

Student/Student Organization Campus Event Reservations East Tennessee State University

Student and Student Organization events and activities held on campus (outside of informal meetings between organization leaders and members) must be reserved through the Student Center; provided, however, that this requirement will not be applied in a way that prohibits spontaneous outdoor assemblies or distribution of literature except to the extent such an outdoor location has been reserved by an authorized user in advance.

While small and informal events requiring little to no Student Center support and taking place inside meeting rooms of the Culp Student Center may be reserved same-day by students and University-Affiliated groups; larger General Assembly and Outdoor spaces, as well as events requiring Student Center support (due to size, set-up or technology needs), must be reserved a minimum of 15 business days (typically 3 weeks) in advance of the event.

Advance reservation requirements outlined in this policy do not preclude public forum or spontaneous outdoor assembly by students as described in ETSU's [Free Speech Policy](#). In addition, space at Borchuck Plaza (in front of Sherrod Library) has been designated for outside or non-affiliated groups to reserve same-day for public forum when the space is not already reserved. Except as previously noted about spontaneous outdoor assemblies, any other outdoor or general assembly space must be reserved in advance according to policy.

Student groups must be registered with the Office of Students Activities & Organizations and have an active full-time faculty/staff advisor in accordance with the [General Policies for Student Organizations at ETSU](#) and the [ETSU Board of Trustees Policy on Student Organizations](#) (formerly TBR Policy 3:01:01:00) to be eligible to reserve space on campus. Event reservations must be approved by the student organization's faculty/staff advisor and the Student Center before being advertised or taking place. Organizations unable to identify the assistance of a faculty/staff advisor may appeal for registration and reservation assistance with the Office of Student Activities & Organizations.

Insurance and Security

For events held on ETSU property, the Student Center may require the Registered Student Organization to obtain event insurance and/or safety and security personnel for any event, activity or program.

Features that may require insurance and/or event security include:

- The use of equipment that attendees will be on or in, such as inflatables
- Large crowds
- Non-university attendees and/or participants
- High impact sports activities
- Minors expected to be in attendance
- Exchange of large sums of cash

Per the [University Free Speech Policy](#), ETSU will not charge students security fees based on the content of their speech, the content of the speech of guest speakers invited by students, or the anticipated reaction or opposition of listeners to speech.

ETSU Public Safety will be notified of all events scheduled through the Student Center. Together, the Student Center, Public Safety and Emergency Management will determine if the event requires any safety/security staffing. This may include uniformed officers, administrative staff, bonded security guards, emergency medical or other certified staff. To the extent permitted by law (Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-2405(a)(15)), the event organizer/sponsor is responsible to pay the cost associated with providing security staffing.

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These requirements will be determined during the event reservation process.

Minors*

Minors are persons under the age of 18 who are neither enrolled nor accepted for enrollment at the University. Minors may only be present at on-campus student organization-sponsored events while a parent or guardian is present with the minor for the duration of the activity.

For events advertised as “all ages,” or where the organization anticipates minors to attend, the sponsoring organization must provide notice that minors must be with a parent or guardian and that the parent or guardian is responsible for the minor’s participation in the events or activities.

For on-campus events advertised as “all ages,” or where the organization anticipates minors to attend, the sponsoring organization must meet with the Student Center staff to review the content of the event. If the content of the event is deemed explicit, obscene or pornographic for minors (according to Tennessee Law), minors will not be permitted to attend, regardless of the presence of a parent or guardian.

If minors are not permitted due to explicit, obscene or pornographic content, the organization must promote the event as 18+ or “ETSU Students Only” and provide such notice prior to and at the event. It is the responsibility of the organization to prevent minors from attending events where minors are not permitted to attend.

FAQ: How will the University determine whether the content of the event is explicit and/or inappropriate for minors?

Student Center team members will work with organization officers and advisors and University Counsel to determine whether an event’s proposed content would be considered explicit, obscene or pornographic for audiences under 18. While some subjectivity may make it difficult to determine the suitability of the content, two frameworks will be considered. First, Tennessee statutes related to illegal explicit activities will be consulted. Second, the ratings system used for motion pictures will be reviewed. For instance, a motion picture may be rated “R” or “NC-17” due to the presence of hard language, violence, sexual content, drugs, or other adult content. The University will generally prohibit the presence of minors at on-campus student organization events with content equivalent to R-rated or NC-17-rated films.

There are many constructive reasons to allow minors to attend student organization-sponsored events on campus, and most proposed activities will be appropriate for all ages. However, student officers and the University assume increased liability and responsibility when minors are involved. As such, the institution will err on the side of caution when electing to permit minors to attend student organization-sponsored events and activities.

*Minors in this context refers only to those individuals under the age of 18 who are not current ETSU students. Enrolled students under the age of 18 are permitted at events sponsored by ETSU and registered student organizations.

