

Dissent and Disorder Policy – 2025-26 Student Handbook, Pages 75-76

Wittenberg University has established free and open channels of communication; every member of the Wittenberg community can express their concerns with the expectation that they are to be brought to the attention of the proper authorities or to a broad segment of the university community. If an individual or the members of a group should find the existing channels inadequate, the university supports their right to call immediate attention to their ideas by petition, public protest, or any innovative means so long as the means employed do not infringe upon established rights of others and do not violate local, state, or federal laws, and do not impede any campus activity. At no point in time should such dissent endanger the well-being of Wittenberg community members or campus visitors.

Whenever dissenting individuals or groups of individuals challenge the established community, two fundamental values must be preserved:

- the freedom to criticize, to protest, or to organize for the purpose of changing the community
- the right to enjoy the privileges and immunities of an order which protects the rights and freedoms of all and insures the peace and security of the community.

When, in the opinion of the President in consultation with the Provost, Human Resources and/or the Dean of Students (or their designee), a disturbance threatens to disrupt campus life, they must take immediate steps:

- to request immediate cessation of the disturbance so that discussion may be carried out under suitable conditions
- to offer to establish within a stated length of time special channels of communication with spokespersons of the disturbing group.

If order is not restored after these steps have been taken, then the disturbance may be regarded as a disruption. Should a serious disorder occur, sufficient to disrupt the educational process, campus activities or threaten the safety of members of the campus community, it is the immediate responsibility of the President in consultation with the Provost, Human Resources and/or the Dean of Students, acting in consultation with the President and the Provost, to determine that a disruption does in fact exist, to take initial steps as outlined above, and to call upon such agencies and authorities as deemed necessary to restore order.

Once order has been restored, and if the disorder has been declared a disruption, the university then acts as follows:

- A debrief of the incident to consider next steps to include all appropriate parties relative to the disruption.

- o When involving students – include the appropriate Senior Staff member and the Dean of Students

- The Dean of Students, believing there is a need for further action, refers the case to the student conduct process.

- o When involving faculty, staff and/or visitors – include the appropriate Senior Staff member and Human Resources.

- The Area Senior Staff member and Human Resources, believing there is a need for further action, will follow the code of conduct process.