

Special Events & Facilities Use Policies & Guidelines

Mission Statement

The goal of the Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling is to maintain an effective and efficient administrative network of services that maximize the use of all campus resources to the greatest benefit of the University.

The Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling is responsible for receiving all inquiries related to the use of University facilities and/or services from off-campus and on-campus individuals and organizations interested in conducting any type of conference, seminar, meeting, catered function, or summer/sports camp. The Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling staff determines if the University can host any particular activity in accordance with current operating policy and availability.

The Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling is an auxiliary department of the University and is obligated to ensure that all off-campus programs and special funded on-campus conferences account for costs related to the use of auxiliary facilities and services that are required to conduct the activities requested. The Office must show a reasonable profit by which to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of services offered. Fee policies and schedules are reviewed annually to provide for equitable compensation for campus services provided.

Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear explanation of the guidelines for reserving space, using campus grounds or buildings, conference facilities and dining services by internal and external individuals and organizations. Any questions regarding this Policy should be directed to the Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling at 864-503-5985.

This Policy establishes regulations for the periodic, temporary, and contractual use of University facilities by external users, campus-based users, sponsored users, and student organizations in accord with the University's missions, goals, and policies.

While USC Upstate facilities and properties are utilized primarily to fulfill the educational mission of the University, certain University facilities and properties are made available for use by recognized student organizations, University Departments and public and non-public groups provided there is not a conflict with University scheduled events and that the usage and event does not detract from the University's mission. As part of the University's metropolitan mission rests upon a foundation of partnerships with the education, corporate and service organizations of the Upstate, this policy is mission driven to include the people, organizations and corporations of the Upstate as users of USC Upstate facilities and grounds.

Definitions

Facilities: All buildings, land, and property owned, leased, or under the control of USC Upstate.

Campus-based User: Any USC Upstate department or business unit using the requested facility for USC Upstate business with appropriate authorization to provide a USC Upstate account number to which any charges associated with the usage may be billed.

External User (Off-campus user): An individual or groups of individuals, organizations, associations, or businesses not affiliated with USC Upstate.

Student Organization User: An active student organization recognized by the Office of Student Affairs and registered with the Office of Student Life.

Affiliated User: An organization, group, or individual which is affiliated with USC Upstate by virtue of grants or mission-consistent goals carried out by faculty and/or staff employed by the University, e.g. German Students on Saturday.

Fronting: Permitting a non-university individual or organization to use University space/facilities and services under the guise that the activity is a University-sponsored program.

Service: Any University personnel support and/or expertise, technical equipment, supplies or special services provided to individuals or organizations conducting programs in University facilities or on campus grounds.

Scheduling Priorities

Scheduling priority for facilities is given first to all academic scheduling and student-related programs within the guidelines of this policy and in accordance with the Best Use and Purpose Guidelines for individual facilities. Priority is also given to external mission appropriate related events in an effort to generate revenue to offset a portion of our facilities operating cost; however, not at the expense of academic student related scheduling.

1. Events sponsored by the Chancellor's Office

Events planned for or sponsored directly by the Office of The Chancellor are given first priority in booking space.

2. Academic and University Events

Classes, exams, and large scale University events are given priority in reserving space.

During the first three (3) weeks of each semester, these groups are given priority in reserving space for the upcoming semester, in accordance with the Best Use and Purpose Guidelines for individual facilities. For example, during the first three weeks of the Fall semester, reservations for facility use during the spring semester will be taken solely from these groups. Similar protocol will be used during the spring semester in reserving and planning for the fall semester. For dates outside of the standard academic year, and during the winter and summer period, all campus resources are scheduled on a first come, first served basis.

It is important that University calendars be planned well in advance for large events since our larger facilities are marketed externally. Banquet, classroom and meeting space for annual events, such as conferences, seminars, workshops, productions and speaker events should be reserved at least one year prior to the proposed event. Advertising, ticket sales and invitations must not be produced until event space is confirmed by the Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling. Space for events with tentative dates can be held tentatively until dates are confirmed. It is requested that tentatively held space be confirmed at least six months prior to the event allowing others to have access to unused areas.

3. Student-Related Events

Any events for student organizations are being booked in the College of Arts and Science's building whenever possible.

4. Conferences/Event Scheduling

In scheduling conference-related programs that will require use of a large portion of our facilities, consideration will be given to the priority needs of students, faculty, and staff to ensure the appropriate facilities are available to meet the primary mission of the University, i.e. the grand rooms in both the Campus Life Center and the University Readiness Center are blocked for on-campus events during University week.

