



GEORGIA TECH PROCEDURES FOR THE USE OF FACILITIES & SPACES

Table of Contents

| | | |
|------|--|----|
| I. | Introduction | 2 |
| II. | Freedom of Expression Policy Statement..... | 3 |
| III. | Definitions | 3 |
| IV. | Outdoor Facilities Use for Expressive Activity | 4 |
| | A. Provisions for the Campus Community | 4 |
| | B. Provisions for the Non-Campus Community..... | 4 |
| | C. Reservations | 5 |
| | D. General Time, Place, Manner Provisions | 5 |
| V. | Indoor Facilities Use for Expressive Activity | 6 |
| | A. Scope | 6 |
| | B. Appropriate Use of Indoor Facilities..... | 7 |
| | C. Priority of Use | 8 |
| VI. | Other Expressive Activities..... | 8 |
| | A. Chalking..... | 8 |
| | B. Flyers, Placards, Posters, Signs, Banners, and other written/visual communications..... | 8 |
| | C. Displays/Exhibits..... | 9 |
| | D. Camping or Temporary Shelters..... | 9 |
| | E. Distribution of Written Materials..... | 10 |
| | F. Solicitation..... | 10 |
| VII. | Accountability and Enforcement | 11 |
| | APPENDIX: Restricted Outdoor Areas..... | 12 |

I. Introduction

As one of its [strategic guiding values](#), the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) safeguards freedom of inquiry and expression. As such, we protect the freedom of all members of our community to ask questions without fear, seek truth without reservation, express their views with respect, and vigorously debate differences of opinion.

In order to live this value every day, Georgia Tech strives to protect the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, including the right to free speech, free expression, free exercise of religion, and the right to assemble peaceably. We also uphold the tenets of Georgia State law known as the [FORUM \(Forming Open and Robust University Minds\) Act](#) (O.C.G.A. 20-3-48).

Accordingly, Georgia Tech is a forum for the open exchange of ideas, opinions, and perspectives. To that end, the unrestricted outdoor areas of campus are deemed public forums for Georgia Tech's campus community; designated indoor venues may also be reserved for expressive activities. We acknowledge that the Institute may impose reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions on the use of campus facilities to achieve a compelling Institute interest, as well as ensure that assembly, expression, and speech activities (hereafter collectively known as "expressive activities") do not disrupt the educational and administrative functions of the Institute or interfere with the rights of others.

The procedures in this document – typically referred to as the Institute's **time, place and manner (TPM) procedures** – limit or regulate the content of speech as minimally necessary. They were designed to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the campus community; to ensure the excellence, effectiveness, and efficiency of the learning environment and of the workplace; and to further mission-supportive activities and objectives of Georgia Tech. These restrictions will be applied on a content- and viewpoint-neutral basis.

While rights of free speech are afforded to Georgia Tech faculty and staff - and academic freedom of faculty is protected - employees of the University System of Georgia should recognize that they are not entitled to unlimited rights in this regard during the course of fulfilling their job responsibilities. Even as we uphold the rights of individuals to express themselves without retribution, we also ask that members of the Georgia Tech community consider their responsibilities to each other – to demonstrate collegiality, care, and compassion to each other, even in the midst of vigorous debate or vehement disagreement.

Lastly, in accordance with federal regulations, Georgia Tech remains committed to promoting a living, learning and working environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. Even though the vast majority of "hate speech" which occurs on campus is likely to be protected speech under the law, speech which potentially violates **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964** (which prohibits discrimination, including harassment, based on race, color, national origin, or shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics) or **Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972** will be referred to the appropriate office for further inquiry or investigation, and appropriate assistance will be provided to complainants. For more information, please refer to Georgia Tech's [Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination, and Anti-Harassment Policy](#), as well as [Sexual Misconduct Policy](#).

II. Freedom of Expression Policy Statement

Georgia Tech holds the First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech, freedom of expression, and the right to assemble peaceably as an essential cornerstone to the advancement of knowledge and the rights of a free people. Georgia Tech remains firmly committed to affording every member of the Institute community the opportunity to engage in peaceful and orderly exercise of these rights. We cherish diversity of ideas as necessary for learning, discovery, scholarship, and creativity.

