

NUMBER: STAF 3.12
SECTION: Division of Student and Affairs and Academic Support
SUBJECT: Off-Campus Speakers
DATE: June 1, 1992
REVISED: April 19, 2016
Policy for: Columbia Campus
Procedure for: Columbia Campus
Authorized by: Vice President for Student Affairs
Issued by: Office of Student Life

I. Policy

The Board of Trustees is by law the governing board of the university and nothing in this statement of policy shall abrogate or limit in any way the authority of the Board in matters of governance.

The University of South Carolina is committed to the principle that students should be allowed to invite and/or hear any person of their own choosing. The campus is open to free discussion and the examination of views and ideas (popular and unpopular, orthodox and unorthodox) with the condition that such discussion or examination be accompanied by peaceful methods and conditions consistent with the scholarly nature of an academic community. Freedom of inquiry both in the classroom and in all other aspects of university life is essential to the search for truth, and therefore is a major tenet of the university's educational philosophy.

ACCOUNTABILITY - A positive effort is made to provide for a vigorous presentation of varied points of view under conditions of suitable scheduling and publicity. Invited speakers and their sponsoring organizations are accountable to campus and civil authorities for compliance with existing regulations and laws which are designed to prevent disruption of the University, injury to person or property, obscene behavior, or riot.

DISCLAIMER - The university encourages the expression of diverse opinions and views. At the same time however, the presentation of a particular view or opinion by a visiting speaker on campus does not imply university endorsement of that view.

II. Procedure

A. Speakers may be sponsored by registered student organizations, academic units, or university departments. The Associate Vice President for Student Life (or designee) shall

approve requests for campus facilities for off-campus speakers provided all applicable requirements are satisfied.

- B. The following information must be provided before the request can be considered for approval:
1. The proposed speaker's topic and sufficient biographical information to identify the proposed speaker, including the address and telephone number of the speaker or that of the agency representing the speaker.
 2. The following additional information may be required upon request:
 - a. A statement as to what non-university attendance, if any, is invited or expected.
 - b. An outline of the manner in which the event is to be publicized.
 - c. An outline of security measures planned (if applicable).
- C. The organization sponsoring the speaker must complete the online space request/event registration, completed by an officer of the organization, and submit to the Russell House University Union (RHUU) event services coordinator (Russell House - Room 218) at least two weeks prior to the planned event. Forms and related specific information can be obtained from the RHUU event services coordinator or by visiting the departmental website at www.sa.sc.edu/rhuu .
- D. Arrangements for the scheduled use of university facilities will be subject to administrative approval to prevent a conflict in scheduling and to assure appropriate attention to related concerns such as safety and security. When a negative decision must be made because of a scheduling conflict or related concern, the sponsoring organization is free to seek a more suitable date or other arrangement(s). Unless there are conflicts in scheduling, speaker appearances will be approved upon fulfillment of applicable requirements. An exception to routine approval occurs when the proposed speaker or activity is undesirable under criteria of the paragraph on accountability above, or when conditions within the university indicate that danger to persons or property might result from an appearance. The president of the university shall have final authority in these matters, whether upon review of the decision of the Associate Vice President for Student Life or upon appeal of such decision by the sponsoring organization.
- E. It shall be the responsibility of the sponsoring organization to provide speakers with a copy of the procedures governing off-campus speakers at the time of invitation. Once a speaker affected by the above procedures has been invited and his/her acceptance received, his/her appearance on the campus shall be governed by the following:
1. Student attendance at campus-wide events is not compulsory.

2. In order to assure free and open discussion, which is essential to safeguarding free institutions, the president of the university at his/her discretion and when he/she considers it appropriate, may require any or all of the following:
 - a. That a meeting be chaired by an officer of the university or by a ranking member of the faculty;
 - b. That speakers at the meeting be subject to questions from the audience;
 - c. That an opportunity be provided at the meeting, or later, to present speakers of different points of view.

III. Reason for Revision

Policy organization, content and accuracy reviewed in March 2016; no substantive revisions required.