5. Facilities Refurbishment

Facilities/Room maintenance and refurbishment is also considered a top scheduling priority. In order to maintain facilities in a manner consistent with the image appropriate for the University it is necessary that regular maintenance and refurbishment be completed. Every effort will be made to complete maintenance and refurbishment at times throughout the calendar year that will not conflict with University events.

Facilities Scheduling

All academic classes are scheduled by the Registrar's Office. Classrooms may not be scheduled for non-instructional purposes prior to the formulation of the schedule of classes for each semester or term except for activities to be scheduled during non-class or weekend hours. Any changes in the classroom schedules made by academic departments after the original room assignments should be communicated to the Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling for appropriate corrections to the facilities schedule.

All activities and events scheduled on campus that are not part of the academic class schedule are scheduled through the Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling. In addition, any activities scheduled in classrooms that are not considered part of the academic calendar are handled through the Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling.

To schedule an event on campus, you may access the Special Events webpage on the USC Upstate home page. Select, complete and submit the Preliminary Request Form. The submission of this form does not guarantee a reservation; it only notifies the Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling of your request. You will receive notification that your request was received and should there be a conflict with your request, you will be notified. All scheduling of facilities and properties must be made through the Office of Special Events & Facilities Scheduling at least 3 business days prior to the event; or 5 business days if additional services (catering, A/V, room setup) are required. Some requests may be accommodated within the 3 day period, but this cannot be guaranteed. Examples of such events would be small club meetings that require no assistance and will be held in the CASB building or another appropriate classroom.

As some events require special set-up and/or maintenance, the Office of Special Events & Facilities Scheduling may allocate additional time to allow for set up and break down of facilities.

Event Guidelines

1. Prohibitions on “Fronting” Activities

Non-University individuals/organizations are required to schedule University space through Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling and pay for the use of space and services in accordance with current policy and fee schedules. Any sponsoring USC Upstate individual or organization that reserves space for the purpose of allowing non-University groups or vendors to advertise, hold meetings, and/or sell items without the expressed understanding and permission of the Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling is participating in fronting for the organization, which is prohibited by University policy.

"Fronting" is defined as permitting a non-University individual or organization to use University space/facilities and services under the guise that the activity is a University-sponsored program in order to avoid payment.

The following are a list of guidelines for determining if an event is to be considered University-sponsored and avoid the appearance of “fronting.”

- a. Attendance consists of primarily campus-related individuals.
- b. Presenter fees are paid for by University organizations/departments.
- c. Primary advertising is directed toward University organizations and constituents.
- d. Planning/production handled by the University-sponsoring group.
- e. Event is within the scope of the University mission.

Determination of fronting situations is made by the Director of Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling in consultation with the Facilities Policy, Usage Guidelines.

Any request for a waiver of fees must be submitted to the Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling in writing and then approved by the Chancellor.

2. Limited Public Forum Area

An application for the use of facilities and areas for meetings, assemblies, rallies, speak-outs, demonstrations, and distributions on the grounds of USC Upstate by both University recognized and non-recognized individuals and organizations must be completed and approved prior to the event.

University policy requires that all USC Upstate events are pre-approved and restricted to certain outdoor locations designated as "Limited Public Forum." All individuals/ organizations must complete the Application for Limited Forum Meetings and submit it to the Special Events and Facilities Scheduling, for circulation, discussion and approval.

Requests should be submitted three (3) working days prior to the event. Approval will only be granted if:

- a. The person/organization can demonstrate that reasonable precaution will be exercised to ensure that the educational mission and administrative/support functions necessary to that mission will not be disrupted, and that the safety of members of the University community and the general public will be assured.
- b. Persons/organizations must clearly identify themselves and their affiliates.
- c. Fronting or making reservations for a second party is not allowed.
- d. The rights of the University community must be protected from undue interference with the flow of traffic and intimidation in securing an audience.

General Information:

There are no rain locations for "Limited Public Forum." Excessive noise, such as amplified sound or shouting, is not permitted in "Limited Public Forum" area. Use of "Limited Public Forum" area is restricted to 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. daily for a maximum of three (3) hours per scheduled event. Events are limited to three (3) days. Two (2) groups may not occupy the same location simultaneously. Demonstrations, rallies, peaceful assemblies, speak-outs, etc., must be conducted in designated "Limited Public Forum" areas.

The area generally considered to be for "Limited Public Forum" is the "quadrangle." This area has been designated because it is not likely to interfere with the academic routine of the University and, at the same time, will allow access to an audience, as this is a high traffic area.

Other forum areas may be approved on an individual basis considering the unique needs of a specific occasion/event.

