



# FREEDOM OF SPEECH POLICY



DALTON STATE  
DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE

# Table of Contents

First Amendment of the Constitution

Section A: Purpose and overview of policy

Section B: Designation of public forums on campus

Section C: Members of the college community

Section D: Non-members of the college community

Section E: Procedures for Forum Reservation Requests and Appeals

Section F: General Provisions



## First Amendment of the Constitution

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

### A. PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW OF POLICY

Dalton State College ("DSC") recognizes and upholds the rights protected by the First Amendment, including free speech and free expression and the right to assemble peaceably. Demonstrations, assemblies, and dissemination of information can be valid expressions of dissenting opinions, provided they do not disrupt the academic and administrative functions of the institution. This policy in no way prohibits individuals enrolled at or employed by DSC ("members of the College Community") from engaging in conversations on campus and does not apply to College-sponsored activities but rather only establishes a designated public forum on DSC's campus for outside speakers. This policy shall apply to all non-commercial speech on the Dalton State College campus and any other Dalton State College facilities. The opinions expressed by organizations, groups, or individuals using DSC facilities do not necessarily reflect the position of DSC. The College affirms its commitment to freedom of speech, assembly, and expression even though the language or ideas of those seeking a venue for free expression may contradict the College's ideals and policies or the personal views of DSC employees and students. By placing reasonable limitations on time, place, and manner of speech, DSC does not take a position on the content or viewpoint of the expression but instead allows for a diversity of viewpoints to be expressed in an academic setting.

**"Dalton State College ("DSC") recognizes and upholds the rights protected by the First Amendment... [and] does not take a position on the content or viewpoint of the expression, but rather allows for a diversity of viewpoints to be expressed in an academic setting. "**

## **B. DESIGNATION OF A PUBLIC FORUM ON DSC'S CAMPUS FOR OUTSIDE SPEAKERS**

To better facilitate the free exchange of ideas, DSC has designated the concrete area of the Burran Bell Tower, facing the Campus Quadrangle, as a public forum on DSC's campus ("Public Forum Area"). The Public Forum Area is generally available from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, provided that the Public Forum Area has not previously been reserved. Reservations will only be processed when DSC's Administrative Offices are open for business ("college business days"). Though reservations to use the Public Forum Area are only required as outlined in Section C and Section D below, DSC recommends that all parties interested in using the Public Forum Area submit a completed Forum Reservation Request Form to DSC's Dean of Students Office before use so that the College may minimize scheduling conflicts, accommodate all interested users, and provide for campus safety

**"DSC has designated the concrete area of the Burran Bell Tower... [as the] ... ("Public Forum Area")."**

## C. MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE COMMUNITY

Members of the College Community include students, faculty, staff, and their invited guests. Members of the College Community who plan to engage in expressive activity on campus may utilize all unrestricted outdoor areas of Dalton State as Public Forums areas, and reservations are not required. Groups expected to consist of 30 or more persons are encouraged to submit a completed Forum Reservation Request Form to DSC's Dean of Students Office before the scheduled activity. Prior notice is only requested to ensure that there is available and sufficient space for the large group event, that necessary College resources exist for crowd control and security, and that the academic and other operations of the College are not disrupted. However, please note that reservations are not required.

**"Members of the College Community include students, faculty, staff, and their invited guests... [and they] may utilize all unrestricted outdoor areas of Dalton State as Public Forums areas."**

## D. PERSONS WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE COMMUNITY

Individuals or groups of persons who are not enrolled at or employed by DSC may only engage in expressive activity on DSC's campus in the Public Forum Area and only after submitting a completed Forum Reservation Request Form to DSC's Dean of Students Office at least two college business days before the scheduled expression and obtaining approval in writing from a Student Affairs official pursuant to the procedures outlined in Section E below. Organizers are encouraged to submit their requests as early as possible in the event's planning stages. This provision does not apply to classroom instruction or College-sponsored events.

