of the Sponsored Guest on University Property a protest, rally, or riot occurs or is threatened that poses an imminent threat to the University community as a result of participants becoming or anticipated to become disorderly, violent, or to potentially block university entrance, egress, or roads on University Property, the University has the right in its sole discretion at any time to revoke the Sponsored Guest's status and cancel the event.

Security

The University is committed to ensuring a safe and peaceful environment while protecting the First Amendment rights of those who wish to participate in Events hosted on campus. This policy is explicitly intended to support the right and ability of all eligible University Sponsors to host Events on campus and will be applied without regard for viewpoints, perspectives, or positions expressed in connection with those events.

In order to promote respectful discourse in an environment that is committed to welcoming diverse viewpoints, the University will enforce the following rules for Events occurring on University Property. University Public Safety and Campus Police will conduct a risk assessment of an Event involving the Sponsored Guest and make recommendations to minimize risks to the health and safety of the event participants, audience, the campus, and the surrounding community.

- Recommended security measures may include, but are not limited to, adjusting the venue, date, and time of the Event; providing additional law enforcement; imposing controls or security checkpoints; and creating buffer zones around the venue.

- In some cases, the University may, consistent with applicable constitutional principles and applicable laws, charge “security fees” to the University Sponsor to help the University defray its anticipated extra costs (e.g., the costs of hiring additional security personnel, or the costs of renting traffic barriers) relating to the Event. Such security fees may be based on objective criteria such as the anticipated size of the crowd expected to the event and the timing and location of the Event.
- Additional security fees may not be charged to Recognized University Organizations based solely (1) on concerns that the subject matter of the Event or the viewpoints, opinions, or anticipated expression of the Sponsored Guests, University Sponsor, or others participating in the Event might provoke disturbances, or (2) the cost of responding to such disturbances.
- In general, in cases where security fees are based on estimates of crowd size, the University will generally not take into account the number of anticipated attendees who oppose the views of the controversial speaker or will be protesting or demonstrating against the speaker, so as not to inappropriately burden the speech of the speaker or the speaker’s University Sponsor.
- Security fees will be based on standard rates for University or other security personnel and for any associated equipment costs or rentals.
- All Event attendees may be subject to search for contraband, weapons, drugs, alcohol, and other illegal or prohibited materials.
- Should the University Sponsor(s) or proposed Sponsored Guest and the University be unable to agree on implementation of security measures or recommendations, the University President or their designee will make the final determination as to whether the Event poses an imminent threat to the safety of the University community, the speaker, or the attendees or potential protesters, and therefore whether the event will proceed.
- If during an Event an imminent threat to safety or property arises which requires termination of the Event, authority to terminate the event rests with University Office of Public Safety.

Insurance and Indemnity

All Sponsored Guests must sign a University Sponsored Guest Agreement and provide evidence of required insurance as stipulated by the University Risk Manager. Additional insurance coverage and limits in excess of the minimum requirements may be required based on the risk assessment recommendations for the Event. The Risk Management Manager shall determine the insurance requirements for all Events conducted on University property.

Unaffiliated Speakers

Unaffiliated persons wishing to engage in public speaking, performance, or distribution of literature on outdoor University property may do so in designated locations. Unaffiliated persons wishing to utilize the spaces designated for such activities may do so by contacting the Director of the Memorial Union (<https://web.uri.edu/memorialunion/contact-us/>) no more than four (4) weeks in advance, and at least seven (7) days in advance, of the desired speaking/activity date. Reservations are allocated on a space-available basis with priority given to student groups/organizations and University-affiliated persons. Reservations are for two-hour blocks, with a maximum of one two-hour block per speaker per week. Use of spaces designated for public speaking, performance, or distribution of literature must conform to University regulations and policies and must not block pedestrian or vehicular traffic or impede normal University operations.

Rental of University Venues

In order to defray costs, the University from time to time rents out University venues to outside entities who are not Sponsored Guests under a commercial contract. These rentals are a commercial transaction and therefore the University reserves the right in its sole discretion to decide whether to rent out the facility for a given requested use.

University uses of the venue receives highest priority for these venues, with conflict among multiple University uses desiring to use the facility at a particular time prioritized by the University depending on the venue, as set forth in Priority of Use, above.

Use of the facility by non-sponsored guests for a Non-Sponsored Event under a commercial rental contract will be granted at the sole discretion of the University and will be evaluated in accordance with a number of criteria including but not limited to the following:

- Activities that are considered to be competing for the same audience as an Event for a University Sponsored Guest or a previously scheduled non-sponsored rental may be subject to a waiting period before and after a previously scheduled event at a University venue appealing to essentially the same patrons. In addition, the University may limit the number of competitive activities renting University venues within a given period.
- History of the proposed or a similar event at other venues elsewhere: injuries, damage to property, heavy security burdens, likelihood that the event will engender conflict or demonstrations, and other considerations will weigh against contract approval.
- Financial condition and reference check of the entity desiring to rent the venue.
- Demonstrated ability to meet the insurance requirement and other terms set forth in the contract.

Exceptions

None