Areas that are not "Limited Public Areas" include, but are not limited to, office areas, classroom buildings, libraries, residence halls, dining facilities, and other spaces reserved for specific use, etc. Activities such as soliciting, selling, petitioning, surveying, and publicizing are specifically prohibited in the aforementioned areas of the University.

3. Political

As a state-supported institution of higher education, USC Upstate remains neutral in political activities. USC Upstate may not endorse, recommend or otherwise indicate political support for any candidate for an elected office, or for any current officeholder of such an office. In addition, University officials, administrators, faculty, and staff are not authorized in their official capacity to make public or media statements in support of, or in opposition to, a political campaign or candidate for public office. USC Upstate will support and protect the freedoms of speech, expression, petition, peaceable assembly and association. USC Upstate encourages its students, faculty and staff to exercise fully the rights of citizenship, including participation in the political life of their communities, the state and the nation, and to educate and involve themselves in world affairs.

The following are guidelines pertaining to any/all political events that take place on the USC Upstate campus.

a. Use of campus facilities:

- i. Facilities may not be made available for fund raising events for candidates or parties.
- ii. Facilities may be made available for purposes of holding political meetings, provided there is no interference with regularly scheduled functions, there is not otherwise available a reasonable facility in the community, students are permitted to hear the speakers without charge and sponsors pay in advance the regular fee for use of the facilities.
- iii. Political office holders and candidates shall not be introduced or recognized on campus unless they are participating in the campus event which they are attending.
- iv. Student organizations that are officially chartered and currently registered with the Office of Student Life may invite candidates for political office or current officeholders to speak at the group's meetings.
- v. No university derived funding may be used to conduct political activities or to make political contributions.

b. Marketing Materials

- i. Off-campus political campaign materials may not be placed in or on the grounds or on automobile windshields or utility poles.
- ii. Campus mail and email systems are not to be used to distribute political campaign materials.
- iii. Use of University symbols and insignia is not permitted for any political events.
- iv. Promotional material for the political event may not state or imply that USC Upstate endorses a political candidate or organization.

4. Deposits/Payment

For all groups paying a room rental fee, this will be due in full at the time of contract signing. Currently, we accept cash and check payments. All estimated catering and event related payments must be made at least 5 days before the start of the event and must be paid in full at that time. Non-payment may result in cancellation of the event.

5. Cancellations

USC Upstate reserves the right to substitute an alternative space for any facility reserved for a non-affiliated University function if deemed necessary to conduct official University business or special programs.

In extremely rare situations, due to factors beyond the control of the University, such as weather conditions, unavailability of facilities due to physical damage, or mechanical breakdown of support systems, etc., the University may cancel a previously scheduled non-University event without penalty. In the event of a weather emergency in which the University is closed, outside catered events and facilities reservations may be cancelled.

If an event is canceled, The Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling will contact the primary contact listed on the reservation sheet to discuss the cancellation and opportunities for rescheduling.

Client Cancellation Provisions:

The Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling requires a cancellation notice of three business days, with the exception of wedding receptions, which require cancellation notice of thirty (30) days. Cancellations made less than three business days from the event, (thirty days for wedding receptions) will incur a charge of 100% of the room rental.

Please speak to Dining Services for specifics regarding their cancellation and deposit policies.

Student & Employee Event Cancellations:

Student Organizations and USC Upstate employees are also subject to penalties under a similar cancellation policy. The Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling must receive notice of cancellation no less than 24 business hours before the start of any event that does not include additional setup, catering or A/V. Any event that does include additional setup, catering or A/V must be cancelled at least three business days before the start of the event. Cancellations within three business days and/or no-shows are subject to a \$100 charge per event. Three incidents will result in loss of booking privileges for the remainder of the semester and potentially the following semester.

Changes to Policy and Failure to Comply

All policies and guidelines presented in this document are subject to review and change without notice. Facilities and services fees will be reviewed annually to assess and establish fair and reasonable costs and charges.

1. Failure to comply with the policies described may result in the assessment of charges to recover the costs of services scheduled and/or performed, the suspension or revocation of scheduling privileges, and/or the closing of an event requiring restitution for expenses or damages.

Services Offered & Coordinated by the Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling

The Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling schedules and coordinates the use of facilities, services, and resources for both campus-based and off-campus individuals and organizations. The staff works collaboratively with other services departments to ensure that all needs are met. Services offered include:

1. Reserves and confirms dates, facility space, and services.
2. Coordinates and confirms meals, catered functions, refreshment breaks, and any other special services. University Dining Services directly manages all individual catered events.
3. Coordinates set up for each event based on information submitted via the reservation request. If no specific set up is requested in advance, the room/facility will be set in the standard format for the room requested.
4. Coordinates audio visual equipment requested for external users. Campus student groups, affiliates and employees are responsible for coordinating any audio visual equipment needed.
5. Prepares contractual agreements that include cost of facilities and services.
6. Coordinates invoices and transfer of funds with University Dining Services Billing Department.
7. Manages post-event evaluations.