To review the University System of Georgia's policy, please visit <https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section6/C2653>

To review applicable Georgia Tech policy, please visit <https://policylibrary.gatech.edu/faculty-handbook/5.2.1-additional-provisions-freedom-speech-freedom-expression-and-right-peaceful>

III. Definitions

- A. **Campus-Based Organization** – refers to an organization that is convened, coordinated, managed, or otherwise governed by members of the Institute community, including students, administrators, faculty, and/or staff, as well as alumni or affiliates; examples include, but are not limited to, Academic Senate, Staff Council, affiliates of the Alumni Association, etc.
- B. **Campus Community** – means students, administrators, faculty, and staff at the Institute and their invited guests.
- C. **Commercial Solicitation** – means any solicitation for the purpose of securing a profit for the benefit of an individual or commercial entity.
- D. **Expressive Activity or Expression** – means communicative conduct or activity protected by the First Amendment, such as public speeches, demonstrations, marches, protests and picketing, and the distribution of literature, as well as other forms of symbolic expressive activity, including signs and banners; however expressive activity does not include ordinary, day-to-day conversations among members of the campus community or commercial speech/activity.
- E. **Facilities** – means buildings, structures, Georgia Institute of Technology or University System of Georgia grounds, all outdoor areas of the Institute, including streets, entrances, gates, and landscape features such as quadrangles, gardens, lakes, fountains, and fields, athletic venues, and improvements of all types.
- F. **Material and Substantial Disruption** – means when a person intentionally engages in conduct or expressive activity which such person knew or reasonably should have known would significantly hinder another person's or group's expressive activity, prevent the communication of the person's or group's message, or prevent the transaction of the business of a meeting, gathering, or procession by:
 - i. Engaging in fighting, violent, or other unlawful behavior; or
 - ii. Physically blocking, using threats of violence, or creating loud or sustained noise or vocalization intended to prevent any person from attending, listening to, viewing, or otherwise participating in an expressive activity.

- This does not include minor, brief, or fleeting nonviolent disruptions of events that are isolated and short in duration; whereby the definition of “minor” or “brief” may be dependent on the situational context.
- G. **Non-commercial Solicitation** – means any solicitation for the purpose of securing a monetary gain for the benefit of a nonprofit or charitable organization; this includes sales and requests for donations.
 - H. **Restricted Outdoor Areas of Campus** – means outdoor areas that are intended for specific uses or require special maintenance, and lawfully restricted areas. These areas include, but are not limited to, Intercollegiate Athletics facilities, Campus Recreation Center fields, and academic building interior quads, as well as residence hall courtyards, patios, and quads. A complete list can be found in the Appendix and is maintained and updated on a regular basis by the office of the Vice President for Student Engagement & Well-Being.
 - I. **Unrestricted Outdoor Areas of Campus** – means any outdoor areas of campus that are generally accessible to members of the campus community, including, but not limited to, grassy areas, plazas, seating areas, or other common areas.

IV. Outdoor Facilities Use for Expressive Activity

A. Provisions for the Campus Community.

- i. **Planned Expressive Activity.** Georgia Tech recommends that community members engaging in planned expressive activity make a reservation prior to use so that Georgia Tech may minimize scheduling conflicts and accommodate all interested users; a reservation also affords that individual and/or organization first rights of access to that space.
- ii. **Spontaneous Expression.** Georgia Tech reserves the right to direct individuals and/or groups to another available area of campus to ensure the safety of campus members, to provide proper crowd control, and/or to limit disruption of the academic and other operations of the Institute. The Institute must not consider or impose restrictions based on the content or viewpoint of the expression when relocating or redirecting any expression.

B. Provisions for the Non-Campus Community.

- i. While prior reservations are encouraged and recommended, non-campus community members may engage in expressive activity on Georgia Tech’s campus without a prior reservation; the expressive activity must be consistent with the general provisions outlined in these procedures.
- ii. Reservations are generally required to ensure availability of space and for the safety of the campus and of the individuals who will be participating in the expressive activity.
- iii. Without a prior reservation, non-campus community members may be required to relocate to another area on campus to accommodate those who did reserve the space.

