



# YOUR FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS AS A STUDENT AT UCLA



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## AMENDMENT I | FREEDOMS, PETITIONS, ASSEMBLY

*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.*

*Freedom of thought, inquiry, speech and lawful assembly are fundamental rights of all persons. These rights include the freedom to express opinions; to hear, express and debate various views, no matter how unpopular; and to voice criticism. Free speech is uniquely important to the University as it brings about a free interchange of ideas integral to the University's fundamental mission of teaching, research and public service. The fundamental mission of the university — to seek, discover, and disseminate truth — cannot be realized without open, unimpeded exchange of ideas, both inside and outside the classroom. Consequently, both the US Constitution and the university's core mission inspire the policies and practices related to free expression on our campus.*

UCLA has a long history of respecting and valuing student activism. Protests and civil disobedience have played an historic role on the University campus, in bringing important and beneficial changes within society, and in the development of our democracy. The campus has also been a vigorous protector of the First Amendment and students' rights to assemble peaceably and to express their opinions through speech and media. We take pride in our students' engagement with social and political issues, viewing it as a desirable, if not essential, component of the college experience. However, civil disobedience is not protected speech under the Constitution. The Constitution does not guarantee any right to engage in civil disobedience — which, by its very definition, involves the violation of laws or regulations — without incurring consequences. Civil disobedience may have a negative effect on the protected interests of others and may interfere with University business or threaten public safety or University assets, in ways that require the University to act to protect those other interests. For everyone to enjoy freedom of expression there must be reciprocal respect for the rights of all individuals: the exercise of the rights granted by the First Amendment cannot interfere with others' exercising their own rights.

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## CAMPUS POLICIES

As a public institution, UCLA has the authority to regulate the use of its property and in so doing limit First Amendment rights through “time, place, and manner” restrictions. While individuals may exercise the constitutionally protected rights of speech and assembly on university grounds that are generally open to the public, these activities must not interfere with the orderly operation of the campus and must be conducted in a manner that reasonably protects others from becoming involuntary audiences. For the purpose of applying “time, place, and manner” restrictions, “grounds open to the public generally” are defined as follows:

Between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and midnight, paved pedestrian walkways and lawns on University property are generally open to the public, except those:

1. Within areas reserved for classes, public performances, organized activities, or special events;
2. On vehicular driveways, streets and parking lots; or
3. On and adjacent to public entrances to the hospital and outpatient clinics, except as provided for in the specific regulations governing the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center and Medical Plaza area.

Paved pedestrian walkways within designated food service or eating areas are generally open to the public only for the purpose of food service or eating.

Between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m., paved pedestrian walkways and lawns on University property are generally closed to all activities except coming and going to a University building or crossing the campus.

All outdoor programs or activities utilizing sound amplification systems must obtain specific approval for such amplification in advance from the office of Student Organizations, Leadership and Engagement (SOLE). All sound amplification systems and sound levels must meet criteria established by SOLE. During periods of regularly scheduled classroom instruction or the conducting of other University-related business, amplified sound may only be used between 11:50 a.m. and 1:00 p.m., with appropriate review and approval by SOLE. Every attempt will be made to avoid the scheduling of concurrent programs in adjacent areas when one or more of the programs has amplified sound.

For a fuller discussion of time, place, and manner regulations, and additional restrictions that apply to the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center and Medical Plaza area and the University Residence, consult the UCLA Regulations on Activities, Registered Campus Organizations, and Use of Properties, found on the SOLE website at <http://www.studentactivities.ucla.edu/policies.html>.

Failure to comply with the law or time, place, and manner regulations in order to make a political statement while engaging in speech and assembly constitutes civil disobedience. Although civil disobedience has played a historic and respected role in the United States, from the founding of the nation forward, it is essential for students to be aware that civil disobedience involving violence and threats of violence, damage to property, and serious disruption of the business of the university, cannot be tolerated. Equally, interfering with the free expression of other individuals, such as disrupting a speech, cannot be tolerated. There are risks and consequences for engaging in civil disobedience, and students should keep in mind the possible consequences of civil disobedience, such as arrest and prosecution, and should consider carefully whether they are truly prepared to make the necessary sacrifices.

### DIRECT QUESTIONS TO:

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