

Protest, Demonstration and Civil Disobedience Procedure

Procedure #PPL-PRO-96

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1	09/18/2024	09/20/2026	Initial Release

Dave Truax, Executive Director, Campus Safety Services	07/15/2024
Policy Holder	Date Reviewed

College Council	09/18/2024
Advising Body	Date Consulted

David Johnson, Vice President, Finance and Corporate Services	09/04/2024
Approver (Name and Title)	Date Approved

Background

Georgian College campuses should be safe environments where students, employees, and community members can have critical, difficult, even uncomfortable debates and discussions about things that matter both at home and abroad.

Georgian College provides opportunities for informed, structured, and generous discussions on complicated issues. Students and the broader community should have opportunity to express their ideas in a way that does justice to the issues yet is also restrained and respectful so that when people express their positions, they do so in ways that are not harmful to others.

While peaceful, non-obstructive demonstrations represent the intrinsic human right to freedom of expression (refer to Georgian College policy “Free Speech”), it is possible that these demonstrations may infringe on the rights of other persons who attend the College to work and study.

Georgian College has a responsibility to consider the rights of all community members when responding to protests, demonstrations and civil disturbances on Georgian College campuses or property.

Purpose

This procedure provides direction to the Georgian College community when responding to protests, demonstrations and civil disturbances occurring on Georgian campuses or properties.

Scope

It is acknowledged that there are many types of social gatherings/assemblies that serve to display a group feeling towards a person or cause (see definitions listed below), but for the interest of this document the terms **“protest, demonstration, or civil disturbance”** shall be used to denote all these activities.

This procedure applies to all employees, students, visitors, contractors and guests at Georgian College campuses or properties before/during/after a protest, demonstration and/or civil disturbance. The full cooperation of all persons is required during any such event. Georgian College recognizes individual autonomy in choosing to engage in these activities, however any violations of codes of conduct (student or employee) or applicable laws during these events will be subject to investigation and potential punitive action.

Guiding principles

There should be no uncertainty nor discomfort on Georgian College campuses about the right of individuals to express themselves, and to assemble lawfully for that purpose. Peaceful demonstrations, gatherings, protests, and rallies should not be interrupted by the college. Participants should not be blocked or provoked, and efforts should be made to conduct Georgian College business in a routine manner.

Understanding that every demonstration, gathering, protest or rally is a unique situation with varying degrees of risk and impact to the community, the Executive Director, Campus Safety Services will activate/ notify the Emergency Operations Control Group should any of the following situations occur.

1. Interference with scheduled college activities.
2. Participants represent a source of potential harm to any person(s).
3. Participants represent a threat to property, assets or infrastructure belonging to the college or community.
4. Participants violate the Student and/or Employee Codes of Conduct i.e. there are threats of violence, harassment, or actions that put the safety of others at risk.
5. Participants are taking part in illegal activities.
6. Participants disrupt the flow of human or vehicular traffic on college property (preventing or blocking entry or egress routes from buildings, classes, offices, or other facilities)
7. Media is present or may attend the college due to these activities.

This list is not exhaustive. The Executive Director, Campus Safety Services may activate or notify the Emergency Operations Control Group at any time if deemed necessary.

Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Assembly	A gathering of people in a group (as for social, religious, or political purposes).
Demonstration	A public display of group feelings toward a person or cause.
Protest	A statement or action expressing disapproval of or objection to something.
Rally	A public meeting of a large group of people, especially supporters of a particular opinion.
March	An organized procession of demonstrators who are supporting or protesting something.
Occupation protest / demonstration	When protesters occupy some public or off-limits space, refuse to leave without being arrested or physically removed by authorities, offering only passive resistance in return.
Civil Disturbance	Civil disturbance, also known as civil disorder, civil unrest, or social unrest, are incidents which disrupt a community. For the purpose of this procedure, the community is "Georgian College", and a disruption would include anything which affects the ability of students and employees to learn or teach.
Emergency Notification System	Notification system controlled and operated by Campus Safety Services which sends notifications through the following channels: 1. All computers connected to the Georgian College Network and turned-on will display the predetermined emergency message as a "pop-up". 2. All computers equipped with speakers, connected to the Georgian College network, and turned on will play a pre-recorded emergency message. 3. Public Address system audio speakers will play a pre-recorded or live emergency message. 4. All mobile devices that have installed the Safe@Georgian application will receive a push notification."
Planned protest / demonstration	When protest/demonstration participants have communicated their intentions to engage in activities to the Georgian College leadership.
Unplanned protest / demonstration	An impromptu protest or demonstration activity that was not communicated to any employee of Georgian College.
Threat to safety	A threat to safety is defined as a situation which may include (but is not limited to) assault causing bodily harm including thrown objects, sexual assault, or uttering threats of death or physical violence. To determine if a situation is a legitimate threat to safety requiring immediate action, consider the following; 1. Severity of the Threat: Evaluate how serious the potential harm could be. This includes the nature of the threat (e.g., physical violence, emotional distress) and its potential impact.

