



Policy Name:	Policy on Protests and Demonstrations		
Associated Forms:	N/A	Policy Number:	2026-14
Reviewed:	Non-Academic Policy Committee	Approved:	August 18, 2026
Approval Authority:	President <i>Susan Parish</i>	Adopted:	August 24, 2026
Responsible Executive:	Assistant Vice President for Campus Safety and Emergency Management	Revised:	July 29, 2024; August 28, 2023
Responsible Department:	Campus Safety	Contact:	Director of Campus Safety

POLICY ON PROTESTS AND DEMONSTRATIONS

I. Background

The University believes that students or members of groups within the Mercy University community should have the right to engage in individual or organized activity to express their views on a particular issue or cause, whether against the University or society. Demonstration and rallies, however, should not interfere with the operation of the institution. The University has an obligation to protect the safety and welfare of its students, faculty, and staff, and to ensure that its academic mission is not compromised. Therefore, demonstrations and rallies must be nonviolent, considerate of the rights of all members of the University community and may not involve disruptive conduct.

II. Disruptive Conduct

It will be considered disruptive conduct under this policy for participants to:

1. Gather in such a fashion as to physically hinder entrances to, exits from, or passageways within any University building or other structure, or hinder the normal flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic on or to any campus.
2. Create a volume of noise that prevents members of the University from carrying on their normal activities.
3. Intimidate, employ force or violence, or engage in behavior that constitutes an immediate or perceived threat of force or violence, against persons or property.
4. Congregate, or assemble within any University building or on University property in such a fashion as to disrupt the University's normal functions, including but not limited to violating the following rules:
 - A. No demonstrations or other protest activities may occur inside academic or administrative buildings and places or spaces where academic or other student activities take place.
 - B. No group may be admitted into a private office unless invited by the University employee. If invited, the group cannot exceed either the number designated or invited by the occupant. Passage through reception areas leading to a private office must not be obstructed.
 - B. Corridors, stairways, doorways, and building entrances may not be blocked or obstructed in violation of municipal regulations or of the University. Clear and unimpeded passageways must be maintained at all times.

- C. Space may be utilized only when assigned through established University procedures.
- D. Sleeping or camping out overnight in vehicles or other outdoor spaces, or using tents or other enclosed structures on Mercy campuses at any time of the day, are prohibited.
- E. Any noise or music which interferes with the work or study of persons in a building will not be permitted.
- F. Buildings must be cleared at normal closing time for each building unless other arrangements are approved in advance.
- G. Individuals with face masks must present identification, and face masks are not permitted to conceal identity to violate laws.

III. Demonstration Approvals

Permission for organized demonstrations on University property or in University facilities or spaces, as well as request to bring individuals who are not Mercy community members, must be obtained in advance and in writing from the Dean of Students, who shall consult with appropriate campus administrators, including the Vice President of Operations and Facilities and Assistant Vice President of Campus Safety and Emergency Management. The decision by the Dean of Students shall be final. Once approval is granted for a demonstration or rally, individuals organizing the event are responsible for ensuring that it is conducted in a responsible manner. The University reserves the right to take steps to address inappropriate conduct. The location of a demonstration or rally will be clearly defined by the Dean of Students who shall consult with the Assistant Vice President of Campus Safety and Emergency Managements and the Vice President for Operations and Facilities. The University will notify the local police in advance of a demonstration or rally.

IV. Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policies

Demonstration activity is subject to the University anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies. Student groups are subject to discipline for discriminatory conduct or other violations of University policies.