



V i r g i n i a C o m m o n w e a l t h U n i v e r s i t y

University Student Commons & Activities  
Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services

Meeting and Event  
Guidelines & Procedures  
2011-2012

# **University Student Commons & Activities Mission Statement**

The facilities, services, and programs of the **University Student Commons and Activities** department are designed and implemented to bring together all members of the Virginia Commonwealth University community—students, faculty, staff, alumni, and guests—thereby contributing to intellectual, emotional, and social growth through informal interaction.

A diverse offering of educational, social, cultural, and recreational programs represents an invitation to make use of personal time as an integral part of the college experience. Students develop and refine citizenship, leadership, management, and interpersonal skills through participation in programs, events, and organizations with administrative and advising support from staff.

Students also learn life-long work skills while working as partners with staff to deliver high-quality customer service in the cost-effective operation of facilities and services. The University Student Commons, Larrick Student Center and Hunton Student Center provide gathering places for the University community and services needed in daily life. The facilities and programs also serve as a gateway to the University for the community beyond the campus boundaries.

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## **I. GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES FOR FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

University Student Commons & Activities (USC&A) has been funded by student fees and is designed to support the programs, events, meetings and conferences of the students, faculty, staff, alumni and guests of Virginia Commonwealth University. Student organizations receive priority in the reservation process since the USC&A facilities are designed primarily to support student activities.

The following policies, procedures and guidelines will govern meetings, events and programs executed in the University Student Commons, Hunton Student Center and the J.L. Larrick Student Center and all other facilities or spaces operated and/or managed by USC&A.

Failure to follow these or any other published policies, procedures, or guidelines for the use of USC&A managed spaces may result in cancellation of reservations, denial of reservation privileges, and/or other University sanctions as approved by appropriate University authorities. A Glossary of Terms is provided at the end of this document.

### **A. General Guidelines**

1. Any use of USC&A operated or managed facilities for the purpose of a meeting, event, program or similar activity requires a Facility Use Agreement and must follow the general policies, procedures and guidelines outlined in this and other USC&A and University documents available on the USC&A website.
2. In general, reservation requests will only be accepted from Registered Student Organizations, University Departments, VCU Affiliates and Non-University affiliate groups sponsored by a university department or registered student organization. Organizations or individuals which are not sponsored by a registered student organization or University department are only permitted to reserve space through VCU Conference Services and are subject to specific limitations.
3. Permission to reserve meeting space in USC&A managed facilities will be granted only to those officially registered and approved as MERA users. Access to the MERA system will be granted once a user signs the on-line contract agreement for usage of MERA.
4. Permission to reserve complex event space in USC&A managed facilities will be granted only to those registered student organizations that have completed the Complex Event Training Workshop. University Departments and Non-University affiliate groups do not need to complete the Complex Event Training Workshop; however event planning training sessions will periodically be offered.
5. Registered student organizations receive first priority in advanced space scheduling and use of major event and programming spaces. Registered student organizations are not required to pay rental fees for use of rooms or USC&A equipment unless the organization is charging admission fees.
6. University departments receive second priority in advanced space scheduling and use of major event and programming spaces. University departments are not required to pay rental fees for use of rooms or USC&A equipment unless the department is charging admission fees. University departments are not permitted to reserve USC&A facilities for academic classes or academically related events without prior approval from the office for academic space management on the Monroe Park or MCV Campuses.

7. VCU Affiliates (VCUHS specifically) also receive second priority in advanced space scheduling and use of major event and programming spaces. VCU Affiliates are required to pay rental fees for use of rooms or equipment.
8. Non-University affiliate groups receive the lowest priority for reservations. All usage by non-university affiliated groups is subject to rental and other fees. Non-University affiliate groups must be invited to campus and sponsored by a registered student organization or University department. The sponsoring student organization or department must be integrally involved in the planning and execution of any event. The sponsoring student organization or department must also provide the USC&A Event Planning office with their Index Code to guarantee payment by the Non-University affiliate. The student organization or department will be held ultimately responsible for any violations of policies, procedures or guidelines committed by the Non-University affiliated group. Non-university affiliated groups are required to pay a non-refundable deposit equal to one quarter of the anticipated charges.
9. Individuals are not permitted to reserve space in USC&A managed facilities with the exception of dues paying members of VCU's alumni associations and full-time VCU employees only (including VCU Health Systems). Special restrictions apply to these events and USC&A reserves the right to deny personal use of University facilities at any time.