Event Restrictions

All events must be scheduled in accordance with a list of restrictions, within reasonable boundaries of discretion, which include the following:

1. No groups are allowed to bring food onto campus unless given written permission by Campus Catering Services.
2. Facilities may be made available on regularly scheduled days and weekends. The University does not allow facility use on extended closings and some holidays. Please contact the Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling for special closing dates.
3. All University facilities are tobacco free.
4. Any events that require extensive retrofitting, i.e. requires long set up and/or tear down time, of the room or facility requested, will not be scheduled, e.g. removing all tables and chairs from the large ball room in the University Readiness Center for an event would be very labor intensive and logistically difficult because of no storage space for the chairs and tables.
5. Rooms must be left in the same condition at the end of the function as when the function began with the exception of general cleanup.
6. Any decorations must be approved through the Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling. The use of nails, thumbtacks, tape, etc. on walls is prohibited.
7. No alterations may be made to University property unless otherwise authorized by the Special Events Office and Facilities Scheduling. As a courtesy to others, it is expected that any set up changes will be returned to the original set up at the conclusion of the event.
8. Event charges can only be applied to one account. We will not split charges between multiple group accounts.
9. Users may not sublet or reassign University property or facilities.
10. User will be responsible for any loss or damage to facilities and property caused by negligence or misuse.

Special non-University groups must have a signed letter of understanding in their file which affirms that they have read, understand and will abide by the policies and procedures, and that they will hold harmless USC Upstate. This applies to all programs, be they one-time only or continuous year round. Special programs must be endorsed by the department head as well as the faculty or staff individual involved. These special non-University groups will be charged a "Maintenance Fee" to cover the cost of custodial needs, electric, and other fixed costs and needs, directly or indirectly, associated with the program. This maintenance fee will be equal to ½ the normal non-profit rate.

The University requires all non-University groups to provide proof of liability insurance, an indemnification agreement, and cost reimbursement sufficient to cover the operational cost of the facilities or property utilized. Proof of liability insurance and the indemnification agreement must be filed and approved by the Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling before any facility or property can be approved for outside use.

Insurance and Indemnification

Lessee agrees to maintain during the term of this Lease Agreement a public liability insurance policy on the Leased Premises acceptable to Lessor in which Lessor is named as an additional insured.

Lessee hereby agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Lessor and the University of South Carolina, its Trustees, officers, agents, and employees, from and against any and all claims, demands, actions, or causes of action for loss, damage, expense, or liability of whatsoever type, including injuries to persons, property, arising out of or in any way related to Lessee's presence on or use of the Leased Premises.

Alcohol Beverage and Tailgating Policy

All alcoholic beverage service must be provided by the University. Organizations will be charged at current rates, and service will be in accordance with the policies listed in the University's Catering Brochure.

All events with alcoholic beverage service must be substantially food related and include the availability of alternate beverage(s). Furthermore, the organization must agree to adhere to the spirit/intent of the University's philosophy regarding the use of alcoholic beverages: recognition that the use of alcohol is a personal choice and that individuals are responsible for their behavior while using alcoholic beverages. It is clearly understood that drunkenness or vandalistic disruptive behavior sometimes associated with it is not an acceptable norm of conduct on the USC Upstate campus. Further, it is understood that the organization is responsible to insure the conduct of its membership. Additionally, the University reserves the right, without penalty, to refuse service of alcoholic beverages to an individual or to discontinue service at a function if, in its opinion, it is in the best interest of the University. Any exceptions to these guidelines must be made by the Chancellor.

Please see the Alcohol and Tailgating policy for specifics found here:

http://www.uscupstate.edu/uploadedFiles/Faculty_and_Staff/Policies_and_Procedures/Alcohol%20Policy.pdf

Parking

Parking lots can be booked for events however they will be confirmed on a case by case basis, depending on the day of the week, class schedule, etc. Parking lots should not be completely blocked off during regular class times, due to high traffic.

The Board of Trustees of the University of South Carolina has promulgated rules and regulations governing traffic and parking that may be examined upon request at the University Police Department. These instructions contain basic procedures for the guidance of anyone who operates a motor vehicle on campus.

Many special events will have designated parking for the event. For large events Special Events can also work with your group to provide parking passes to place on each dashboard.

