

Policies and Procedures

SECTION: Administration	NO. 2.1.2.		
CHAPTER: General	ISSUED: 3/7/88	REV. A 10/28/08	REV. B 2/1/2020
POLICY: Freedom of Expression and Active Dialogue Policy	PAGE 1 OF 5		

PURPOSE

This policy provides guidance in reconciling possible or perceived conflicts between Creighton’s commitments as a Jesuit, Catholic institution and its commitments as a university when events, activities and demonstrations are hosted, sponsored, or funded by any Creighton University entity, while ensuring the orderly functioning of the University and a safe learning environment.

Creighton University strives to be a community that is dedicated to the pursuit of truth in all its forms and to the betterment of society. As a University, Creighton is committed to its role as an academic institution in which the widest possible freedom of expression and openness to diverse ideas should be responsibly presented and examined. It is because of these commitments that we embrace freedom of thought and expression. Essential elements in the Ignatian tradition offer emphases on encouragement of active dialogue and on the innate dignity of each member of our community.

As Catholic, Creighton is committed to identification with a specific religious tradition and all of its essential values. This includes critical examination of ideas and perspectives which may be or may appear to be incompatible with its Catholic tradition and mission.

SCOPE

This policy applies to events hosted, sponsored or funded by any Creighton entity.

DEFINITIONS

Promoted event - means an event hosted, sponsored, or funded by any Creighton University entity, whether or not held on campus, which is to be advertised to the Creighton and/or broader community. Advertisement includes but is not limited to flyers, posters, social media, email, Creighton Today, *The Creightonian*, newsletters, word of mouth, and radio or television ads.

Event organizer – the member of the Creighton community planning a promoted event.

Controversial event – a promoted event providing an opportunity for those with viewpoints that may be in conflict with Creighton’s mission and values, and/or an event that may attract protests or demonstrations creating an unsafe environment.

Appropriate University administrator – the position that is tasked to make an informed judgement as to whether or not to designate the promoted event as a controversial event.

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The appropriate University administrator for faculty and staff in a college or school is the dean of the college or school.

The appropriate University administrator for staff in a division of the University is the Vice President/Provost of the division.

The appropriate University administrator for students and student organizations is the Vice Provost for Student Life or the Vice Provost's designee. Additionally, students and student organizations must complete the event registration information in CU Involved to initiate the event approval process.

POLICY

In order to provide a safe learning environment and to ensure the orderly functioning of the University, the event organizer for any promoted event that may be deemed controversial must take steps to review all relevant background information for the promoted event, prepare a detailed overview of the event, and submit this information to the appropriate University administrator for review.

a. **Exclusion from this Policy**

This policy does not apply to events sponsored by faculty members in the regular conduct of a scheduled University course with the students enrolled in that course. The Academic Freedom and Responsibility provisions of the *Faculty Handbook* guide faculty members in this regard.

b. **No Connoted Endorsement**

The scheduling of promoted events does not necessarily connote Creighton University's approval or endorsement of the views expressed at such events.

c. **Issue Affecting Creighton as a Tax-Exempt Organization**

As a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, Creighton cannot participate or intervene in any political campaign. The University refrains from sponsoring programs designed to raise funds for political candidates or parties. Creighton may provide opportunities for legally qualified candidates for public office to speak on the University campus subject to applicable laws and IRS guidelines.

d. **Reservation of Rights**

Creighton University reserves the authority to cancel or refuse to allow any promoted event for the following reasons:

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- i. Where promoted events are proposed during Final Exam Week, Welcome Week, Mission Week, Founders Week, Holy Week, Alumni Reunion Weekend, Commencement activities; or
- ii. Where the University cannot ensure the adequate safety of the Creighton community or the invited speaker or persons participating in the event.

The final determination to cancel or refuse any promoted event shall be made at the discretion of the President or the President's designee.

PROCEDURES

The following steps must be completed when it is likely that a promoted event will be designated a controversial event:

- a. In the case a promoted event requires review by the appropriate University administrator, the administrator should be given advanced notice of the desired date of the event (preferred 30 or more days). This will allow an informed judgement as to whether or not to designate the promoted event a controversial event and allow sufficient time to build an event support plan.
- b. The event organizer must inform the appropriate University administrator of a promoted event and provide all relevant and request background information. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - i. For speakers/presenters/panelist - positions, works, published speeches, social media presence, and biographies.
 - ii. For artistic performers – lyrics or other published works, social media presence, or audio/video recordings.
- c. The event organizer must inform the appropriate University administrator of the format of the event, including the event plan, execution details, and anticipated audience.
- d. The appropriate University administrator will review all submitted information and determine whether to designate a promoted event as a controversial event.
 - i. The appropriate University administrator may seek input from others including but not limited to the Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT), campus subject-matter experts (including but not limited to Public Safety, University Communication and Marketing, Centralized Reservations, Facilities Management, Mission and Ministry, Institutional Diversity and Inclusion, the Office of the President, General Counsel, the Office of the Provost or faculty from a specific academic discipline), and affected interested parties.
 - ii. Additionally, special consideration will be given to the date of the event and the University calendar. The University may refuse to allow promoted events scheduled

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- during Final Exam Week, Welcome Week, Mission Week, Founders Week, Holy Week, Alumni Reunion Weekend, or during Commencement activities. Where the date of the proposed event occurs during these special consideration dates/events, the appropriate University administrator may seek input from others, including but not limited to the Creighton officials responsible for those special consideration dates.
- iii. The appropriate University administrator determines whether to designate a promoted event as a controversial event.
 - iv. If designated a controversial event the University administrator will determine if the controversial event is approved and under what circumstances (including but not limited to the format of the event) the controversial event may proceed.
 1. The organizer or their designee will include in their opening/introductory remarks the Freedom of Expression and Active Dialogue Policy's purpose, as well as the no connoted endorsement statement in their entirety. The organizer may be required to include the no connoted endorsement statement in advertisements for the event.
 2. Once a controversial event proposal has been approved the by appropriate University administrator, any alterations to the promoted event's proposal must be submitted for review and approval prior to the event.
 - v. If the appropriate administrator does not allow an event to proceed or otherwise limits how the event may proceed, the event organizer may appeal that decision to the President or the President's designee. The decision of the President or the President's designee is final.

ADMINISTRATION AND INTERPRETATIONS

This policy shall be administered by President or the President's designee. Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the President, the President's designee, or the Office of the General Counsel. Individual University schools, colleges or operating units may create policies specific to their school to meet accreditation requirements or specific operating conditions, provided any conflicts with this policy are resolved with the agreement of the President or the President's designee.

VIOLATIONS/ENFORCEMENT

Any known violations of this policy should be reported to the appropriate University administrator.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, RESOURCES AND ATTACHMENTS

[Creighton University Mission Statement](#)
[Creighton University Faculty Handbook](#)
[Creighton University Student Handbook](#)
[CU Involved Event Registration](#)
[Centralized Reservations](#)

AMENDMENT/TERMINATION OF THIS POLICY

The University reserves the right to modify, amend or terminate this policy at any time.