## B. Reservation Request/Confirmation Procedures

### 1. Process for Meeting Requests

- a. A completed Meeting Request, submitted via the Meeting and Events Request Application (MERA), is required to start the reservation process. The appropriate University Student Commons and Activities (USC&A) official will electronically process the reservation request and provide the sponsor with an electronic Facility Use Agreement, which serves as the contract for the reservation. The Facility Use Agreement serves as the primary agreement for use of any and all facilities, equipment, and labor required for the meeting.
- b. A Meeting Request must be made during the appropriate Reservation Period (see Reservation Timetable). If Meeting Requests are submitted before the appropriate period, USC&A will deny the request and ask the sponsor to re-submit on the appropriate date. Reservations for standard meetings must be made at least 3 business days prior to the requested meeting.
- c. All MERA users will be required to agree to the Terms, Conditions, Guidelines and Policies for use of USC&A managed facilities every time a Meeting Request is submitted. This will be a requirement of the on-line request process.
- d. Sponsors are required to read the Facility Use Agreement carefully to ensure that all services needed are listed. All costs on the Facility Use Agreement are estimates. If a meeting requires changes to rooms, equipment or labor, the final charges will be adjusted accordingly, and late change fees may also apply.

- e. USC&A reserves the right to deny a Meeting Request if it is determined that USC&A cannot programmatically or operationally accommodate the meeting, or if the group or meeting is in conflict with University policies or regulations.
- f. USC&A staff will assign each Meeting Request to the most appropriate space(s) available. Requests for specific rooms or space will be honored when possible. USC&A reserves the right to re-assign space when necessary and to identify suitable alternative space for the original reservation. USC&A will make every effort to notify sponsors of changes in advance of the actual meeting.

## 2. Process for Event Requests

- a. A completed Event Request, submitted via MERA, is required to start the reservation process. The sponsors assigned Event Planner will process the request and contact the sponsor for additional event details. The Event Planner will provide the sponsor with an electronic Facility Use Agreement, which serves as the contract for the reservation. The Facility Use Agreement serves as the primary agreement for use of any and all facilities, equipment and labor requires for the event.
- b. All Event Requests will be considered Confirmed - Pending Details until receipt of the signed Facility Use Agreement, which will include all the final details, equipment requests, labor requests, and charges.
- c. Sponsors are required to read the Facility Use Agreement carefully to ensure that all services needed are listed. All costs on the Facility Use Agreement are estimates. If an event requires changes to rooms, equipment or labor, the final charges will be adjusted accordingly, and late change fees may apply.
- d. Sponsors must indicate that they accept and agreed to the terms of the Facility Use Agreement by signing the Facility Use Agreement and returning it to the USC&A Event Planning office. This will serve as the confirmation of the reservation and the contract for services that will be provided. The signed Facility Use Agreement will also serve as authorization to process any and all charges against the Index Code provided and/or agreement to pay all related charges. Until the signed Facility Use Agreement has been received by USC&A Event Planning, the reservation request will not be Confirmed - Final.
- e. USC&A Event Planning requires five (5) business days to respond to any Event Request. All sponsors can expect to receive a communication from the assigned USC&A Event Planner within five business days of submission in MERA.
- f. USC&A reserves the right to deny an Event Request if it is determined that USC&A cannot programmatically or operationally accommodate the event, or if the group or event is in conflict with University policies or regulations.
- g. USC&A staff will assign each Event Request to the most appropriate space(s) available. Requests for specific rooms or space will be honored when possible. USC&A reserves the right to re-assign space when necessary and to identify suitable alternative space for the original reservation. USC&A will make every effort to notify sponsors of changes in advance of the actual event.

- h. Registered student organizations planning events defined as COMPLEX must have submitted the Event Request in MERA no less than 90 calendar days in advance of the preferred event date. A meeting with the Complex Event Advising Team to review planning and arrangements is required. Facility Use Agreements for events will not be confirmed until program plans have been reviewed and all necessary arrangements completed.
- i. For University departments and Non-University affiliated groups sponsoring events, the Event Request must be submitted in MERA no less than 30 calendar days in advance. USC&A Event Planning staff will meet with sponsors well in advance to discuss necessary planning. The Facility Use Agreement will not be Confirmed-Final until the signed contract has been received by USC&A Event Planning.