**"Individuals or groups of persons who are not enrolled at or employed by DSC may only engage... in the Public Forum Area and only after submitting a completed Forum Reservation Request Form... and obtaining approval."**

## **E. PROCEDURES FOR FORUM RESERVATION REQUESTS AND APPEALS**

Completed Forum Reservation Request Forms should be submitted to DSC's Dean of Students Office (via the online form) at least two college business days before the scheduled expression. Reservation requests will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis without regard to the content or viewpoint of the expression.

The Student Affairs official will respond to all requests as soon as possible. Still, in no event, more than one college business day after receipt of the request, either authorizing the reservation and noting any special instructions, if applicable, or setting forth the reason for denial of the reservation. The Student Affairs official may only deny a reservation request for one of the following reasons:

1. The Forum Reservation Request Form is not fully completed;
2. The Forum Reservation Request Form contains a material falsehood or misrepresentation;
3. The Public Forum Area has been previously reserved, in which case the College will designate another appropriate date, time, or location to accommodate the expression;
4. The use or activity intended by the applicant would conflict with or disturb previously planned programs organized and conducted by the College;

5. The Public Forum Area is not large enough to accommodate the expected or actual number of persons engaging in large group expression, in which case the College must provide a reservation for the applicant at an alternate location that can safely accommodate the expression provided that the applicant is a member of the College Community and that such a location exists on the DSC campus;

6. The use or activity intended by the applicant would present a danger to the health or safety of the applicant, other members of the College Community, or the public; or

7. The use or activity intended by the applicant is prohibited by law, DSC policy, or Board of Regents policy.

When assessing a reservation request, the Student Affairs official must not consider or impose restrictions on the expression based on the content or viewpoint of the expression.

All appeals must be made in writing to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management within one week of being denied a reservation request. The Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management or their designee must respond to the appeal in writing within one college business day.





## F. GENERAL PROVISIONS

In addition to the requirements set forth above, all individuals expressing themselves on DSC's campus must comply with the following guidelines and provisions:

- There must be no obstructions to and from buildings, no interference with other authorized and scheduled College activities, no impediments of passersby, or any disruptions of normal activities of the College.
- Sound amplification (including microphones and bullhorns) is not permitted due to the disruption of classes and other academic and administrative functions.
- Dalton State College equipment will not be available for assemblies, demonstrations, or protest activities.
- Events may not threaten public safety as determined by the Office of Public Safety or another College official.
- Open flame devices and bonfires are prohibited.
- Items may not be affixed to permanent structures.
- Camping and the use of temporary shelters as such activities are prohibited.
- Non-commercial written materials may be distributed. The Campus Solicitation Policy covers the distribution of commercial materials.
- When the approved activity period ends, the individuals or groups engaging in the expression must remove signs, placards, litter, and all other materials.



- Any activity that damages or destroys property owned or operated by the College or property belonging to students, faculty, staff, or guests of the College is prohibited.
- In the case of inclement weather, the assembly, demonstration, or protest activity will be postponed until the next available assembly date that the group would like, provided that the Public Forum Area is available during that date and time.
- Compliance with the Dalton State College Student Code of Conduct regulations, Dalton State College policies and procedures, University System of Georgia policies and procedures, Dalton city laws, Georgia state laws, and federal law is required.

The College reserves the right to deny individuals or groups the ability to assemble, demonstrate, or protest if the individuals or groups refuse to abide by the administrative procedures and guidelines. The authorized representative or person in charge of the expression must acknowledge, in writing, compliance with these administrative procedures and policies and agree to make restitution for any litter or damage that occurs due to the expressive activity.

To access the Forum Reservation Request Form, please refer to the Freedom of Expression section on our Forms/Resource page <[https://www.daltonstate.edu/campus\\_life/forms.cms](https://www.daltonstate.edu/campus_life/forms.cms)>.



Please review the Board of Regents Policy Manual – 6.5 Freedom of Expression for more information.

<<https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section6/C2653>>

