



POCKET GUIDE

# WE ENCOURAGE EXPRESSIVE ACTIVITY!

## HERE'S HOW TO DO IT!

*TU is committed to fostering a welcoming community where ideas are shared freely, respect for each other is promoted, and students, faculty and staff feel valued and heard. This guide is intended to provide guidance for approved expressive activities at Freedom Square.*



STUDENT  
AFFAIRS





The University values freedom of expression and the open exchange of ideas. As a public institution, the University endeavors to protect each person's free speech rights, and may not limit speech or expression, however offensive or disagreeable, based solely on the content or the views being expressed. With certain exceptions, such as threats of physical violence and unlawful harassment, free speech and expression is protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

### **WHAT IS THE MISSION OF FREEDOM SQUARE?**

The mission of Freedom Square is to provide a forum for the campus community to express and deliberate issues of civic concern. The space shall be a haven for freedom of expression and speech, in addition to encouraging an atmosphere of critical thinking and debate.

### **HOW CAN STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN EXPRESSIVE ACTIVITIES AT FREEDOM SQUARE?**

Both individual students and student organizations can engage in expressive activities at Freedom Square. Approved student organizations can reserve Freedom Square through Events and Conference Services to engage in expressive activity as outlined in the University's Policy on Time, Place, and Manner for Expressive Activities (TU Policy: 06-04.11) and the approved guidelines for chalkboard use. Events and Conference Services is tasked with reservation approval and event management for Freedom Square. See the guidelines for chalkboard use.



## **WHAT ARE THE GUIDELINES FOR CHALKBOARD USE AT FREEDOM SQUARE?**

- Comments should relate to the mission of Freedom Square.
- Chalking is only allowed on the chalkboards.
- Chalking should not include discriminatory, threatening, harassing, lewd and/or obscene language as per the University's Chalking procedures and the Code of Student Accountability. The university reserves the right to remove anything that violates these guidelines and to bill the responsible individual or group.
- The boards are cleaned daily.
- Confirmed reservation holder(s) will have uninterrupted and sole use of the chalkboards fifteen minutes prior to the start of their event and conclude fifteen minutes after the event's scheduled end.
- Sole use includes erasure and decoration of the chalkboard fifteen minutes prior to the start of their event and conclude fifteen minutes after the event's scheduled end.
- Questions about reservations and event planning should be directed to Events and Conference Services, [reservations@towson.edu](mailto:reservations@towson.edu).
- Questions about civic engagement opportunities should be directed to the Office of Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility, [civicengagement@towson.edu](mailto:civicengagement@towson.edu).

## **WHAT ARE THE LIMITS ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION?**

The Policy on Time, Place and Manner for Expressive Activities (TU Policy: 06-04.11) establishes reasonable and view point-neutral restrictions on the time, place, and manner of speech and expression on campus to address concerns such as significant public safety interests and disruptions of classes and campus life to ensure that expressive activities do not unreasonably disrupt University operations, violate the protected speech of others, put others in danger, or risk damage to University property. This policy DOES NOT, however, restrict the content or viewpoint being expressed.

## **WHAT CAN TU DO ABOUT HATEFUL OR OFFENSIVE EXPRESSION?**

There is a very important distinction between “Speech or Expression” and “Behavior or Conduct.” While the First Amendment protects most speech and expression, even hateful or offensive speech and expression; discriminatory or harassing behaviors and conduct are NOT protected by the First Amendment. The University is tasked with protecting every individual’s freedom to speak and to hear all views. Hateful or offensive speech that does not rise to the level of a true threat or unlawful harassment cannot be banned or punished. Exposure to all perspectives, including those that may be deemed disagreeable or even offensive, can be an essential part of the educational experience and can help foster a greater understanding of how to respect a person while communicating a differing opinion. The protection afforded to speech and expression by the First Amendment does not mean that we as a community encourage hate, condone harassment or in any way tolerate discriminatory behaviors or conduct.



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