

<b>Title</b>	Policy on Law Student Freedom of Expression
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Dean of the School of Law
<b>Applies to</b>	School of Law Students and Student Organizations
<b>Campus Applicability</b>	School of Law
<b>Approval Date</b>	May 2, 2025
<b>Effective Date</b>	May 2, 2025
<b>For More Information Contact</b>	Dean of the School of Law
<b>Contact Information</b>	Dean’s Office, School of Law, <a href="mailto:lawdean@uconn.edu">lawdean@uconn.edu</a> or 860-570-5127
<b>Official Website</b>	<a href="https://law.uconn.edu/about/policies-and-regulations/">https://law.uconn.edu/about/policies-and-regulations/</a> <a href="https://law.uconn.edu/law-student-freedom-of-expression">https://law.uconn.edu/law-student-freedom-of-expression</a>

## PURPOSE

Lawyers have a special obligation to defend free speech and to exercise it responsibly. The purpose of this policy is to provide for free speech and expression by law students consistent with their duty, as members of the Law School community, to respect the dignity of others, to acknowledge their right to express differing opinions, and to foster and defend intellectual honesty, freedom of inquiry and instruction, and free expression on and off the campus. The Law School’s role is not to approve or disapprove the viewpoints expressed by law students, but to serve its educational mission by facilitating discussion of all viewpoints to the extent permitted by law, including but not limited to the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and article I section 4 of the Connecticut Constitution.

## APPLIES TO

This policy applies to law students and law student organizations.

## EXCLUSIONS

This policy does not apply to students acting in their capacity as employees of the School of Law.

## DEFINITIONS

**Law Student:** any individual admitted, registered, enrolled, or attending any Law School course or Law School program as well as any individual admitted to the Law School who is on Law School premises for any purpose pertaining to such individual’s registration or enrollment.

**Law School Premises:** all land, buildings, facilities, and other property in the possession of or owned, used, or controlled by the Law School, either solely or in conjunction with another entity.

**Registered Law Student Organization:** a law student organization that is registered with the Office of Student Affairs, has an active UConncontact profile, and is in good standing by being recognized and awarded a budget by the Student Bar Association.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

### **1. Law Student Speech**

- (a) Neither the Law School nor any agent thereof, including any Dean, Associate Dean, or faculty member, shall restrict any law student from exercising any right to free speech or expression based in whole or part on the expected or actual viewpoint of such student's speech or expression, even if some may believe that such speech or expression is controversial, offensive, or objectionable.
- (b) Neither the Law School nor any agent thereof, including any Dean, Associate Dean, or faculty member, shall adversely treat any law student for such student's exercise of any right to free speech or expression based in whole or part on the viewpoint of such student's speech or expression, even if some may believe that such speech or expression is controversial, offensive, or objectionable.
- (c) Any law student may conduct orderly picketing or other forms of peaceful demonstration outside of Law School buildings and in other public gathering areas on Law School premises if otherwise permitted by law, provided that such activity not significantly interfere with entry into or exit from such buildings or areas or with the free movement of any person on the Law School campus.
- (d) Entry into Law School buildings, meeting halls, classrooms, and other designated areas may properly be restricted to those engaged in the normal or scheduled activities being conducted. The presence of unauthorized persons in such areas leading to substantial interference with other Law School activities, after due notice has been given, orally or in writing, will be construed as interfering with or obstructing a Law School activity and is not permissible.
- (e) No law student may, in the exercise of demonstrations, picketing, or other expressive activity, engage in conduct that
  - 1. prevents or substantially interferes with the carrying out of Law School functions or approved activities, such as classes, meetings, library services, interviews, ceremonies, and public events;
  - 2. violates the law, defames a specific individual, constitutes a genuine threat or harassment, or unjustifiably invades substantial privacy or confidentiality interests;
  - 3. violates the University Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Related Interpersonal Violence;
  - 4. violates the University Code of Conduct, except that concerns about civility and mutual respect do not justify barring discussion of ideas solely because some find them controversial, offensive, or disagreeable;

5. violates a reasonable time, place, and manner restriction set by the Law School or University, including but not limited to the Law School's [Outdoor Amplified and Projected Sound Policy](#), [Posting Policy](#), [Registered Student Organization \(RSO\) Guest Speaker Procedure](#), and the University's [Outdoor Activities Policy](#).

## 2. Law Student Organizations

- (a) As authorized by article XV, section I, of the [By-Laws of the University of Connecticut](#) the Law School recognizes the right of any group of law students to form a registered law student organization for any purpose not prohibited by law.
- (b) Neither the Law School nor any agent thereof, including any Dean, Associate Dean, or faculty advisor, shall restrict any registered law student organization from inviting any person to speak to law students based in whole or part on the viewpoint of the speaker's speech or expression, even if some may believe that the invited speaker's ideas are controversial, offensive, or objectionable, or based in whole or part on the qualifications of the person so invited.
- (c) Consistent with article XV, section A of the [By-Laws of the University of Connecticut](#), no registered law student organization may discriminate against or exclude any individual because of such individual's actual or perceived race, religion, national origin or any other protected class recognized by state or federal anti-discrimination law, with respect to activities it undertakes on Law School premises. Any such organization, if found to have violated state or federal anti-discrimination law, shall not have the use of Law School premises.

## 3. Use of Law School Name

- (a) Consistent with article XV, section I.4., of the [By-Laws of the University of Connecticut](#), the name or insignia of the Law School shall not be used by any individual or by any group not duly organized as a part of the Law School without the approval of the Dean or their designee. For purposes of this section, registered student organizations are not "duly organized as a part of the Law School."
- (b) In authorizing or denying the use of the name of the Law School, the Dean shall be guided generally by the need to clarify to the public the nature of the relationship between the individual, group, or organization in question and the Law School.

### **ENFORCEMENT**

Violations of this policy may result in appropriate disciplinary measures in accordance with University By-Laws, General Rules of Conduct for All University Employees, applicable collective bargaining agreements, and the University of Connecticut Student Code.

This policy shall be reviewed within three years after its effective date.

**REFERENCES**

**POLICY HISTORY**

**Policy created:**

*May 2, 2025 (Approved by the Faculty of the School of Law)*

**Revisions:**