

APPENDIX B

Board of Regents Statement on Student Conduct

The Board of Regents reaffirms its policies fully to support freedom of expression by each member of the academic community and to preserve and protect the rights and freedom of its faculty and students to engage in debate, discussion, peaceful and non-disruptive or obstructive actions that interfere with academic pursuits of teaching, learning and campus activities.

The Regents' Policy

Students, faculty and others have on occasion conducted demonstrations, sit-ins and other activities that have clearly and deliberately interfered with the regular and orderly operation of the institution concerned. Typically, this action has been the physical occupation of a building or campus area for a protracted period of time or the use 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 activity thus has become clearly recognizable as an action of force, operating outside all established channels on the campus, including that of intellectual debate and persuasion which is at the very heart of education.

Under the Constitution of the state of Georgia, under all applicable court rulings and under 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 of Georgia and the preservation of academic freedom in these institutions. The board cannot and will not divest itself of this responsibility. Of equal or even greater importance, such action of force as is referred to above destroys the very essence of higher education. This essence is found in the unhampered freedom to study, investigate, write, speak and debate on any aspect or issue of life. This freedom, which reaches its full flowering on college and university campuses, is an essential part of American democracy, comparable to the jury system or the electoral process.

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.

The board reaffirms its belief that all segments of the academic community are strongly obligated and mutually responsible specifically regarding the problem described above. 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 effort of irresponsible, disruptive and obstructive actions by students and faculty intended to destroy academic freedom and the institutional structures around which it operates.