

# SOUTHWESTERN

## LAW SCHOOL Los Angeles, CA

### Campus Grounds Use Policy

**Administrative policy approved May 26, 2026. Effective immediately.**

**Revision history:** None; new policy.

**Related policies:** Campus Access Policy; Free Expression Policy; Political Activity Policy; Policy on Alcohol and Other Drugs; Smoke-Free Campus Policy; Policy to Prevent Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation; Additional Campus Safety & Security Policies (available on Southwestern’s website); Flyer Posting and Today@Southwestern Submission Policy for Recognized Student Organizations; Facilities Use by Outside Groups or Individuals; Code of Student Professionalism and Conduct

**Scheduled Review Date:** May 2028 (Administrative Services Office)

#### Table of Contents

- A. Purpose and Scope
- B. Definitions
- C. Non-Community Members and Outside Participation
- D. General Use of Campus Grounds
- E. Spontaneous Expressive Activity
- F. Signs, Literature, and Displays
- G. Activities Requiring Prior Approval
- H. Approval Process
- I. Major Events and Designated Areas
- J. Safety, Accessibility, and Property Protection
- K. Outdoor Recreation Equipment and Attachments
- L. Directions by Authorized Officials

**M. Removal, Damage, and Enforcement**

**N. Savings Clause**

**O. Policy Revisions**

**A. Purpose and Scope**

This policy establishes expectations for the use of Southwestern Law School's outdoor campus spaces. It applies to students, employees, recognized student organizations, departments, invited guests participating in approved activities, and other individuals authorized to be on campus. It governs organized activities, temporary structures, and events.

The policy supports Southwestern's academic mission, campus operations, safety, accessibility, and stewardship of property by establishing reasonable, content-neutral and viewpoint-neutral time, place, and manner standards for using outdoor campus spaces.

For purposes of this policy, the term "campus grounds" includes all outdoor areas of the campus owned, operated, or controlled by Southwestern, including courtyards, lawns, the Promenade, walkways, seating areas, exterior gathering areas (including terraces), common outside areas of The Residences, and similar outdoor spaces.

This policy does not create or expand rights of access to campus and does not convert any portion of campus into a public forum. Access to campus remains governed by the Campus Access Policy and other applicable Southwestern policies. Use of campus grounds must also comply with applicable laws. All individuals on campus grounds must comply with identification, access, and safety requirements under those policies and, to the extent applicable, laws.

Except to the extent that limited public pedestrian access to the Promenade is permitted under the Campus Access Policy or other applicable authority, Southwestern's campus and campus grounds are private property owned, operated, and controlled by Southwestern.

Activities on the Promenade may be subject to advance Fire Marshal approval.

Permission to use campus grounds may be limited, conditioned, or revoked consistent with applicable law and Southwestern policy.

**B. Definitions**

For purposes of this policy:

**1. Authorized official**

The President & Dean, Chief Operating Officer or designee, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, the Director of Campus Safety & Security, and Campus Security personnel for safety, security, and access matters, or other Southwestern official authorized to administer or enforce this policy, acting within assigned responsibilities.

**2. Campus grounds**

All outdoor areas of the campus owned, operated, or controlled by Southwestern, including courtyards, lawns, the Promenade, walkways, seating areas, exterior gathering areas (including terraces), common outside areas of The Residences, and similar outside spaces.

**3. Expressive activity**

Peaceful speech or expressive conduct, including leafleting, petitioning, holding signs, small demonstrations, vigils, and similar activities.

**4. Non-community member**

A person who is not a current student or employee, including visitors, alumni, contractors, vendors, invited guests, and other persons present on campus only as permitted under Southwestern policy.

**5. Organized activity**

An activity that is planned, sponsored, announced, promoted, or coordinated by a student organization, department, office, employee group, non-community member, or other identifiable organizer, or that reasonably requires Southwestern space management or operational support.

