



## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Responsible Unit: Safety and Security

Last Reviewed/Updated: August 31, 2024

Approving Sector Head: Vice-President, Finance & Administration and CFO

Policy: **Campus Protests and Demonstrations**

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### **1. Purpose**

Acadia University is committed to fostering an environment where the open exchange of ideas and respectful discourse are encouraged and supported. This policy outlines the university's expectations for students, faculty, and staff regarding protests and/or demonstrations on campus.

### **2. Policy Statement**

Acadia University encourages all members of the university community to have active voices in advocating for change and engaging in discussions on important issues. The university supports the right to peaceful and lawful protest and demonstration as a vital part of freedom of expression and the democratic process.

### **3. Guidelines for Protests and Demonstrations**

#### **3.1 Peaceful and Non-Violent Protests**

All protests and demonstrations on campus must be conducted in a peaceful and lawful manner. Violence, threats of force or violence, and/or any actions that endanger the safety of others, and/or damage property, and/or interfere with the expressive freedoms of others are strictly prohibited.

#### **3.2 No Impediment to Regular University Business**

Protests and demonstrations must not substantially and materially impede or disrupt the regular business of the university. This includes, but is not limited to, the obstruction of entrances or exits to buildings, disruption of classes, academic activities, and/or administrative functions, and interference with scheduled events. For further clarification, the following examples constitute forms of conduct that are not permitted under this policy:

- Holding up signs, shouting, or playing loud music in a manner that substantially interferes with a speaker's ability to be heard or a community member's opportunity to listen (also known as "deplatforming"), particularly if done repeatedly or for a sustained period of time. By contrast,

spontaneous or temporary interruptions are less likely to violate this policy.

- Trespassing by remaining in a building or other campus space when told to leave by the university.
- Occupying a physical location in a manner that obstructs the ability of other members of the university community to move about campus or enter or exit buildings.
- Vandalizing artwork, posters, and/or memorials created by another member of the university community.

### **3.3 Time and Place Restrictions**

- Protests and demonstrations are permitted during normal university business hours, defined as 8:30 AM to 10:00 PM, Monday through Friday, excluding statutory holidays.
- Long-term encampments and/or occupations of campus spaces before 8:30am or after 10:00pm are not allowed without permission from the university.
- Demonstrations should be conducted in areas that do not substantially and materially interfere with university operations and/or violate the rights of other members of the community.

### **3.4 No Disciplinary Action for Participation**

- No student will face disciplinary action from the university on the basis of their participation in a protest or demonstration, provided that the protest or demonstration complies with this policy.
- Faculty and staff who participate in protests or demonstrations on campus must do so in compliance with this policy and their existing employment contracts and collective agreements. In any instance where this policy and a collective agreement are in conflict, the latter shall prevail.

## **4. Responsibilities**

### **4.1 Participants in a Protest or Demonstration**

- Participants in a protest or demonstration must adhere to this policy and conduct protests or demonstrations in a peaceful and lawful manner.
- Participants in a protest or demonstration must ensure that their actions do not substantially and materially disrupt university operations or infringe on the rights of others.
- Participants in a protest or demonstration must not violate the rights of others to engage in expressive activities.

### **4.2 University Administration**

- The university administration is responsible for ensuring that this policy is applied neutrally and communicated clearly to all members of the university community.
- The university administration will protect the right of students, faculty, and staff to participate in protests and demonstrations that are consistent with this policy.

- In the event of non-compliance, the university administration will take appropriate actions while respecting the rights of individuals involved.

#### **4.3 Safety and Security**

- Safety and Security is responsible for ensuring the safety of all participants and bystanders during protests and demonstrations.
- Safety and Security personnel will monitor protests and demonstrations to ensure they remain peaceful and safe and in accordance with this policy. Participants in a protest or demonstration may not impede Safety and Security personnel in any way.

#### **5. Compliance**

Failure to comply with this policy may result in actions by the university to restore order, which may include dispersal of the protest or demonstration, and in severe cases, appropriate disciplinary measures in accordance with the student non-judicial code of conduct, terms of employment, and/or collective agreements.

#### **6. Review and Amendments**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Office of Safety and Security. Amendments to this policy will be made in consultation with the Acadia Students' Union, employee groups, and in alignment with the university's commitment to freedom of expression and the open exchange of ideas.

#### **7. Exclusions**

This policy does not apply to strikes, lockouts, or any action that falls within the Nova Scotia Labour Standards Code and shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with applicable laws, provincial regulations, and collective agreements.

**Approved By:** Erin Beaudin, Vice-President Finance and Administration and CFO

**Date of Approval:** August 31, 2024