

Emory University Speakers' Policy

Principles and Guidelines Governing Student-Invited Speakers

Statement of Principles

Emory University is an inquiry-driven, ethically engaged, and diverse community, dedicated to the ideals of free academic discourse and open exchange of ideas. Emory University is committed to the values of academic freedom and abides by the assumption that contention among different views is positive and necessary for the expansion of knowledge, both for the University itself and as a training ground for society at large. Emory seeks to foster the widest possible scope for the free circulation of ideas.

Such freedom is limited only by applicable laws and by the University's commitment to maintaining an environment free of unlawful harassment and discrimination.

Emory also affirms that such freedom places a burden of responsibility on all members of the Emory community. Additionally, persons who are guests of the Emory community—and thereby benefit from the freedoms of the Emory community—assume these same responsibilities and obligations and must abide by the policies and rules of the University.

Rights

Anyone in the Emory community may distribute information about invited speakers and related events by means of electronic or other media, so long as this communication complies with policies, guidelines, and procedures of the University.

Student organizations have the right to invite speakers whose opinions may be deemed by some or most members of the community to be controversial or even offensive, outrageous, biased, or unwarranted.

In the rare occurrence where a speaker or individual may be so controversial as to create a public safety concern, the University reserves the right to reschedule, relocate, or cancel the event if it's determined that adequate security has not been planned

Responsibilities

The rights outlined above impose certain responsibilities on organizations that extend invitations to prospective speakers. The responsibilities include the following:

- The inviting organization(s) must work in conjunction with staff members of the Office of Student Leadership & Service to plan the event. The steps outlined in the Small-Medium Scale Event Planner or Large Scale Event Planner must be followed.

- The inviting organization(s) must assure security when requested by the speaker, or must advise the Emory Police Department when the speaker is so controversial as to be likely to create a security risk. Except in unusual circumstances, the cost for security will be borne by the inviting organization(s).
- The sponsoring organization(s) must secure space adequate to the event.
- Communication about speakers and events must conform to Emory's Policy on Equal Opportunity and Discriminatory Harassment (<http://policies.emory.edu/1.3>).
- Costs associated with speakers and events must be borne by the sponsoring organization(s).
- The behavior of persons attending events involving speakers (whether the speeches themselves or related receptions, dinners, book-signings, and so on) ultimately reflects on the sponsoring organizations; therefore, the sponsoring organization(s) must safeguard civility and plan for the possibility of uncivil behavior.
- When planning to bring a speaker to campus, student organizations should keep the following timeline in mind to ensure a successful, efficient, and productive planning and execution of the event.
- The Director of the Office of Student leadership & Service will notify the President's Office and the Office of General Council of all high profile guests (head of state, dignitary, government official) at least 8 weeks before the event so that they have the option to send a delegation to meet the guest if they deem it necessary.