



OFFICIAL POLICY

6.1.9

Historic Campus Usage Policy

8/15/2026

Policy Statement

With a campus defined by its rich history and some of the most iconic and enduring spaces in higher education, the College of Charleston is committed to preserving the character, integrity and shared meaning of its most visible landmarks.

To preserve an inclusive and welcoming campus environment, the College of Charleston generally prohibits students, faculty, staff and external groups from decorating the Cougar statues located in Cougar Mall and in front of the arena. As a central and unifying symbol of the College, the Cougar statues must remain neutral and free of displays that could imply exclusivity or institutional endorsement.

Similarly, the Cistern Yard and Randolph Hall, recognized as the historic core of campus, may not be decorated unless a group has formally reserved the entire space for an approved event. This restriction protects the historic character of the Cistern Yard and Randolph Hall and ensures equitable and consistent use of the area.

Consistent with practices at other historic universities, this policy recognizes that such spaces are a shared part of the institution's heritage and should be protected from becoming overly commercialized, cluttered or associated with any single group or message.

These guidelines uphold the College's commitment to maintaining shared, respectful and community-focused campus spaces.

Policy Manager and Responsible Department or Office

Office of the President

Policy

The College of Charleston is committed to maintaining an inclusive, welcoming and respectful environment for all members of our campus community and visitors. As highly visible and symbolically important landmarks, both the Cougar statues (in Cougar Mall and in front of the arena) and the Cistern Yard/Randolph Hall play a central role in representing that commitment.

The Cougar statues are a unifying symbol for students, faculty, staff, alumni and guests. To preserve its neutrality and ensure that it remains a source of pride and belonging for everyone, the statues may not be decorated by individuals, campus groups or external organizations without written consent. Allowing decorations and/or decorative installations, even for well-intentioned causes, can unintentionally create perceptions of exclusivity, endorsement or division. Maintaining a consistent, undecorated appearance ensures that the Cougar statues continue to be a shared emblem of the entire College community.

Similarly, the Cistern Yard, its bordering fence/gates and Randolph Hall, as the historic core of campus and one of the College's most iconic spaces, is protected from ad-hoc displays, decorations or decorative installations.

Given the significance of the spaces, decorations are prohibited unless a group has reserved it in full for an approved event (the Cistern Yard, its bordering fence/gates and Randolph Hall) or has received written permission (the Cougar statues). Absent unusual circumstances, approved decorations should be installed no earlier than two hours prior to the event and should be removed within two hours following its conclusion. This approach helps safeguard the historic integrity of the Cistern Yard and Randolph Hall while ensuring that its use remains equitable, consistent and aligned with institutional values.

Together, these guidelines help uphold the College's commitment to a campus environment that reflects shared respect, fosters community cohesion and remains welcoming to all.

Departments/Offices Affected by the Policy

All of campus

Procedures Related to the Policy

Except as noted below, the Office of the President oversees the request and approval process for any proposed decorations or decorative installations (which includes yard signs, signs and sandwich boards) involving the Cougar statues or the Cistern Yard, its bordering fence/gates and Randolph Hall.

Requests must include the proposed design, purpose, dimensions, installation method, location(s), event or occasion associated with the decoration and decorative installation, and proposed dates for installation and removal. All requests should be submitted via email to president@cofc.edu.

When reviewing requests, the Office of the President will consider factors including, but not limited to: impacts on the historic, cultural and aesthetic integrity of campus; potential perceptions of exclusivity,

endorsement or division; safety and installation requirements; accessibility; campus placement and space availability; and the duration of any proposed installation. Following review, the Office of the President may approve, deny or modify each proposal at its discretion and in compliance with applicable law and College policies.

A. Requests Involving the Cougar Statues

The Cougar statues are a unifying institutional symbol, and as such, decorations and decorative installations are generally prohibited. Requests for temporary decorations and decorative installations involving the Cougar statues will be considered only under exceptional circumstances. Such requests must be submitted at least 14 days in advance of the proposed installation date and may only be submitted by College-based organizations.

The sponsoring organization shall bear all costs associated with installation, removal and any damage, repair or restoration resulting from the installation.

B. Requests Involving the Cistern Yard and Randolph Hall

The Cistern Yard, its bordering fence/gates and Randolph Hall are the historic core of campus. Decorations or decorative installations of any kind are prohibited unless the entire Cistern Yard and Randolph Hall has been formally reserved for an approved event through the relevant campus scheduling office.

If the space has been officially reserved, the sponsoring organization must submit decoration and decorative installation proposals to the Office of the President at least 14 days in advance of the event. Approval is required prior to installation.

Absent unusual circumstances, approved decorations should be installed no earlier than two hours prior to the event and should be removed within two hours following its conclusion. College officials reserve the right to remove and discard any decorations, signs or other materials that remain in place beyond the approved timeframe of a reserved event.

The sponsor shall bear all costs associated with installation, removal and any damage, repair or restoration resulting therefrom.

C. Exceptions

The requirement for review and approval by the Office of the President shall not apply in the following situations:

1. **Standard University Landscaping or Maintenance Activities**, including seasonal plantings, groundskeeping and campus beautification efforts conducted by Facilities Management.
2. **Official College Ceremonies and Traditions**, such as Convocation, Commencement, Cougar Night Lights, Homecoming, Spring Alumni Weekend or CofC Day, as coordinated by the institution's Office of University Events.
3. **Temporary Operational Signage or Safety Installations** required for maintenance, construction or public-safety purposes.

4. **Tabling events in the Cistern Yard, Randolph Hall and Cougar Mall**; however, any decorations or decorative installations displayed in connection with such activities must be continuously staffed by the sponsoring individual or organization. The College reserves the right to remove any unattended materials.

The Office of the President retains the discretion to alter the required time for submitting requests in extraordinary circumstances.

Additional Requirements

This Policy does not contemplate every potential situation that may arise with respect to decorations and decorative installations on College landmarks and icons. Accordingly, the College reserves the right to impose reasonable restrictions regarding time, place, manner and appropriateness of proposed decorations, even if not expressly addressed in this Policy.

Prohibitions include, but are not limited to:

- The use of paints, stains, adhesives, tapes, glues, chalk or any substance that may damage or alter campus structures or surfaces.
- Affixing items directly to historic brick, stone, statuary, painted surfaces or architectural elements.
- Any decoration that obstructs accessibility or creates safety hazards.
- Any installation that implies institutional endorsement of a political, commercial or religious message.

Sponsors are responsible for ensuring all approved decorations are removed by the date/time specified. Failure to remove decorations may result in loss of future privileges.

Policy Compliance and Enforcement

The College reserves the right to remove any decorations or decorative installations that do not comply with this Policy or that are installed without prior approval.

Enforcement of this Policy is the responsibility of the Office of the President, in coordination with Public Safety, Facilities Management and other administrative units as appropriate.

Related Policies, Documents or Forms

3.9.3. Signage: Banners, Signs and Posted Materials; 13.1 Student Handbook

Issue Date: 8/15/2026

Next Review Date: 8/15/2031

POLICY APPROVAL

(For use by the Office of the Board of Trustees or the Office of the President)

Policy Number: 6.1.9

President:



Date: August 15, 2026