### 3. Process for Dance and Performance Rehearsal Requests

- a. Rooms within the Jonah L. Larrick Student Center Recreational Sports Facilities will be made available to registered student organizations for practice/rehearsal on a set schedule to be reviewed each semester. The Recreational Sports Staff reserves the right to deny any student organization usage of the space based on inappropriate usage or if a student organization is participating in an activity that is not appropriate for the available space. All rooms in Larrick Student Center have video surveillance.
- b. The registered student organization is responsible to arrive and leave on time for their reservation.
- c. All participants must be current VCU Students or Recreational Sports Members. All participants will be required to use RECS Speed Pass or present a current VCUCard to the Recreational Sports Service Desk. No exceptions will be made for participants without a valid VCUCard.
- d. The leader of the organization is to check in all practice/rehearsal participants at the Recreational Sports Desk in Larrick Student Center. Once all of the participants have arrived, the list will be handed to the Recreational Sports Desk Assistant. If a member of an organization arrives late and self checks in using RECS Speed Pass or the Service Desk, the leader of the organization must immediately return to the service desk and add the participant to the organizations list. Failure to do so will result in cancellation of all further reservations for a time to be determined.
- e. Tennis shoes, sneakers, or similar foot wear are the only approved shoes to be used in any reserved room in Larrick Student Center Recreational Sports Facilities. Participants may wear socks, however bare feet are not allowed. There are to be no boots, high heels, or other footwear used in the facility.
- f. No implements (canes, flags, wooden guns, swords, implements to be thrown or placed in contact with the floor, staffs, tambourines, poles, etc.) may be used in the facilities. If any organization is found to be using any implement:
  - i. The organization will be removed from the facility immediately.
  - ii. The organization will be ineligible to reserve space in the future for a time to be determined by the University Student Commons and Activities and Recreational Sports staff.
  - iii. The organization will be responsible for any repair or replacement costs to the floor or other areas of the facility damaged by use of the implements in the practice/rehearsal.

- g. If a student organization does not show for its reservation, a report will be sent to the Assistant Director, Student Development.
  - i. One no show will result in a written warning.
  - ii. Two no shows will result in cancellation of all remaining reservations for the month.
  - iii. Three no shows in a semester will result in the organization being ineligible to reserve space for four months.
  - iv. Additional no shows will result in the organization being ineligible to reserve space for a 12 month period.

#### C. Penalties, Exceptions and Appeals

1. Fronting is the practice of having a legitimately recognized sponsor reserve facilities or services so that another group may gain access to University facilities or services. Fronting in any form is prohibited. Sponsors who are found in violation of this guideline will lose reservation privileges and may be subject to other charges under the University Rules and Procedures.
2. The sponsoring student organization or department will be held ultimately responsible for any violations of policies, procedures or guidelines committed by a Non-University affiliated group. Sponsors that are found in violation of this guideline will lose reservation privileges and may be subject to other charges, penalties and fines under the University Rules and Procedures.
3. The Student Activities Advisory Committee (SAAC) is responsible for reviewing all guidelines, procedures and rental fees for USC&A managed facilities. Increases for inflationary or cost-of-living adjustments will be recommended as needed by the Director, University Student Commons & Activities for review by SAAC and approved by the University.
4. Requests for exceptions to these procedures should be forwarded to the Director, University Student Commons & Activities. The Director may act on the exception or forward it to SAAC for review and recommendation. All actions of SAAC are advisory to the Director and the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Services.

#### D. Special Procedures for Summer Events

1. Meeting and Event Requests by registered student organizations and University departments for all meetings and events occurring during the summer session will be accepted up to one year in advance unless otherwise negotiated in a special long term contract. **New student orientation programs for academic schools and departments may be reserved up to one year in advance provided they occur prior to the first day classes in August.** (NOTE: Summer hours of operation are limited. Before submitting requests for summer events, contact the USC&A Event Planning office for hours of summer operation.)
2. Meeting and Event Requests by Non-University affiliated groups or authorized alumni and employees for all meetings and events occurring during the summer session may be accepted up to three (3) years in advance and must follow Special Procedures for VCU Conference Services.

E. Special Procedures for VCU Conference Services

1. As directed by the Provost Task Force on Summer Activities 2004, programs and events held during semester breaks, summer sessions, and when USC&A facilities are otherwise closed, or which involve multiple uses of University resources, shall fall under the operations of VCU Conference Services. VCU Conference Services operates as part of USC&A Event Planning, but uses separate and distinct procedures. For more information on VCU Conference Services, please see the VCU Conference Services website ([http://www.usca.vcu.edu/meetings\\_and\\_events/conference\\_services.html](http://www.usca.vcu.edu/meetings_and_events/conference_services.html)).
2. To allow for VCU Conference Services operations during breaks and summer sessions, some spaces managed by USC&A will abide by the VCU Conference Services special procedures for space reservations. VCU Conference Services will accept requests for reservations up to 3 calendar years in advance.