	2. Immediacy of the Threat: Determine how imminent the threat is. An immediate threat requires quicker action compared to a potential future risk. 3. Capability of the Threat: Assess whether the individual or group has the means to carry out the threat. This includes access to weapons, size of the group, or other resources. 4. Intent of the Threat: Consider the intent behind the threat. Is it a credible and deliberate attempt to cause harm, or is it a less serious expression of anger or frustration? 5. Vulnerability of the Target: Evaluate how vulnerable the potential target is. This includes factors like age, physical condition, and ability to escape or defend themselves. 6. Environmental Factors: Consider the environment where the threat is occurring. This includes the location, time of day, and presence of other people who could either help mitigate or exacerbate the situation. 7. Historical Context: Look at any past incidents or behaviors that might indicate a pattern of threats or violence. Excessive noise, offensive language and graphic signage ARE NOT a threat to personal or public safety.
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Responsibilities

Student, employee, and visitor responsibilities include:

- When engaging in any activities on college properties, students and employees should be mindful that their conduct is subject to the Student or Employee Codes of Conduct.
Policy and Procedures - HR-015 - Employee Code of Conduct
- When engaging in any activities on college properties, visitors should be mindful that Georgian College is private property and that they may be trespassed from the site if their conduct is deemed to be disruptive to college operations or may affect the health and safety of the Georgian College community.
- When planning a protest or demonstration on Georgian College property, event leadership should communicate their protest or demonstration plans in writing at least 72 hours prior to the event, to Georgian College department of Campus Safety Services and/or any other departments identified and/or targeted by their activities.
 - Campus Safety Services – campussafetyservices@georgiancollege.ca
- When observing a gathering or group of people who appear to have the intent to protest or demonstrate (carrying signs, speakers, megaphones, etc.) with no identified employees or security present, call Campus Security to ensure awareness of the event: 705.722.5100 or “Security Emergency Call” in the Emergency Contacts widget on the SAFE@Georgian App.

- When observing a group of people who appear agitated or who are creating a potential or active civil disturbance on Georgian College property, call Campus Security 705.722.4000 or “Security Emergency Call” in the Emergency Contacts widget on the SAFE@Georgian App.
- It is expected that Georgian students and employees will only engage with protestors or demonstrators in a respectful and safety-conscious manner. Georgian College students or employees will not attempt to aggressively engage or disband groups conducting protests or demonstrations on college properties. Georgian College students and employees will act in a manner aligned with their relative code of conduct.
- During any protest or civil disturbance, it is expected that all Georgian community members follow the [Emergency Response Guide](#) directives on “*Harassing and Violent Situations*” regarding their safety.
- All persons on Georgian College property will take direction from the appropriate authorities and are required to contribute to a safe and secure environment.

Campus Security responsibilities include:

- The Security Command Centre and Georgian College’s Marketing, Communications and Recruitment department shall monitor news and social media for information about planned or impromptu protests or demonstrations that will impact Georgian College locations. Security employees should immediately report any concerning information discovered to the Manager of Security & Parking Operations and the Executive Director of Campus Safety Services, or their designate and to the Manager of Marketing, Communications and Recruitment.
- As Security Command Centre becomes aware of an event on college property, and confirms its validity, Security will immediately inform the Supervisor/Site Supervisor. Depending on the activities occurring and if the campus has security team members on site, a security guard(s) will also be sent to the location of the protest or demonstration.
- Contact the Manager of Security and Parking Operations and/or the Executive Director of Campus Safety Services, or their designate and provide details of the event including number of persons, location, and description of behaviour.
- Security personnel will keep in radio communication with each other. Security Dispatch and Site Supervisor will coordinate security team activities during an active event.
- Security will contact and liaise with local emergency response personnel as necessary. If the demonstrators become agitated, aggressive, or violent; if injury to persons or property has occurred or appears imminent; Security will immediately call 911.
- Security team and Supervisor will continuously assess if the ongoing incident merits activation of the ‘**Hold & Secure or Lockdown**’ procedures. If this decision is made, Security will broadcast the alert and activate the appropriate components of the Emergency Notification System.
 - Hold and Secure Procedure
 - Lockdown Procedure
- Security personnel will continue to communicate and liaise with emergency response personnel as necessary.
- Security personnel, if on site, will assist Emergency Responders as necessary.
- Georgian College Security personnel will refrain from engaging in having staged or choreographed photos, videos or interviews taken by any media and/or persons engaging in

protest, demonstration, and civil disturbance activities. This does not include any photos or security videos captured of Security personnel engaged in carrying out their duties during these incidents.