C. Reservations.

- i. **Reservation Requests.** Faculty, staff, and officers of registered student organizations may access the Events Management System at <https://gtevents.gatech.edu/emswebapp/>. Individual students and non-Georgia Tech community members may reserve a space by completing this [form](#). Requests to conduct filming or still photography on campus may be [submitted online](#). Additional information on reservation procedures can be found by visiting the [Student and Campus Event Centers website](#).
- ii. **Content-Neutrality.** When processing a reservation request or in responding when they become aware of spontaneous expressive activities, Institute personnel shall not consider the content or viewpoint of the expression or the possible reaction to that expression other than as permitted by law. Such reasons as permitted by law may include but are not limited to the following: true threats, obscenity, credible direct threats of violence, fraud, defamation, discriminatory harassment, and/or incitement to imminent lawless action.

D. General Time, Place, Manner Provisions.

- i. **Promotion of Safety and Welfare.** Interference with the free flow of vehicular or pedestrian traffic on campus, or with the ingress/egress of campus facilities is prohibited; expressive activities may not block the rights of other individuals to freely move about the campus. Motor vehicles may not be used except on roads and in parking lots. Safety and welfare also include concerns related to hazards, criminal behavior, and unsanitary or unhealthy conditions. Georgia Tech Police Department will make safety and welfare determinations based on a content and viewpoint neutral basis and may consult with the Vice President for Student Engagement & Well-Being or designee as needed.
- ii. **Prohibition of Disruption.** Speech activities that substantially disrupt the functioning of the Institute or interfere with the rights of others will not be allowed. Disruption includes, but is not limited to, blocking entrances or exits to buildings, interfering with instructional activities, impeding administrative operations, and preventing others from carrying out their normal activities on campus.
- iii. **Sound Amplification.** Sound amplification is not allowed on reading days or during the final examination period. At all other times, noise must be at a reasonable level so as not to impede instructional activities, administrative functions, or student and employee services. Use of items that are intended to amplify sounds, such as bullhorns, megaphones, microphones, speakers, etc., should not be used unless prior approved in writing by the Office of the Vice President for Student Engagement & Well-Being or designee. Upon receiving this request, the Office may consult with the Registrar's Office and other departments on campus to assess potential impacts of the anticipated noise levels.
- iv. **Institute Functions and Operations.** Interruption of the Institute's instructional, educational, research, administrative, and other official

- functions and operations, including Institute ceremonies and events, is prohibited.
- v. **Personal Responsibility.** The individual or organizational representative who makes the reservation shall be responsible for ensuring that the venue is left clean and as close to the condition in which it was prior to use for the expressive activity. If this is not the case, individuals or organizations responsible for the event may be held financially responsible for cleanup costs for removal of signs, placards, litter, and other materials left by the representative's speaker or group.
 - vi. **Respect for Others' Expressive Rights.** Expressive activities may not take place in a location that has already been reserved for another activity or event by an individual or organization. Protests in response to a speaker or event on campus are allowed, but such protests must not disrupt either the expressive activity itself or the ability of others to view or hear the expressive activity. Protesters may not use physical force or intimidation to prevent others from expressing their views. Similarly, banners, posters, placards and/or other signage may not interfere with the ability of others to observe or view the expressive activity.
 - vii. **Respect for Property.** Damage or destruction of property owned or operated by Georgia Tech, or property belonging to students, faculty, staff, or invited guests of the Institute, is prohibited. Individuals or organizations causing such damage may be held financially and/or criminally responsible; additionally, students may be subject to discipline in accordance with the [Student Code of Conduct](#).
 - viii. **Compliance with Applicable Laws and Policies.** Individuals and groups expressing themselves on Georgia Tech's campus must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws; Board of Regents' policies; and Georgia Tech policies, rules, and regulations.
 - ix. **Refusal to Comply.** The Institute reserves the right to not permit individuals or groups to assemble, demonstrate, protest, or otherwise express themselves if the individual or group refuses to abide by these content-neutral procedures and guidelines. Speakers or organizations failing to comply may be asked to leave, and/or Institute disciplinary action or judicial action may be pursued.

