

Policy on Campus Gatherings & Related Student Conduct Matters

The United States Constitution, the North Carolina Constitution, the laws of North Carolina and longstanding University policy combine to operate the University of North Carolina in a manner that balances the first duty of public safety of campus communities with an unflagging commitment to free expression and thought. It is that commitment to free expression and thought—and cultivating both among the approximately 250,000 students who enroll in the University annually—that sets the academic arena apart from other parts of society. The responsibility to balance the competing interests of public safety with free expression falls to the hundreds of campus professionals working every day in North Carolina in the areas of law enforcement, student affairs, and campus administration.

Such balancing must inherently be campus-based and does not lend itself to hard and fast “one-size fits all” prescriptions at a System-wide level. The Board of Governors does not operate each of the seventeen campuses of the University of North Carolina—indeed, that task would be insurmountable given the unique missions of our institutions and nature of the seventeen communities of which our campuses are vibrant hubs. Instead, the University rightly reaffirms the principle that operating our campuses is the duty of our chancellors as codified in Chapter 116 of the North Carolina General Statutes and *The Code*. The balancing and tailoring asked of each campus professional in doing his or her job is made even more complex given the myriad related federal and state laws, including those governing destruction of public property, free expression, trespass, access to buildings by persons with disabilities and the confidentiality of student and personnel information that serve their own important public policy goals.

I. Minimum Requirements for Campus Policies Regarding Mass Gatherings & Related Student Conduct

With this background in mind, each constituent institution of the University of North Carolina shall continue to comply with the following minimum principles in crafting and administering its campus-specific policies regarding public gatherings on campus and student discipline arising from conduct by students on sister campuses of the University of North Carolina:

1. **Reasonable Prior Notice & Reservation.** Each constituent institution shall maintain a mechanism whereby persons wishing to gather in groups larger than a size set by the campus must reserve or otherwise provide not less than 24-hours’ notice to the campus administration and the appropriate campus safety official of the intent to gather in indoor spaces located on campus or in specified outdoor areas for purposes other than university-sponsored instruction, classes, or research. These reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions tailored and crafted by the campus shall empower campus officials to prepare for and ensure the safety of students and other community members inside campus buildings and in specified outdoor areas.
2. **Fostering Spontaneous Expressive Activity.** Furthermore, to ensure that students, staff, and faculty may continue to assemble and engage in the “spontaneous expressive activity” encouraged and facilitated by [Section 1300.8 of the UNC Policy Manual](#), *Policy on Free Speech and Free Expression Within the University of North Carolina System*, each constituent institution shall ensure that the outdoor portions of the campus not specified as requiring a reservation or notice remain freely

accessible so long as they are not utilized in a manner that substantially interferes with or materially and substantially disrupts the institution's missions, as set out in Section IV of [Section 1300.8 of the UNC Policy Manual](#).

3. Safe Ingress & Egress & Sound Amplification. Each constituent institution shall ensure that its applicable policies governing student conduct and public gatherings prescribe clear rules about the maintenance of safe points of ingress and egress to each campus building and the use of sound-amplifying equipment near such building. Such clear rules should be crafted in a way that ensures that students, staff, and faculty residing, working, learning, and teaching are not disrupted while free expression continues.

4. Regulation of Camping. Each constituent institution shall ensure that its applicable policies governing public gatherings prohibit Camping on University Property without prior written approval from the appropriate campus official and the appropriate campus safety official. In accordance with UNC Policy and applicable state and federal law, any requests for approval from campus officials shall be determined in a viewpoint neutral manner considering necessary time, place, and manner restrictions.

a. "Camping" is defined as any of the following:

i. The establishment of, or attempt to establish, temporary or permanent living quarters at any location on University Property other than residence halls, apartments, or other university managed housing;

ii. Sleeping outdoors on University Property with or without bedding, tent, hammock, tarp, or similar device, protection, or equipment overnight (between sunset and sunrise);

iii. Sleeping in, on top of, or under any parked vehicle on University Property;

iv. Establishing or maintaining outdoors, or in or under any structure not designated for human occupancy, at any time during the day or night, a temporary or permanent place on University Property for cooking, storing of personal belongings, or sleeping by setting up any bedding, sleeping bag, mattress, tent, hammock, or other sleeping equipment, or by setting up any cooking equipment that has not been approved by the appropriate University health and/or safety officer.

b. "University Property" is defined as any building, structure, or outdoor space that is owned, leased, operated, managed, or controlled by the University.

c. Exceptions. Actions that constitute "camping" as defined above may be permitted under the following special circumstances:

i. When expressly authorized by the constituent institution in connection with a ticketed event.

ii. In extraordinary circumstances, such as times of natural disaster, when approved in writing in advance by the chancellor or designee.