Sponsorship/Co-Sponsored Events

ETSU recognizes the importance to the educational process and environment for persons affiliated with the University including officially recognized student organizations and other groups to have reasonable

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access to, and use of, the educational facilities on campus, to hear various views. While ETSU maintains the generally accessible open, outdoor areas of its campus as traditional public forums for free speech by students; ETSU facilities are not traditional public forums for the general public. Instead, ETSU facilities exist primarily for use consistent with the advancement and orderly administration of its educational mission for the benefit of its Students, Faculty/Staff, and Affiliated Groups and Individuals. As such, ETSU does not ordinarily make its buildings or other facilities available to Non-Affiliated Persons. Exceptions may be made if the proposed use is consistent with this policy and institutional policy and mission.

With this in mind, student organizations are limited in the number of events co-sponsored with non-affiliated entities that they can host on campus annually. Co-sponsored events are defined as activities sponsored jointly by two or more organizations. Sponsorship may be inferred by the use of an organization's name and/or logo being in promotional materials, authority for event planning decision-making and implementation, and/or the use of organization funds and resources. Guest speakers, beneficiaries of philanthropic fundraising efforts, or affiliated national organizations' presence at an event does not necessarily constitute sponsorship.

- Each student organization is limited to two on-campus events co-sponsored with non-University groups each academic year.
- Student organizations may not co-sponsor more than one on-campus event with the same non-University group each semester.
- Restrictions related to non-University co-sponsorships are intended to reduce ambiguity or exploitation regarding the Affiliated Use and Rental of ETSU Facilities policies.

When hosting a co-sponsored event, the sponsoring student organization requesting space through the Student Center is responsible for planning the event and must be present at the event. A sponsor may not "front" for another non-affiliated entity for the purpose of securing a venue at no cost or reduced fees. For example, a community group or for-profit entity may not utilize a registered student organization to reserve a venue unless the event is planned by the student organization and open to students. Student groups who violate this requirement may be barred from using ETSU property.

Amplified Sound

Sound amplification (the use of speakers or other public address equipment for music or speech) of any kind will not be permitted in the Public Speaking Areas, unless written approval has been obtained by the D. P. Culp Student Center at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the event. No amplified sound is allowed during final examination periods or in close proximity to the library and classrooms.

Food

Food purchases by the organization for on-campus events must comply with the University's Dining Services contract. Events in the D.P. Culp Student Center with food expenses less than \$300 may purchase food from off-campus restaurants and retailers. If food expenses exceed \$300, the organization must utilize ETSU Dining Services. Additional requirements for hosting food vendors on campus can be found in the [ETSU Facility Use Policy](#).

Responsibilities of Users

Once an event ends, the space used for the event must be restored to its condition when the event began. If clean-up or repairs are needed following an event, the student group will be assessed supplementary charges to recover the cost of clean-up or repairs. Student organizations whose events

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repeatedly incur these supplementary charges may be prohibited from using ETSU property and/or may be subject to additional conduct procedures.

Reservation of Rights

Students/student groups reserving space on campus acknowledge that successful submission of a reservation does not guarantee assignment or availability of the space requested. Furthermore, Student Center staff reserve the right to assign event locations for a number of reasons including, but not limited to, event size/capacity, maximization of space utilization, or management of safety and security for participants.

The Student Center event and reservation staff, representing ETSU and in consultation with University Counsel and the Vice President for Student Life & Enrollment, reserves the right to make any final decisions on matters not covered by the Facility Use Rule and policies outlined above. Additionally, event and reservation staff of the Student Center reserve the right to change, alter and/or rearrange parts or all of these policies at any time with the approval of the Vice President for Student Life & Enrollment.

Exemptions

- The sponsorship requirements of this Policy do not apply to events that have either a fully confirmed space reservation request or the organizer of which has received a draft contract before September 1, 2023.
- The sponsorship requirements of this Policy do not apply to the use of ETSU Property by governmental entities, such as the City of Johnson City, and ETSU may make ETSU Property available to governmental entities at an agreed rate or without compensation.

Interpretations

This Policy is intended to be applied consistently and in compliance with all applicable laws and policies, including the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, Article I Section 19 to the Tennessee Constitution, [Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. § 1720-01-02](#) (Regulations on the Use of University Property) and [§ 1720-01-12](#) (Regulation on the Use of University Property by Non-Affiliated Persons for Free Expression Activities), Board Policy ([Use of Campus Property & Facilities](#), [University Free Speech](#)) and Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-2401 *et seq.* ([the Tennessee Campus Free Speech Protection Act.](#)) No decisions made in applying the terms of this Policy should be made on the basis of the viewpoint of any person who wishes to engage in free expression activities. Any questions about the applicability of these laws or the proper interpretation of this Policy should be addressed to the ETSU Office of University Counsel.