V. Indoor Facilities Use for Expressive Activity

A. Scope.

- i. While expressive activity may take place in indoor facilities on campus, the Institute has the authority to limit activities and events to specific locations, specific date(s) and specific time(s); limit the manner in which facilities are used; limit the number of participants at an activity or event; and set other limits to ensure the effective operation of the Institute's primary programs and

- educational purposes, as well promote the safety and welfare of Georgia Tech community members and their invited guests.
- ii. The use of all indoor facilities is subject to these procedures. Leased spaces may be subject to additional rules imposed by their individual lease.
 - iii. Institute departments and units are permitted to locally administer the scheduling of the facilities that have been administratively assigned to them, or which they occupy under a lease. All such entities must administer the scheduling of their facilities in a manner that does not conflict with these procedures. The following is a non-exhaustive list of units that have opted to locally administer the scheduling of their facilities:
 - a. **Classrooms, seminar rooms, auditoria, and other instructional facilities** are scheduled by the Office of the Registrar. A list of centrally scheduled rooms can be found here: <https://registrar.gatech.edu/academic-scheduling/buildings-and-class-locations>. To the extent such facilities are made available for purposes other than the instructional programs of the Institute, the use of such facilities is subject to these procedures and shall be scheduled through the reservation system, consistent with these procedures.
 - b. **Library & Clough Rooms** are available for use by current Georgia Tech students, faculty, and staff with a valid BuzzCard. The use of these rooms is limited to academic, co-curricular, and scholarly activities, and student organization meetings are not permitted.
 - c. **Tech Rec** (located on the first floor of the John Lewis Student Center) is available to reserve as early as one year in advance through GT Events at <https://studentcenter.gatech.edu/rent-tech-rec>.
 - d. **The Bill Moore Student Success Center** manages reservations through the GT Campus Event Management System provided above in Section IV, C, i.

B. Appropriate Use of Indoor Facilities.

- i. Use of the requested facilities must be suitable to the primary functions for which the facility was designed, or aligned with how it is currently utilized.
- ii. The proposed use of a facility must conform to building and fire codes, including adherence to occupancy limits and maintaining proper ingress and egress of the facility.
- iii. Certain facilities are not reservable and may not be appropriate for use beyond their primary function for reasons of safety, security, or sustainability of the space. These facilities and spaces include but are not limited to: offices, storage rooms, closets, bathrooms, stairwells, some hallways, mechanical rooms, residence hall rooms, maintenance shops, dining centers, catering kitchens, laboratories, and athletic and recreational facilities.
- iv. Institute indoor facilities may not be used in a manner that infringes upon, disrupts, or conflicts with the operations of the Institute or its educational purposes.

- v. The Institute shall determine appropriate measures for the health, safety, and security of campus members and the public for activities and events and may deny or limit the use of Institute facilities accordingly.
- vi. Indoor facility use may be denied or restricted if the Institute determines that the internal or external user(s) have violated Institute and/or University System of Georgia policy and/or federal, state, or local law during a previous use of Institute facilities.
- vii. Non-campus community members requesting indoor space for any reason will be required to complete an approved license agreement, including a properly executed indemnification and liability insurance agreement unless the outside party is constitutionally prohibited from doing so.

C. Priority of Use.

- i. Reservation requests for facilities use will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis. In the event that multiple requests conflict, the following order of precedence shall govern:
 - a. Academic instruction;
 - b. Institute-sponsored activities, events, and programs;
 - c. Recognized student organizations' activities, events, and programs;
 - d. Student activities, events, and programs;
 - e. All other campus community activities, events and programs; and
 - f. Non-campus community member activities, events and programs.
- ii. If the occasion arises when an Institute-sponsored activity, event or program (including instruction) needs to utilize an already scheduled space, the Institute event or activity takes precedence. The Institute will work with the sponsors or organizers of the displaced activity to find suitable alternative locations and times.