**6. Outdoor recreation equipment**

Personal or group equipment used for leisure, exercise, or informal recreation, including hammocks, slacklines, nets, ropes, goals, and similar devices.

**7. Spontaneous expressive activity**

Expressive activity by individuals authorized to be on campus that is not planned, sponsored, announced, promoted, or coordinated by an identifiable organizer and does not reasonably require space reservation, equipment setup, or operational support.

## **8. Temporary structure**

Any tent, canopy, booth, table setup, stage, platform, barrier, freestanding display, inflatable, shade structure, or similar item placed on campus grounds.

## **C. Non-Community Members and Outside Participation**

Southwestern's campus grounds are private property and are not open to unrestricted access by the general public. Limited public pedestrian access to the Promenade may be permitted only as authorized by the Campus Access Policy or other applicable authority. Non-community members may enter or participate only as permitted under the Campus Access Policy, as invited guests in an approved activity, or with other written authorization. Southwestern may impose check-in, identification, escort, security, time, place, and manner, and capacity-related conditions on the presence and activities of non-community members.

Use of campus grounds by outside groups or individuals is governed by Southwestern's Facilities Use by Outside Groups or Individuals policy, including any required agreements and approval processes.

Political candidate appearances, campaign activity, or other political events involving individuals or groups outside the Southwestern community are also subject to Southwestern's Political Activity Policy, including related approval processes.

## **D. General Use of Campus Grounds**

Individuals authorized to be on campus may use campus grounds for ordinary passage, informal conversation, quiet study, meals, and other incidental, noncommercial, non-disruptive activities, provided that such use does not interfere with campus operations, damage property, block access, or otherwise violate law or Southwestern policy.

Southwestern functions, academic activities, admissions events, previously approved events, maintenance, safety operations, and emergency response activities take priority over other uses of campus grounds.

## **E. Spontaneous Expressive Activity**

Individuals authorized to be on campus may engage in peaceful, spontaneous expressive activity on campus grounds without prior approval, provided that the activity:

- occurs in outdoor areas of campus grounds that are not reserved, closed, or otherwise restricted for operational or safety reasons, including temporary restrictions imposed in response to safety or security conditions;
- does not materially disrupt or interfere with classes, exams, library operations, clinics, interviews, meetings, ceremonies, admissions programming, or other scheduled Southwestern activities;
- does not block or materially impair any entrance, exit, doorway, stairway, ramp, accessible route, driveway, fire lane, service route, or pedestrian path;
- does not involve the use of amplified sound, generators, projection equipment, lighting, staging, tables, canopies, tents, or other equipment requiring setup or operational support;
- does not involve camping, overnight occupation, sleeping accommodation, or the storage of personal property on campus grounds; and
- complies with applicable law and Southwestern policy governing harassment, discrimination, threats, intimidation, privacy, safety, and property, including the Policy to Prevent Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation and the Smoke-Free Campus Policy.

As part of spontaneous expressive activity, individuals authorized to be on campus may carry handheld signs, distribute literature, and gather signatures, provided that materials are not forced on others and the area is left free of litter or debris.

Requests involving expressive activity will be reviewed and administered in a content-neutral and viewpoint-neutral manner. Nothing in this policy authorizes prior restraint of student speech or discipline of a student solely on the basis of speech or other communication protected by applicable law.

Any restriction, relocation, or condition imposed on expressive activity will be based on objective operational, safety, access, property-protection, or legal considerations, and not on disagreement with the content or viewpoint of the expression, anticipated controversy, or the possibility that others may find the expression offensive.

During large-scale Southwestern events (e.g., Homecoming), expressive activity may be subject to temporary location-based restrictions as provided in this policy (see Section I below).

Expressive activity that constitutes or involves political campaign activity remains subject to the requirements and restrictions of Southwestern's Political Activity Policy.