F. Reservation Request Periods

To allow for an orderly process for advanced reservations, USC&A has established specific periods of time when each type of sponsor (registered student organization, University department, or Non-University affiliate) may submit Meeting and Event Requests. A schedule of these time periods for each academic year and semester will be published on the USC&A website. The schedule for the up-coming year will be published no later than February 1 each year.

1. Registered Student Organization:

- a. Meeting Requests and Event Requests for registered student organization sponsored meetings and events will be accepted via a MERA request starting on the first Monday in April prior to the academic year in which the meetings occur.
- b. Registered student organizations classified as Governing or Programming are permitted to submit Meeting and Event Requests for annual events up to one (1) year in advance.
- c. Student organizations planning to host events defined as COMPLEX may choose to participate in the Complex Event Calendar Planning process which takes place the last Friday in February prior to the academic year in which the events occur.
- d. Registered student organizations with a history of regular days and times for standard meetings and events may petition SAAC for similar privileges. These organizations will be permitted to hold regular meetings of general body and executive committee on a weekly basis. USC&A will maintain a list of these organizations which shall be reviewed for action by SAAC every spring.

2. University Department:

- a. Departmental events are those designed primarily to be accessible to faculty, staff and non-student members of academic and administrative departments of the University.

- b. MERA requests will be accepted beginning on the first Monday of the month of May for meetings and events occurring in the following academic year.
- c. The use of any USC&A managed space for academic purposes or as an extension of an academic program must be approved by the Provost's office.
- d. Non-academic meetings or events sponsored by University departments that are designed primarily for the co-curricular benefit of the entire student body, or meetings and events for the Board of Visitors or University Council, may be accepted one (1) year in advance.

3. VCU Affiliates:

- a. VCU Affiliate events are those designed primarily to be accessible to employees of the VCH Health System.
- b. MERA requests will be accepted beginning on the first Monday of the month of May for meetings and events occurring in the following academic year.

4. Non-University Affiliate:

- a. Meeting Requests and Event Requests for non-University affiliates will be accepted beginning on the first business day of the month of August for meetings and events occurring in the fall semester, the first business day of January for meetings and events occurring in the spring semester.
- b. Non-University affiliate meetings and events during breaks or summer shall be managed through VCU Conference Services guidelines and procedures.

5. Exam Period Exception

- a. To be consistent with the academic mission of VCU and discourage students from activities that may interfere with academic pursuits, it will be standard practice to deny requests from student organizations to sponsor events, meetings and other activities during the final examination period.
- b. Organizational meetings and study breaks for organizational members and other private end of year activities will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

6. Welcome Week Exception

- a. Each year during Welcome Week for fall semester, student organizations are prohibited from holding large "meet & greet" style events. As part of Welcome Week, the University plans generalized information sessions about student organizations along with the Student Organization and Volunteer Opportunities Fair which allow student organizations to recruit new students. By restricting individual organization events, the University promotes more centralized recruiting and reduces competition between organizations. Student organizations are free to hold standard meetings and executive meetings as necessary.

## G. Rental Rate Guidelines

1. USC&A managed space is supported through University Fees and Student Activity Fees. Registered student organizations and University departments receive special rates to recognize those financial contributions. VCU Affiliates and Non-University affiliate groups and approved alumni and University employees do not receive special rates.
2. USC&A rates are posted on-line. Printed copies are available in the USC&A Administrative office and the USC&A Event Planning office. Rates are reviewed no less than every two years.
3. Registered Student Organization and University Department Fees
  - a. Rental fees are not charged for meetings and events that are not designed as revenue producing events by registered student organizations and University departments.
  - b. A rental fee is charged if the sponsor accepts or charges an admission fee, vendors' table fee, registration fee, cash donations or similar method of payment.
  - c. Additional charges may be assessed if the meeting or event requires extraordinary set-up or clean-up, A/V technicians, or staff, whether the meeting or event is designed as a revenue producer or not.
  - d. A registered student organization or University department that holds a revenue-producing event and donates all proceeds to a non-profit, 501c(3) organization, will be eligible for a room rental charge refund. To receive a refund the Sponsor must:
    - 1) Inform the Event Planner at the time of the MERA Request that the event is for non-profit benefit.
    - 2) Show proof of the donation within four weeks of the event conclusion.
  - e. Requests for exceptions must be submitted in writing to the Director, University Student Commons & Activities two weeks prior to the event date.
4. VCU Affiliate and Non-University Affiliate Fees
  - a. VCU Affiliates, Non-University affiliate groups and approved alumni and employee events must pay all rental, service, labor, set-up or other fees as specified in the rate sheets.
5. Labor Fees
  - a. Charges will be assessed for labor related to special set-ups, audio/visual aid, and special services.
  - b. Audio/Visual Labor fees will be assessed for the entire period of the confirmed reservation. No reduction will be made for labor unless the request is cancelled or modified no less than 10 business days in advance of the meeting or event. The change to the Facility Use Agreement must be made in writing to USC&A. Notification to A/V supervisor or staff is not sufficient.