The University shall assume no responsibility for the care and/or protection of any vehicle or its contents at any time while it is operated or parked on campus. Valuables should not be left in unoccupied vehicles at any time and vehicles should be locked when not in use. Thefts or damages that occur should be reported to the University Police Department for investigation or other action.

Unless otherwise posted, the campus speed limit is 25 miles per hour; however, everyone is expected to operate vehicles in a safe manner commensurate with road and weather conditions.

The definition of park is the standing of a vehicle, whether occupied or not, other than while engaged in loading or unloading.

Parking is prohibited at fireplugs, fire lanes, sidewalk, or alleyways, unless otherwise indicated by signs. At no time should service drives or trash pickup areas be blocked.

Parking is permitted within lined and/or surfaced lots only, and vehicles must be within lines spaces. The fact that a person parks in violation of any law or regulation and does not receive a citation does not mean that the law or regulation is no longer in effect.

Facilities Charges

Of those individuals and/or organizations that have access to facility and service use at USC Upstate, fee charges- ranging from no fee, discounted fee, non-profit fee or full fee - will be charged in accordance with the following group descriptions.

1. Student Activities or Programs (including regularly scheduled academic classes, exams, special academic presentations). The University, recognizing that campus facilities are primarily here to benefit and support student activities and interests, provides students groups the first opportunity to schedule space at no charge in University Facilities including classrooms, auditoria, and athletic facilities.
2. Faculty/Staff conducting University business. The University, recognizing, that campus facilities are primarily here to benefit and support University activities and interests, provides faculty and staff groups an opportunity to schedule space at no charge in University Facilities including classrooms, auditoria, and athletic facilities.

For all no charge reservations, the Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling reserves the right to closely monitor the time allocated for the scheduled event to ensure we are maximizing the use of all campus facilities.

3. Affiliated Groups: defined as co-sponsored and/or adjunct organizations for which facilities fees are waived.

Note: Cost recovery rates will be charged for all events and activities when a registration or a testing fee is required to take part in the activity.

There are two basic user types included in this group:

- a. Co-sponsored events – Activities or programs which are provided through the University but involve non-University clients.
- b. Adjunct organizations- Programs which are sponsored by a University-sanctioned group directly related to the mission of the University.

In special circumstances, courtesy adjunct organization status will be extended to individuals and organizations with which the University has significant educational and strategic relationships. The Chancellor or her/his designee may grant this status. Individuals and organizations listed under affiliate groups who have required a fee for entry into an activity or event will be charged cost recovery rates based upon direct hourly costs for the respective auxiliary department, services, and facilities provided. Direct costs include the labor for setups and breakdowns, housekeeping, utilities, etc.

4. External Groups and Organizations

All groups falling into the off-campus individuals or organizations, for profit and not for profit, using University facilities and/or services category will be charged market rates adjusted annually for facility rentals and other services.

Faculty, staff or students using facilities to conduct outside activities or as a representative of a non-university organization not associated with their role as an agent of the university will be charged a rate below the not for profit rate.

A not-for-profit organization must be a corporation, trust, or unincorporated association which meets the following requirements:

- a. Organized and operated exclusively for a charitable purpose;
- b. Net earnings may not inure to the benefit of any private individual or shareholder.
- c. No substantial part of its activity may be attempting to influence legislation.
- d. No action of the group may intervene in political campaigns.
- e. No part of the purposes or activities may be illegal or violate fundamental public policy.

Exceptions to rate charges require the approval of the Chancellor's office.

Service and Fee Rates

Facilities and service fee rates are reviewed and set annually. The current schedule of fees is available through the Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling.

Alumni Requests

Facility rental fees may be reduced by fifty percent for those self-identifying as alumni at the time a reservation is made. The discount may be applied to rental fees only and not to food, audio-visual, set-up fees or other charges. Alumni seeking a reservation and discount must be a point-person for the event and may not procure space on behalf of other groups or individuals. This discount applies to social events only (weddings, birthday celebrations, etc.) and is not applicable to corporations, associations or fraternal groups.

Fee Waivers

USC Upstate reserves the right to reduce or waive facilities and property charges where a compelling public need or interest is served; an example is using a designated facility as an emergency shelter for hurricane evacuation or other disasters.

All requests for fee waivers must be submitted in writing to the Office of Special Events and Facilities Scheduling and will be reviewed and approved by the chancellor.

Changes to Policy and Failure to Comply

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Failure to comply with the policies described may result in the assessment of charges to recover the costs of services scheduled and/or performed, the suspension or revocation of scheduling privileges, and/or the closing of an event requiring restitution for expenses or damages.