Peaceful Assembly Policy

The liberal arts college is a place that invites those from all aspects of life to have a meeting of the minds and thus foster an environment where learning occurs. As such, the right to dissent is essential to academic freedom and scholarly pursuits. Dissent in the form of protest against a particular position, action, or situation is permitted. However, such dissention must not restrict the freedom of thought or movement of others who hold different views. Morehouse College seeks to provide the right to engage in peaceful assemblies for the students in our academic community.

Further, Morehouse College (the “College”, where appropriate) encourages the free pursuit of learning and makes every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct. It respects and defends free inquiry by its constituents, while expecting that in the exchange of criticism and ideas, all will show respect for the views of others. In providing individuals the right to peaceful assembly, there must also be room for others in the community to access academic and educational processes, to reside in residential spaces, and to take advantage of normal business operations. Therefore, this document serves to outline the appropriate procedures for peaceful assembly.

Guidelines for Planning a Peaceful Assembly

Only Morehouse College students or student organizations can organize peaceful assemblies on campus. Those who are interested in planning a peaceful assembly on campus must first report the event to the Office of Student Life and such an assembly will be subject to approval. The event must be presented in writing and detail all aspects of the activity. If the assembly will utilize a campus facility, the organizer must complete a facility request and obtain the necessary approvals. Considering that there may be times when a student or student organization plans an activity that quickly responds to a current event, students or student organizations must still follow this policy and the Office of Student Life will make reasonable efforts to accelerate its review; however, such accelerated reviews will occur on a case-by-case basis in a manner that is consistent with this policy.

Examples of peaceful assembly include (Please note that this is not an exhaustive list):

- **Demonstration** - A large group of people, usually gathering for a political cause. It usually includes a group march, ending with a rally or a speaker. A demonstration is similar to a protest in that they both can use the same or similar methods to achieve goals. However, demonstrations tend to be more abrasive and spontaneous, whereas protests tend to be more organized.
- **March** - A walk by a group of people to a place in order to express an objection with any event, situation, or policy
• Picket Line - A line or group of people who are refusing to go to work until their employer agrees to certain demands
• Protest - A protest is a way to express objections with any event, situation, or policy. These objections can be manifested either by actions or by words.
• Sit-In - any organized protest in which a group of people peacefully occupy and refuse to leave college premises.
• Vigil - An observance of commemorative activity or event meant to demonstrate unity around a particular issue or concern, and/or to promote peace and prevent violence.

Procedure for Planning a Peaceful Assembly

A. Prior to sponsoring a peaceful assembly, a group or organization representative must prepare in writing a proposal for the event at least 48 hours in advance of any activity and submit it to the Office of Student Life. The Office of Student Life may require further notice based on the scale of the event.

   1. The proposal should include the proposed date of the event, the proposed start and end time, the purpose of the event, the target group of students and estimated number of participants, security requirements.
   2. If the proposed event is a march, the supporting group will be required to attach a route of the demonstration.

B. A member of the Student Life staff will review the notification within one working day of its submission. The Office of Student Life will meet with the individual(s) requesting the permit prior to its approval. The meeting will cover logistics including safety and security issues, use of amplified sound, and the potential for disruption to the College. Upon notification of a proposed activity, the Office of Student Life will inform Campus Police, Office of Student Conduct, Associate Dean of Housing and Residence Life, and the Vice President of Student Development. The Office of Student Life will communicate approved activities in writing (with a clear description of the event) to the aforementioned members of administration.

   1. Groups submitting application may be subjected to costs associated with the event.
   2. All costs must be paid prior to the commencement of the event.

C. Failure to file this notification will result in appropriate sanctions according to the Student Code of Conduct.

D. Sponsoring organizations and their representative are responsible for ensuring that there will be no disruption of College activities, conduct of
business or events, programs or services. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. The free passage of pedestrian and roadway traffic into or around campus at all points.
2. No persons or group should block the ingress and egress to any building.
3. Groups submitting application may be subjected to costs associated with the event.
4. All costs must be paid prior to the commencement of the event.
5. Use of amplified sound will not disrupt the conduct of College business.
6. Activities that might disrupt the campus environment will not be allowed or encouraged.
7. Respect of and adherence to all policies and procedures regulating on-campus events.
8. In the event that the demonstration will move outside of the confines of campus, the supporting organizations will be responsible for obtaining all permits and notifying Atlanta city officials.
9. Any contact with the media must be handled by the Office of Communications.

E. Compliance with College Officials

1. Everyone is expected to comply with the directions of College officials who are acting in accordance with the performance of their duties. Failure to do so is a violation of campus conduct codes, and is subject to sanctions as outlined in Student Code of Conduct. If a demonstration or activity interferes with normal College activities and/or functions, participants will be asked to disperse.
2. Failure to disperse may be treated as trespassing and handled in accordance by state law or the College disciplinary policy.

Approved Locations for Peaceful Protest
In order to ensure the safety of our students, the following locations are approved (upon availability) areas to host peaceful protest.

1. Kilgore Student Center Plaza
2. Sale Hall Bell
3. King International Chapel Plaza