When social media activity is identified or when media is anticipated to attend any Georgian College property:

- Security or Campus Safety Services, or the most responsible senior employee on site will immediately contact and inform the Manager of Communications or their designate from the department of Marketing, Communications and Recruitment.

Manager Security & Parking Operations and Executive Director or designate responsibilities include:

- Upon notification of a protest, demonstration, or civil disturbance, (planned or in progress) the Executive Director or designate shall notify the Office of the President, the VP Finance and Corporate Services and the VP External Relations and Enrolment and provide a briefing of known information.
- The Executive Director of Campus Safety Services may assemble the Emergency Management Steering Committee/Emergency Operations Control Group (EOCG) and initialize the *Emergency Response Plan*, if necessary.
- Introduce themselves, if safe to do so, to the protest or demonstration leadership at the site. Listen to the concerns voiced by the group and be able to report these concerns to senior leadership of the college as necessary.
- Conduct a high-level assessment of the protest/demonstration or civil disturbance activities and the potential risks to any personnel on site, and/or any impacts to the infrastructure at the subject location.
- Clearly communicate to protest/demonstration organizers the expectations Georgian College has for their activities and/or behaviour while on college property. Ensure that the protestors/demonstrators understand any breaches to code of conduct (student and/or employee) or breaking of laws will result in potential investigations and/or punitive outcomes.
- When experiencing a civil disturbance that threatens safety or life, or involves the destruction of property, police shall be contacted immediately.
- Liaise with police and emergency services as necessary.
- Direct Security or Facilities Management personnel to sequester areas to create safe demarcated zones for the protestors/demonstrators.
- When media is anticipated or present on-site, liaise with the Crisis Communications Lead, department of Marketing, Communications and Recruitment to ensure that incident messaging is issued.
- Ensure that corrective actions are taken to build resiliency against future incident reoccurrence and any negative outcomes related to the event.

Marketing, Communications and Recruitment responsibilities include:

- Upon notification, assist Security Command Centre employees with monitoring news and social media for information about planned or impromptu protests or demonstrations that will impact Georgian College locations.
- The Executive Director of Marketing and Communications (Crisis Communications Team Lead) or designate will immediately convene the Crisis Communications Team, per the Crisis Communications Plan and follow the directions.
- The Crisis Communications Lead will then liaise with the Executive Director of Campus Safety Services or their designate, in their role as the Chairperson of the Emergency Operations Control Group (EOCG).
- The Marketing, Communications and Recruitment department will issue alert messaging to potentially impacted students and staff through key channels such as the Georgian College website, social media channels and student channels such as MyGCLife.
- The appropriate spokesperson(s) once identified by the Marketing, Communications and Recruitment department, will introduce themselves to the leadership of the protesting group if it is safe and appropriate to do so. The spokesperson(s) seek approval from the Executive Director of Campus Safety Services before they approach the group of protestors/demonstrators.
- The appropriate spokesperson(s), once identified by the Marketing, Communications and Recruitment department, will be the liaison with the media both on and off site on behalf of Georgian College.

Campus Principal/Campus Business Manager or designate responsibilities include:

- When becoming aware of an active protest or demonstration at their Georgian College location, the Campus Principal or Campus Business Manager will:
 - Contact Georgian College Security Command Centre (705,722,4000 or “Security Emergency Call” in the Emergency Contacts widget on the SAFE@Georgian App).
 - Contact the Manager of Security and Parking Operations and/or the Executive Director of Campus Safety Services, or their designates.
 - When media is present on site, the Campus Principal or Campus Business Manager will notify the Manager of Communications, in the Marketing, Communications and Recruitment department.
- Campus Principal or Campus Business Manager will follow directions provided by the police, Executive Director of Campus Safety Services, Manager Security and Parking Operations, and/or in relation to liaising with the demonstrators at the location, and the directions of the department of Marketing, Communications and Recruitment in relation to liaising with the media.

When experiencing any event that threatens safety or life:

- Immediately call 911 and follow directions given by police.
- Notify Campus Security at 705.722.4000 that police have been contacted.
- When the site is needing to be closed, contact Security Command Centre and request that the Emergency Notification System components be activated to reflect this message.

- Refer to the Unscheduled Campus Closure Procedure and notify the manager, Communications or their designate
- Continue to liaise with local emergency response personnel as necessary.
- Assist in directing evacuation efforts as needed, including directing security or emergency response personnel to the 'Areas of Refuge' and people who require aid during egress.
- Direct everyone away from potential danger, ensure that community members are directed to routes of egress, and consider securing any infrastructure if necessary.