VI. Other Expressive Activities

A. Chalking.

Chalking is permitted on campus sidewalks. Chalking is prohibited on buildings, stairways, walls, fountains, or other surfaces not designated for this purpose. All chalking must be at least 20' from entryways of buildings and not under any overhead obstruction (e.g., awning), that would prevent rain or other natural elements from washing it away. Chalk sprays, markers, stencils, or paint of any kind are not permitted.

B. Flyers, Placards, Posters, Signs, Banners, Flags, and other written/visual communications.

- i. Flyers, placards, posters, signs, banners, flags, and other written/visual communications should be placed in a manner so as not to impede the ability to view expressive content posted by other members of the Georgia Tech community, guests, or visitors.
- ii. Flyers, placards, posters, signs, and other written/visual communications

(generally no larger than 11" x 17" in dimensions) should be placed only on public bulletin boards or other locations clearly designated for posting. Items may not be posted on bulletin boards reserved for the specific use of cabinet areas, colleges, divisions, or departments without the written permission of the building manager who oversees that bulletin board.

- iii. Larger items, such as banners, flags, billboards, and large posters, may not be affixed to any permanent structure (e.g., buildings, fences, trees, etc.) without prior approval from the building manager or other appropriate Georgia Tech administrative office.
- iv. Items posted or installed in violation of these procedures may be subject to removal by Georgia Tech. Items may be removed at the end of each business day, irrespective of content or viewpoint. Removal of items may occur at more frequent intervals based on the purpose of the specific building or facility.
- v. If any member of the Georgia Tech community believes that written/visual expressive activity is taking place in violation of these time, place, and manner restrictions, this may be reported to any of the following offices:
 - a. College Dean's Office
 - b. Dean of Students Office
 - c. Georgia Tech Police Department
 - d. Provost's Office

These offices will in turn inform and confer with the Office of the Vice President for Student Engagement & Well-Being or designee, who will consult with the Office of General Counsel as needed before proceeding with any removal or erasure of these communications.

C. Displays/Exhibits.

- i. If individuals or groups host displays or exhibits that require interaction with the public, they are responsible for ensuring that a Georgia Tech community member is present at all times. Georgia Tech student groups, schools, or departments that are co-sponsoring an event, display, or exhibit with a non-Georgia Tech organization shall be responsible for the event. A Georgia Tech student, faculty, or staff member must remain with the display at all times, along with a representative of the co-sponsoring organization.
- ii. Individuals or organizations not affiliated with Georgia Tech may not host displays or exhibits that require interaction with members of the campus community unless a Georgia Tech group, school or department is co-sponsoring the event, display, or exhibit.
- iii. For safety-related reasons, any exhibit over 10'0" tall must be reviewed by the Office of the Vice President for Student Engagement & Well-Being or designee prior to being installed.

D. Camping or Temporary Shelters.

Activities that involve the use of temporary shelters (e.g., tents, boxes, etc.) are prohibited on Institute property unless prior written approval from the Vice President for

Student Engagement & Well-Being or designee has been provided. This includes but is not limited to camping. This section does not apply to athletic events such as tailgating, for which use of tents or similar structures are approved and regulated by the Georgia Tech Athletic Association.

E. Distribution of Written Materials.

Non-commercial pamphlets, handbills, circulars, newspapers, magazines, and other written materials may be distributed on a person-to-person basis in outdoor unrestricted areas of campus. Members of the community should not be forced or pressured to accept these written materials.

F. Solicitation.

- i. Standards
 - a. Solicitation activities may be limited on a viewpoint-neutral, content-neutral basis with regard to the time, place, and manner of the proposed activity.
 - b. Posting of banners, signs, and other such methods of notification on Institute buildings, fences, or other facilities is prohibited.
 - c. Violation of any time, place, or manner limitations, damage to Institute property, or outstanding debt to the Institute, may result in revocation of the permission to engage in the activity or denial of permission to engage in future activities.
- ii. Commercial Solicitation
 - a. Commercial activities are generally prohibited unless the Institute does not offer the good or service and it is determined that the activity is compatible with the purpose of the Institute.
 - b. Institutions of the University System of Georgia shall not permit the operation of private business enterprises on their campuses, except as otherwise provided by contract. All business enterprises operated on a campus of an institution of the University System of Georgia shall be operated as auxiliary enterprises and shall be under the direct management, control, and supervision of the chief business officer in accordance with [USG Board of Regents Policy 6.19](#).
 - c. Vendors offering services to campus under contract may solicit the sale of goods and services consistent with the terms of the contract.
 - d. Commercial information may not be posted on Institute buildings, interior and exterior doors, interior and exterior walls, windows, fences, directional and informational signs, lamp posts, light poles, barricades, trees, and any other inappropriate location.
- iii. Non-commercial Activities
 1. Non-commercial solicitation may take place in Institute public areas with prior approval by the appropriate authorizing official.
 2. Individuals conducting solicitation on campus shall not engage in unlawful activity, misrepresentation, or fraudulent trade practices. In

