

**SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY
ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE
SAN JOSE, CA 95192**

S15-2, University Policy, Sound Level at Campus Events

Legislative History:

Replaces S12-8

At its meeting of February 9, 2015, the Academic Senate approved the following policy recommendation presented by Senator Frazier for the Instruction and Student Affairs Committee. Prior University Policy S12-8 had negatively impacted certain campus groups by unduly limiting the specified decibel levels of sound they were permitted during their official events. This policy replaces S12-8 and gives ongoing permission for the use of amplified sound at certain decibel levels when appropriate by those groups.

Action by University President: **Approved and signed by
President Mohammad Qayoumi
on February 19, 2015**

**University Policy:
Sound Level at Campus Events**

Background: S12-8 specified the decibel levels of sound, amplified or not, at campus events. Since that policy was enacted, it has been found that certain important campus groups, such as Student Outreach and Recruitment (who conducts campus tours for prospective students) are negatively impacted, given their need for amplified sound. In this proposed policy modification, a procedure is suggested that allows groups to apply for ongoing approval (rather than the much more cumbersome one-time approval). Also, the policy adds language referring to Presidential Directive 2011-01.

- Resolved:**
1. Sound (amplified or otherwise) at campus events that is kept below 65 decibels does not need to be approved. However, all events still need to be properly scheduled through the Student Union Event Services.
 2. Events using sound (amplified or otherwise) in the 65-85 decibel range are allowed campus wide as long as they are approved by Student Union Event Services. Event organizers must notify the department

chairs in the surrounding buildings of the scheduled event. This is a courtesy notification, not a step in the approval process. Student Union Event Services will maintain a list of email contact information.

Campus organizations involved in the recruitment of students to the University may be given blanket approval to use sound in the 65-85 decibel range. This blanket approval shall be granted by Student Union Event Services, which shall monitor any complaints that may arise from the events in question and recommend appropriate adjustments. Approval for these organizations shall be reviewed by Student Union Event Services every two years.

3. Campus events with sound (amplified or otherwise) 85 decibels and above are allowed only in specified locations. The sound at the event must be approved by and monitored by the Student Union Event/Technical Services.
 - a. Student Union Event Services will maintain the list of campus locations for which these events may be scheduled. This list will be reviewed and updated annually.
 - b. Approval of these events will not be limited to a certain time frame during the day.

The decibel levels referred to above are measured at 10 feet from the source of the sound.

4. The University Police Department has the right to insist on the decreasing or ceasing of sound, even if approved by Event Scheduling, at any time.
5. In any case, as per Presidential Directive 2011-01, Section E.2, "Outdoor events which could create noise disturbances on campus will not be approved after the last day of classes through the end of finals each Fall and Spring semesters *[sic]*."
6. This policy does not apply to course related activities, for example the marching band.

Rationale:

The rationale statements given in S12-8 obtain still in this policy revision:

- Sound at campus events is a normal part of co-curricular activities for students, and that sound must be managed as to not be overly disruptive to classes and offices.
- PD 2001-1 only restricts amplified sound rather than sound of a certain decibel level, which is contrary to the intent of sound management as

some unamplified sound e.g. drumming, is more disruptive than some amplified sounds.

- The 65-85 decibel range was within the range of decibel level requirements at other universities. The Instruction and Student Affairs Committee members (of Spring 2012) measured levels of different activities and distances in an informal manner, and the members felt that the 65-85 decibel range was reasonable.
- PD 2001-1 currently limits sound amplification on campus to certain locations. The list of these locations is outdated. It would be more effective to establish a procedure for establishing and reviewing approved places for events that involve loud sound.
- Sound at campus wide events (e.g. protests, marches, and parades) are approved through the registration process for these events with the University Police Department.
- Practice has been that amplified sound is only allowed from 12-1pm on campus. However, this limits when and how the campus community can recruit, communicate with, or attract diverse campus participants.

Approved: November 17, 2014

Vote: 11-0-0

Present: Amante, Branz (non-voting), Bruck (non-voting), Campsey, Feist, Frazier (Chair), Goyal, Hernandez, Huang, Kress, Sofish, Sullivan-Green, Walters

Absent: Brooks, Culatta, Daniels, Kelley

Financial Impact: None

Workload Impact: Possible increase in workload for approval required from Student Union Event Services.