## **F. Signs, Literature, and Displays**

Handheld signs used during spontaneous expressive activity do not require separate approval under this policy. Flyers, banners, affixed signs, or other posted materials must comply with Southwestern's Flyer Posting and Today@Southwestern Submission Policy for Recognized Student Organizations, as applicable.

Freestanding displays on campus grounds require prior approval. Distribution of literature by hand as part of spontaneous expressive activity is permitted; however, materials may not be affixed to surfaces or left unattended on campus grounds except as permitted under the Flyer Posting and Today@Southwestern Submission Policy for Recognized Student Organizations.

## **G. Activities Requiring Prior Approval**

Prior written approval is required before any organized activity uses campus grounds in a manner reasonably expected to:

- reserve, cordon off, or seek semi-exclusive or exclusive use of campus grounds;
- involve the use of amplified sound, projection equipment, lighting, generators, extension power, or other electrical or audiovisual equipment;
- involve any temporary structure;
- involve food service, cooking equipment, sales, fundraising, commercial activity, or third-party vendors;
- involve political candidates, campaign activity, or political organizations subject to Southwestern's Political Activity Policy;
- involve invited non-community member speakers, performers, vendors, media representatives, or other programmed participation by non-community members;
- require Campus Security or other operational support, including custodial, facilities, traffic, accessibility, or electrical services;
- occur outside normal campus operating hours or in proximity to exams, commencement-related events, major admissions programming, or other sensitive Southwestern operations; or
- involve a march, procession, parade, or similar moving activity.

Activities involving alcohol remain subject to the requirements of Southwestern's Policy on Alcohol and Other Drugs, including any applicable approval and permit processes.

Requests involving outside groups or individuals must be submitted and processed in accordance with the Facilities Use by Outside Groups or Individuals policy.

## **H. Approval Process**

Requests to use campus grounds for an organized activity must be submitted to the Chief Operating Officer or designee. Student-sponsored activities will be reviewed in consultation with the Student Affairs Office. Employee- or department-sponsored activities will be reviewed in consultation with the appropriate department head or supervisor and, where appropriate, Human Resources. Additional offices, including Campus Security, Administrative Services, Communications & Marketing, the Dean's Office, or General Counsel Office, may be consulted as warranted by the nature of the activity.

Routine requests should be submitted at least 3 business days in advance. Requests involving temporary structures, sound amplification, non-community member participants, or other heightened operational needs should be submitted at least 10 business days in advance. If an activity responds to unfolding circumstances and advance notice is not reasonably possible, Southwestern will review the request on an expedited basis, as resources and circumstances permit.

Failure to meet these submission timelines may be considered in determining whether Southwestern can reasonably support the activity, but late submission will not be the sole basis for denial if the activity can be accommodated without material disruption, safety risk, or unreasonable operational burden.

Southwestern may approve, deny, relocate, reschedule, or impose reasonable conditions on a requested activity based on neutral factors, including space availability, prior reservations, campus operations, accessibility, safety, staffing, property protection, and compliance with applicable law and Southwestern policy. Approval under this section is not final until confirmed in writing by Southwestern.

If Southwestern denies, relocates, reschedules, or materially conditions a requested activity, it will provide the organizer with a brief written explanation of the neutral reason for the decision. When feasible, Southwestern will identify an alternative time, place, or manner that would allow the activity to proceed while

addressing the operational, safety, accessibility, property-protection, or legal concern. An organizer may request expedited reconsideration by the President & Dean, Chief Operating Officer, or their designee. This reconsideration process does not limit Southwestern's ability to take immediate action in response to safety, security, or emergency conditions.

## **I. Major Events and Designated Areas**

For large-scale Southwestern events or activities involving significant use of campus grounds (e.g., Homecoming, major admissions programs, etc.), Southwestern may designate specific areas for expressive activity and may impose temporary time, place, and manner restrictions as reasonably necessary to:

- maintain safe pedestrian and vehicular movement;
- support event operations and scheduled programming;
- protect participants, visitors, and campus property; and
- ensure access to campus facilities.

