

# It's My Campus and I'll March/Protest/Demonstrate/ Speak Out If I Want To

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Student Activism on Campus and the University's Response

## Panel Members

Jonathan Adams, Associate Dean and Director of Student Conduct

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# Free Speech on Campus

- First Amendment
- Marketplace of ideas
- Protected speech
- Viewpoint neutral
- Reasonable Time, Place, and Manner Restrictions
  - NOT CONTENT
- North Carolina--Restore Campus Free Speech Act



# Things considered before/during/after an event...

- Viewpoint neutrality
- Campus access...consistency
- Reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions
- Policies
- Dealing with disruptions
- Imminent threats to health and safety
- What else is happening on campus?



# DART

- University is committed to:
  - Facilitating a safe learning environment for the community to exercise their First Amendment rights
  - Minimizing interference with normal University operations
- DART supports this goal by:
  - Providing information on demonstration activities
  - Observing and responding to demonstration activities

# Role of Student Conduct

Protected speech or actionable conduct?

University policies:

- Code of Student Responsibility
- Outdoor, On-Campus Activities
- Conduct at Speech Events
- Nondiscrimination

Educational conversations



# Role of Campus Police

- Last resort
- Safety of campus
- Awareness of the surrounding area and other events
- Crimes are still crimes...even if in support of a cause



# Role of Communications

- Encourage free speech
- University values
- Lessons learned from Fall 2016
- Communications strategies
  - NinerAlerts
  - NinerNotices

## Once upon a time...

It is 8:00PM on a Sunday night and the Dean of Students receives a text from a staff member notifying her of an Instagram post by a student that depicted a confederate flag and a caption that reads, “White students must stand up, fight, and take back our campus.”

## Monday...

On Monday morning the post has been shared over 200 times with numerous responses in support. Some posts included suggestions that the University's administration supports their views.

By Monday afternoon the Director of Student Activities learns from a student that an event is being planned for Thursday afternoon. There are few details offered, but he says it is going to begin outside the Student Union. As would be expected, there is a big fundraising event planned for that day and is set to take place in the lobby of the Student Union.

## Tuesday...

On Tuesday morning it is reported that flyers were posted all over several residence halls and classroom buildings that depict the confederate flag, cartoons about segregation, quotes from white supremacists, and information about the event on Thursday.

The Dean of Students Office begins receiving many phone calls and visits from students and parents, demanding that something be done to the students who posted these.

## Tuesday Continued..

On Tuesday evening, an incident report comes in that a group of students “attacked” a faculty member. The report alleges that the students became aggressive during a class discussion on the recent events and accused the faculty member of being a racist bigot. The faculty member reports that a group of 10 students “ganged up on her,” accused her of being racist, and shouted over her as she attempted to continue class. She shares that other students tried to voice their views, but the group just got louder each time. She asked them to leave the classroom, but they refused. A few minutes later, once things calmed down, several from the group stood up and stormed out of the classroom, startling other students.

## Wednesday...

On Wednesday, the Chancellor receives an email with a petition attached that has been signed by over 500 students. The petition included numerous demands such as a call to punish the student organization they believed to be behind the social media posts and flyers from earlier in the week, to fire the Student Affairs administrators who refused to act and the attorneys who were advising them, to award immediate tenure to minority faculty members to show commitment to diversity in the faculty, and many other demands.

## Wednesday continued...

A local news station hears of this petition and contacts the Chancellor's Office asking for a statement.

Around 3 PM, students begin to gather outside Cato Hall. They have large signs, a megaphone, and other props. They are chanting, shouting, and marching around the building demanding that something be done about the events of this week.

## Thursday...

Late morning, a small gathering of students begins to form outside the Student Union. Many are carrying confederate flags of various sizes. The crowd continues to grow over the next hour.

Another group of students begin to gather inside the Student Union. They sit on the floor and remain silent.

The naming event is set to take place at Noon and guests begin to arrive. The students outside the Union are chanting and making it difficult for attendees to enter the Union.

# Closing Thoughts

- Facilitate free expression
- Remain viewpoint neutral
- Maintain safety and normal operations
- Mission of the University