Procedure

1.0 Identifying and communicating the activity

- 1.1 All Georgian College community members or visitors can communicate any noted protest or demonstration activities on college properties to the Georgian College Security Command Centre at 705-722-5100.
- 1.2 When protest/demonstration leadership has communicated details for 'Planned Protests/ Demonstrations' at Georgian College this information will be immediately communicated to the Manager of Security and Parking Operations and/or the Executive Director of Campus Safety Services, or their designates.
- 1.3 When an 'Unplanned Protest/Demonstration' is noted to be occurring at a Georgian College property this information will be immediately communicated to the Manager of Security & Parking Operations, as well as the Executive Director of Campus Safety Services.
- 1.4 Upon notification of a protest, demonstration, or civil disturbance, (planned or in progress) the Executive Director of Campus Safety Services or designate shall notify the Office of the President, the VP Finance and Corporate Services and the VP External Relations and Enrolment and provide a briefing of known information.
- 1.5 The Executive Director of Campus Safety Services may assemble the Emergency Management Steering Committee/Emergency Operations Control Group (EOCG) and initialize the *Emergency Response Plan*, if deemed necessary.

2.0 Monitoring the activity

- 2.1 The protest or demonstration shall be monitored by the Campus Safety Services team, when present at location, on an ongoing basis. When security personnel are not present at the subject Georgian College locations, this responsibility is relegated to the Campus Principal, Campus Business Manager or designate.
- 2.2 The Security Command Centre will also monitor any protests or demonstrations at any Georgian College locations using its security video surveillance system.
- 2.3 Persons present and monitoring the protest/demonstration activities shall maintain open communications with:
 - Campus Security Command Centre.

- Manager Security & Parking Operations, Campus Safety Services.
- Executive Director, or their designate, Campus Safety Services.
- Police and emergency services as necessary.

3.0 Civil disturbance and response

3.1 When a protest/demonstration evolves into a civil disturbance that *poses a threat to safety or involves the destruction of Georgian College property** at a Georgian College location:

- 3.1.1 Call 911 immediately.
- 3.1.2 Police direction will be followed regarding response to the civil disturbance that is transpiring.
- 3.1.3 When appropriate, the Security Command Centre will activate the Emergency Notification System (ENS) for either a **'Hold & Secure, Lockdown, or Evacuation Procedure'**.

*A threat to safety is defined as a situation which may include (but is not limited to) assault causing bodily harm including thrown objects, sexual assault, or uttering threats of death or physical violence. Please see Definitions section above for further factors to consider when determining threat to safety.

Excessive noise, offensive language or graphic signage ARE NOT a threat to personal or public safety.

4.0 Post incident

- 4.1 Recognizing that the impacts of a civil disturbance will range from minor to severe, the issuing of the **'All clear'** messaging through the Emergency Notification System (ENS) will only be distributed at the direction of the police or Executive Director of Campus Safety Services or their designate.
- 4.2 The decision to issue the **'All clear'** notice should only be made once it is verified that there are no further active threats to persons present onsite on site.
- 4.3 Once the decision to issue an 'All clear' has been made and validated by the Security Command Centre, a notification will be sent via the Emergency Notification System (ENS).
- 4.4 Campus Safety Services and Campus Security will liaise with Facilities Management personnel to ensure that all damaged infrastructure and resulting hazards are cordoned off from the public. Work orders to address any damaged infrastructure should be submitted by the appropriate partners. ([MaintenanceDirect \(myschoolbuilding.com\)](https://myschoolbuilding.com))
- 4.5 The Marketing, Communications and Recruitment department will continue to liaise with assigned spokesperson(s) and the media to develop appropriate messaging around the incident.
- 4.6 Campus Safety Services will liaise with Marketing, Communication and Recruitment and Student Success to ensure that Georgian College community members are informed and provided with the necessary supports to recover after the incident.
- 4.7 The Manager of Security & Parking Operations and the Executive Director of Campus Safety Services, or their designate, will facilitate, schedule and host a full debrief of all persons involved or affected by the subject protest, demonstration, or civil disturbance within 72 hours of the

completion of the event. This debrief should also consider leveraging any internal or external personnel or organizations to support the persons involved in the debrief.

- 4.8 Campus Safety Services specialists from Conflict Resolution and Investigations, Occupational Health & Safety, and Emergency Management personnel with follow up on any corrective actions identified.

Related Materials

- Student Code of Conduct
- Georgian College Free Speech Policy
- Employee Code of Conduct Policy
- Unscheduled Campus Closure Policy
- [Use of Force Report - Forms - Central Forms Repository \(CFR\) \(gov.on.ca\)](#)
- [Campus Safety Services – GC Emergency Response Guide](#)
- Hold and Secure Procedure
- Lockdown Procedure
- [MaintenanceDirect \(myschoolbuilding.com\)](#)
- *SAFE@Georgian* mobile app