5. **Misconduct on Other Campuses.** Each constituent institution shall ensure that its applicable policies governing student conduct establish clearly that, at minimum, any of its students cited or arrested by law enforcement authorities or cited by another constituent institution for engaging in misconduct, disruption, trespass, or other conduct creating a public safety threat to the student or others is subject to disciplinary proceedings at his or her enrolled institution.

The foregoing requirement is designed to put University students on actual notice of the risk of disciplinary proceedings arising from conduct resulting in citation or arrest for violation of federal or state law, local ordinances, and/or specified conduct engaged in on another University of North Carolina campus. In administering this policy, campuses shall retain discretion as to whether the conduct by a campus's enrolled student resulting in citation or arrest for violation of federal or state law, local ordinances, or misconduct occurring at a sister institution, if the enrolled campus becomes aware of it, should result in disciplinary proceedings at the enrolled institution and what the appropriate remedy is if the student is found to be responsible.

6. **Final Adjudication of Student Conduct Matters by Professional Staff or Committee.** In accordance with [Section 700.4.1 of the UNC Policy Manual](#), constituent institutions remain free to organize their student conduct adjudication processes as they see fit. They are encouraged to draw from multiple campus stakeholder groups, including students, to ensure that fact-finding and processes are informed by the various perspectives of campus communities and the student body. Final disposition of campus student conduct proceedings shall be made by either one or more campus administrators, which may include a neutral external adjudicator engaged by the campus, possessing adequate training and expertise to perform such tasks in accordance with law and policy or by a committee comprised of campus administrators, faculty, and students so long as the campus administrators constitute a plurality of the committee. All committee members must possess adequate training and expertise to perform such tasks in accordance with law and policy. The decision of a committee may be final, or it may be a recommendation for a final decision by a designated campus administrator. Appeals of final dispositions of student conduct proceedings required by [Section 700.4.1 of the UNC Policy Manual](#) may be initiated by either the responding student or, in the case of a final decision made by a committee, the responsible campus administrator, and must be heard and determined by separate campus administrator(s) or a neutral external adjudicator engaged by the campus, none of whom participated in the initial hearing and disposition being appealed.

7. **Intercampus Sharing of Public Safety Information.** The president shall work with the System Vice President for Safety & Emergency Operations, or his designee, to create or expand an existing mechanism for the exchange of public safety related information among the law enforcement agencies of the University of North Carolina whereby constituent institutions may confidentially exchange for law enforcement, campus safety, and student disciplinary purposes information regarding enrolled student or third party non-student misconduct on campuses of the University of North Carolina.

8. **Close Consultation with Law Enforcement Officials.** To foster the proper balance among ensuring public safety, ensuring free expression, and furthering the educational mission of the University, each constituent institution remains free to organize its departments of public safety and student affairs as it deems appropriate subject to applicable law and policy. However, each constituent institution shall ensure that a senior-ranking public safety official is included, informed, and consulted regarding the logistical planning of campus gatherings and that issues of public safety are prioritized in those discussions. Furthermore, each constituent institution shall ensure that in preparing for mass

gatherings, the chancellor has the benefit of direct consultations with law enforcement officials in effecting the proper plans for such events.

II. Other Matters

1. **Effective Date.** The requirements of this policy shall be effective on the date of adoption by the Board of Governors, and constituent institutions shall ensure compliance on or prior to August 1, 2025.
2. **Relation to State and Federal Law.** The foregoing policies as adopted by the Board of Governors are meant to supplement, and do not purport to supplant or modify, the requirements of federal and state law and existing university policy.
3. **Regulations and Directives.** The president is authorized to promulgate regulations and administrative memoranda to aid in the implementation of this Policy.