- addition, they may not display, distribute, or sell items which are illegal or prohibited by the University System of Georgia or Institute policy.
3. To receive approval, non-commercial sales activities must be occasional, non-continuous, and specific in purpose.
 4. Regular, recurring sales activities are prohibited on campus.
 5. The total number of people soliciting in one place on campus will be limited, dependent on the situational context and to ensure the safety/welfare of the community.
- iv. Campus-Based Organizations
- a. Solicitations conducted by campus-based organizations must be for the benefit of the campus community or a nonprofit or charitable entity. Commercial solicitations are prohibited.
 - b. A representative of the sponsoring campus-based organization must be present at all times during solicitation activities involving an outdoor vendor.

VII. Accountability and Enforcement

- A. Students who are alleged to be in violation of any aspects of this procedure may be referred to the Office of Student Integrity in the Dean of Students Office for further investigation under the [Student Code of Conduct](#) and subject to sanctions up to and including probation, suspension, or expulsion, if found responsible.
- B. Employees who are alleged to be in violation of any aspect of this procedure may be referred to the Office of Human Resources for further investigation under Georgia Tech and USG policies, and subject to sanctions if found responsible.
- C. Other individuals or organizations who are in violation of any aspect of this procedure may be subject to consequences commensurate with the degree of disruption that results. These may include but are not limited to: immediate removal from campus or a specific facility or space; revocations of future opportunities to reserve or utilize campus facilities and spaces; and/or referral to law enforcement.

Questions about these procedures can be directed to the Office of the Vice President for Student Engagement & Well-Being at vp_sewb@gatech.edu or (404) 385-0430. Additional information about freedom of expression can be found at https://students.gatech.edu/freedom_of_expression and at <https://provost.gatech.edu/freedom-of-expression>.

Finalized July 31, 2024

APPENDIX: Restricted Outdoor Areas

Current as of August 1, 2024

The majority of public, outdoor spaces are accessible to members of the Georgia Tech community and their guests. However, public access is not extended to outdoor areas that: (1) are intended for specific/unique uses or purposes; (2) require special maintenance; and/or (3) have implications for the health/safety of members of the campus community. Nor does public access include outdoor areas when and where access to members of the campus community is lawfully restricted.

Restricted outdoor areas include, but are not limited to, Intercollegiate Athletics facilities, Campus Recreation Center fields, and academic building interior quads, as well as residence hall courtyards, patios, and quads. In addition, the following outdoor areas, facilities, and spaces are not considered public, and will require a reservation for access and use:

1. Bio-Tec Quad Courtyard
2. Divine Nine Plaza
3. EcoCommons Crescent Lawn
4. EcoCommons Learning Platform
5. EcoCommons Unity Plaza
6. Harrison Square Plaza
7. Instructional Center Lawn
8. Koan Plaza
9. Manufacturing Related Disciplines Complex Courtyard
10. Noonan Courtyard
11. Peters Deck Basketball Court
12. Peters Deck Tennis Court
13. Seven Bridges
14. Skiles Courtyard
15. Skiles Triangle Lawn
16. Tech Tower Lawn
17. Texas Instruments Plaza

Reservations for these areas, facilities, and spaces will be reviewed and approved in a content- and viewpoint-neutral manner; consideration of requests will focus on whether the activity or event is appropriate to the physical context and infrastructure, as well as purpose of the facility.