Any such designations or restrictions will be:

- content-neutral and viewpoint-neutral;
- no more restrictive than necessary to achieve operational and safety objectives; and
- communicated in advance where reasonably practicable.

Expressive activity may continue in designated areas during such events, and participants must comply with applicable safety, access, and operational requirements.

Non-community members participating in events remain subject to applicable access and location restrictions under the Campus Access Policy.

## **J. Safety, Accessibility, and Property Protection**

No activity on campus grounds may, without the prior written approval of an Authorized official:

- obstruct, narrow, or otherwise impair access to any entrance, exit, ramp, stairway, curb cut, accessible route, parking access aisle, loading zone, service area, or emergency equipment;
- materially interfere with teaching, studying, working, counseling, library use, clinical activities, interviews, meetings, ceremonies, or emergency operations;

- involve camping, overnight occupation, sleeping accommodations, or storing personal property on campus grounds;
- create a threat to health or safety, including unsafe crowding, trip hazards, unsanitary conditions, or interference with security operations;
- involve the use of open flames, fireworks, propane, hazardous materials, weapons, drones, or similar items;
- involve digging into the ground, driving stakes, altering landscaping, damaging irrigation systems, or marking, painting, or defacing campus; or
- result in damage to property or the failure to remove debris, equipment, or materials promptly at the end of the activity.

Individuals must promptly comply with safety directives and report hazards, suspicious activity, or emergencies to Campus Security.

## **K. Outdoor Recreation Equipment and Attachments**

Except as expressly authorized in writing by Southwestern or permitted under an applicable posting policy using approved methods, no person may attach, suspend, fasten, anchor, or install any item on trees, landscaping, irrigation, buildings, railings, fences, benches, poles, signs, light fixtures, or other campus property. This restriction includes, but is not limited to, hammocks, slacklines, ropes, swings, nets, goals, tarps, banners, and similar equipment.

Outdoor recreation equipment may not be used in a way that obstructs travel routes, creates a trip hazard, damages property or landscaping, interferes with campus operations, or endangers any person. Equipment may not be left unattended on campus grounds and must be removed promptly after use.

## **L. Directions by Authorized Officials**

Authorized officials may direct an individual or group to relocate, reduce noise, modify activity, remove equipment, clear an access route, or end an activity when reasonably necessary to enforce this policy, respond to an emergency, protect safety or accessibility, prevent property damage, or accommodate higher-priority Southwestern operations. Individuals on campus grounds must comply with lawful directions from authorized officials acting within their responsibilities. Authorized officials, Campus Security, or emergency responders may restrict, suspend, or terminate use of campus grounds immediately in response to safety, security, or emergency conditions. Authority regarding access control and removal from campus is governed by the Campus Access Policy.

## **M. Removal, Damage, and Enforcement**

Southwestern may remove unapproved, unattended, or unsafe items from campus grounds, with or without prior notice. Individuals or organizations responsible for such items may be held accountable for cleanup, repair, restoration, security, and other reasonable institutional costs resulting from violations of this policy.

Students and student organizations that violate this policy may be referred for review under the Code of Student Professionalism and Conduct or other appropriate policy. Employees may be addressed under the Employee Handbook or other applicable employment policies. Visitors and non-community members may be directed to leave campus and may be denied future access consistent with Southwestern policy.

## **N. Savings Clause**

This policy will be interpreted and applied consistently with applicable law, including California Education Code Section 94367, protected student expressive rights, and protected employee rights under labor and employment law. This policy does not authorize prior restraint of student speech. Nothing in this policy limits Southwestern's authority to address conduct that is not protected by law or policy, including true threats, unlawful harassment, intimidation, violence, discrimination, property damage, material disruption of operations, or interference with safety or access.

## **O. Policy Revisions**

Southwestern expressly reserves the right to change or modify any aspect of this policy at any time, with or without prior notice.