



## **IMPLEMENTATION OF SECTION 51.9315, TEXAS EDUCATION CODE PROTECTED EXPRESSION ON CAMPUS (Senate Bill 18, 86<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature)**

The University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler (UTHSCT) is committed to protecting the expressive rights of persons guaranteed by the constitutions of the United States and of this state by (1) recognizing freedom of speech and assembly as central to the mission of institutions of higher education; and (2) ensuring that all persons may assemble peaceably on the campuses of institutions of higher education for expressive activities, including to listen to or observe the expressive activities of others.

The University of Texas System Board of Regents updated Regents' Rules and Regulations 40501, 80101, and 80103 to ensure that the common outdoor areas of UTHSCT are traditional public forums.

UTHSCT updated its policy detailing students' and workforce members' rights and responsibilities regarding expressive activities. The University of Texas System Board of Regents approved the policy on May 6, 2020. The policy complies with the requirements of Section 51.9315, Texas Education Code and is posted on the UTHSCT website at:

- <https://www.uthct.edu/d/Policies%20%26%20Procedures/free-speech-policy-20201130.pdf>

The policy will be made available to new students during all student orientations and included in future student handbooks. The policy is also made available to all faculty and staff through the Institution's online policy repository which serves a similar function as a personnel handbook. UTHSCT emphasized that employees responsible for educating or disciplining students ensure they understand our internal policies reflecting the requirements of Section 51.9315 for the current Academic Year and will develop additional procedures to train employees moving forward.