

STATEMENT OF DISRUPTIVE AND OBSTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR

The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia reaffirms the policies to support fully, freedom of expression by each member of the academic community and to preserve and protect the rights of freedom of its faculty members and students to engage in debate, discussion and peaceful and non-disruptive protest and dissent. The following statement relates specifically to the problem described below. It does not change or in any way infringe upon the Board's existing policies and practices in support of freedom of expression and action. Rather, it is considered necessary to combat the ultimate effect of irresponsible disruptive and obstructive actions by students and faculty which destroy academic freedom and the institutional structures through which the University operates.

In recent years, a new, serious problem has appeared on many college and university campuses in the nation. Some students, faculty members and others have, on occasion, engaged in demonstrations, sit-ins, and other activities that have clearly and deliberately interfered with the regular and orderly operation of the institution concerned. Typically, these actions have been the physical occupation of a building or campus area for a protracted period of time for the use of, or display of, verbal or written obscenities involving indecent or disorderly conduct.

These actions have gone beyond all heretofore recognized bounds of meetings for discussion, persuasion, or even protest, in that:

1. acquiescence to demands of the demonstrators is the condition for dispersal and
2. the reasonable and written directions of institutional officials to disperse have been ignored.

Such activities thus have become clearly recognizable as an action of force, operating outside all established channels on the campus, including that of intellectual debate and persuasion which are at the very heart of education.

The Board of Regents is deeply concerned by this problem. Under the Constitution of the State of Georgia, under all applicable court rulings and in keeping with the tradition of higher education in the United States, the Board is ultimately responsible for the orderly operation of the several institutions of the University System and the preservation of academic freedom in these institutions. The Board cannot and will not divest itself of this responsibility.

For these reasons and in order to respond directly and specifically to this problem the Board of Regents stipulates that any student, faculty member, administrator or employee, acting individually or in concert with others, who clearly obstructs or disrupts, or attempts to obstruct or disrupt any teaching, research, administrative, disciplinary, or public service activity, or any other activity authorized to be discharged or held on any campus of the University System of Georgia is considered by the Board to have committed an act of gross irresponsibility and shall be subject to disciplinary procedures, possibly resulting in dismissal or termination of employment.