

Complete Policy Title:  
**Regulations Governing Welcome Week**

Policy Number (if applicable):

Approved by:  
**Senate**

Date of Most Recent Approval:  
**March 11, 2009, effective May 1, 2009**

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**April 8, 1992**

Supersedes/Amends Policy dated:  
**July 1, 2006**

Responsible Executive:  
**Associate Vice-President (Student Affairs)  
and Dean of Students**

Enquiries:  
**Associate Vice-President (Student Affairs) and Dean  
of Students**

**DISCLAIMER:** *If there is a Discrepancy between this electronic policy and the written copy held by the policy owner, the written copy prevails.*

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The following regulations govern all Welcome Week activities and all students are expected to uphold them.

1. Welcome Week activities shall be designed to welcome new students to McMaster and to familiarize them with the campus, their residence or group, and their fellow students. Harassment or abuse in any form is not a welcoming gesture; therefore no demeaning, humiliating, dangerous or unhealthy activities are acceptable. Specifically, the purpose of Welcome Week is to offer five opportunities to first-year students, that are important for making a good start at University:
  - a) to make connections with McMaster, (delete) faculty (add) their academic faculty program office, student faculty society, their residence or off-campus society, other students and the city;
  - b) to develop an identity as a Mac student first, and then within their faculty, residence or off-campus society;
  - c) to be safe, both physically and emotionally;
  - d) to connect with support systems (academic, emotional, and other University support systems); and,
  - e) to meet and connect with student leaders, who are positive role models.
2. As the University community welcomes its newest members, we are (delete) proud to be guided by the following principles:
  - a) **Equality:** First-year students join the University community with all the rights of those already here. They are given the support and assistance which new members of the community require. They are made to feel proud to be here not to be treated as subordinates or to feel that first year students are inferior.
  - b) **Freedom of Choice:** First-year students are encouraged to participate in the events of Welcome Week. However, they are always be free to choose when and how to join in, and to decline participation if they wish.
  - c) **Celebration of Diversity:** First-year students come from varied backgrounds and cultures, and they have highly varied interests and values. Differences in gender, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, ability, religion and political affiliation are recognized and treated with respect and sensitivity.
  - d) **Respect for Individuality:** All first-year students are free to be different and can expect to be treated with respect.
  - e) **Privacy:** Even where students live together, as in residence, they are entitled to their private space and time. They should not be disturbed when they have gone to their own room, and other students should enter only if invited.

3. The Welcome Week organizers must ensure that new students are verbally informed of these regulations (especially regarding the non-compulsory nature of activities and the prohibition of harassment). (delete and create a separate point on safety) and are advised about matters of personal safety on campus.
4. Welcome Week organizers must ensure that new students are advised about matters of personal safety on campus.
5. All students, where they are organizers or participants act as ambassadors of the university and their actions should reflect this role. Any activities planned to take students off campus should be designed with an eye to promoting a positive image of McMaster students and the University in the community. Participation in Shinerama, public service clean-up of parks, etc. are encouraged. The rights and property of residents in the community around McMaster are to be respected; disturbances, pranks and lewd or obscene behaviours are not acceptable.
6. Organizers of events must accept the responsibility of leaving the venue of the event in at least as good condition as they found it; when presenting proposals to the First Year Experience Office for confirmation, organizers must follow the Risk Management policy designed for student groups, paying attention to how these responsibilities will be carried out. Should this responsibility not be met, the costs of restoring the area to good condition may be assessed and charged to the sponsoring body.
7. There are to be no planned residence activities after 1:00am, or before 8:00am on any day to ensure that students have the opportunity to have adequate sleep. Groups should ensure that free time is included in the scheduling.
8. During Welcome Week certain time frames have been reserved for specific groups to organize activities for their constituency. These time frames include:

Saturday	Move-in; first contact with campus; breaking the ice.
Sunday	Move-in; first contact with campus; breaking the ice. Residence programming for Saturday move-in students.
Monday	Orientation to University living (in residence or off campus).
Tuesday	Welcome/ Orientation to Faculty and Academic program.
Wednesday	Introduction to the diversity of the campus community and the opportunities for involvement.
Thursday	Attending classes and socializing after classes; Faculty Night.
Friday	Attending classes and socializing after classes.

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Saturday	School Spirit activities, closing the week.
Sunday	Welcome Week Closing Ceremonies; relaxing; preparing for the first full week of classes.

9. In residences there is to be no invasion of privacy. All students are to be encouraged to lock their doors at night or when leaving their rooms at other times, for their own security.
10. Students in residence must be made aware that the Residence Code of Conduct governs student's behaviours during Welcome Week and throughout the year; all students must be made aware that the Student Code of Conduct is in effect during Welcome Week and throughout the year.
11. All student organizations are required to submit a proposal for any Welcome Week activity to the First Year Experience Office for confirmation. It is the responsibility of the office to ensure that the proposed activity is in keeping with the University's purpose and vision of Welcome Week and the guidelines and policies established for Welcome Week by Risk Management, Faculty Program Offices, and other University Departments.
12. If a group intends to organize a Scavenger Hunt, the list of items must be included in the proposal for the activity. In 1986, the Welcome Week Steering Committee established general guidelines for appropriateness of items. The list shall not include:
  - Any Person
  - Any items of great value
  - Any item that is likely to be obtained by stealing

Lists are designed to orient students to their new surroundings, to teach them about McMaster history and traditions or to help them meet their fellow students are preferred.

13. All student groups are permitted to have uniforms for Welcome Week. The purpose of these uniforms is to provide unity to the group and help identify students within groups. Proposals for all slogans and artwork to be printed on the uniforms must be submitted for confirmation to the First Year Experience Office. The name or nickname of the individual and the group to which he or she belongs is also permitted. Any degrading hand written graffiti is not permitted on uniforms.
14. Student groups may not assign nicknames to any students. For a nickname to be used or printed on a uniform the individual must consent to the printing of the name. Any names considered degrading to others are not to be printed on a uniform even if an individual consents.
15. Should an event be hosted at a public venue where alcohol is available for sale and/or consumption, organizers must work with the owners/managers of the establishment to offer an event (typically known as an all-ages event) where procedures are in place to ensure that alcohol cannot/will not be available for sale and/or consumption to minors.
16. When scheduling and planning events, organizers should be aware that enforcement of all laws including the Liquor License Act and the Municipal noise by-laws are rigorous, especially during

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Welcome Week. The local by-law enforcement officer has shown a willingness to work with organizers to develop strategies to keep events within the by-laws. A meeting is scheduled every August before Welcome Week with police, by-law and campus security officers as well as community residents to discuss those Welcome Week activities that will occur off-campus or have an impact on the neighbourhoods around the campus. Welcome Week Organizers of these activities are encouraged to attend this meeting.