## 6. Cancellation Fees

- a. All Meeting Requests made via the MERA system must be cancelled through that system at least 3 business days in advance of the reservation. Facility Use Agreements not cancelled through the system may be subject to cancellation fees no matter when the cancellation request is received.
- b. If a student organization is assessed a late cancellation fee, the organization must pay USC&A the stated amount within thirty (30) business days or reservation privileges will be suspended and all future reservations will be cancelled.
- c. If a University department is assessed a late cancellation fee, USC&A will use the index code provided on the MERA request to obtain the fees.
- d. If a Non-University Affiliate is assessed a late cancellation fee, USC&A will require payment of cancellation fees within two weeks. Failure of Non-University affiliate to pay will result in the sponsoring registered student organization or University department being charged. The index code provided on the reservation will be charged to obtain the appropriate fees.

## 7. Fee Payment and Balances

- a. Registered student organizations with University accounts
  - 1) A registered student organization with a University account may use their VCU index code to authorize all charges related to meeting and event requests. A signed Facility Use Agreement will authorize USC&A to charge all fees related to the meeting or event to the organization index code. Registered student organizations that authorize charges against their University account that are not approved or funded may be held accountable by the proper funding authority.
  - 2) A registered student organization with a University account will pre-pay all charges related to a meeting or event request if the meeting or event has not been funded through the student activity fee appropriation process. It is the responsibility of the registered student organization to determine if appropriate funds are available prior to signing the Facility Use Agreement.
- b. Registered student organizations which do not have a University account must pay the balance of all anticipated charges *10 business days prior* to the scheduled meeting or event. Any additional cost/charges incurred or credits due as a result of the event will be due to USC&A no later than 30 days following the date of event. These charges will be invoiced within seven (7) business days following the event.
- c. University departments must have a valid departmental index code as part of the reservation request. USC&A will process a University transfer of funds (Journal Voucher) within seven (7) business days following the meeting or event which will include all charges, including any on-site requests, late cancellations, or other related charges.
- d. VCU Affiliates and Non-University affiliate sponsors must pay the balance of all anticipated charges *10 business days prior* to the scheduled meeting or event. Any additional cost/charges incurred or credits due as a result of the meeting or event will be due to USC&A no later than 30 days following date of the meeting or event.

- e. Payment must be made by personal check, corporate check, money order, credit card (VISA, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express), or VCU Rambucks. No cash payments are accepted at any time.
- f. Checks returned for insufficient funds will be charged an additional \$50.00 and all subsequent reservations will be placed on hold or suspended until outstanding charges and check charges are fully paid.
- g. If at any time a sponsoring organization has an outstanding balance due to USC&A, all subsequent reservations will be placed on hold or suspended until all balances are paid in full.

## II. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR MEETING AND EVENT MANAGEMENT

### A. General Guidelines for Meetings and Events

1. Sponsors are responsible for the general behavior and activities of persons leading and attending meetings and events within USC&A managed facilities. Sponsors should be aware of other meetings or events occurring in the facility and ensure that their activities do not infringe upon other meetings or events.
2. Meetings and events held in USC&A managed facilities are generally considered to be open to the University community. Sponsors are permitted, within reason, to hold meetings and events that are considered closed for organizational business including but not limited to personnel actions, special organization rituals or activities and paid admission only events.
3. VCU and USC&A encourage individuals with disabilities to take full advantage of meetings and events with USC&A managed facilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act regulations and requirements must be followed at all times for meetings and events. Sponsors may be required to observe special procedures or pay additional fees to ensure that their events are open to persons with disabilities.
4. If extensive cleaning as a result of a meeting or event is required, a flat fee will be charged (see Rate Sheet) to the sponsoring organization. Sponsors will be charged the replacement costs plus hourly labor if applicable for damages to the facilities or equipment.
5. USC&A does not permit the use of “common” areas (lounges, dining areas, seating areas, etc.) for organized meetings or events.

### B. Meetings

1. Meetings are defined as simple gatherings of individuals for the purpose of conducting general business.
2. In general, meetings do not require special arrangements and will be held in rooms with fixed furniture configurations.
3. Reservations for meetings may be made up to 24 hours in advance of the meeting through the MERA system.
4. The sponsor must agree to hold the meeting in the room with the standard set up. Any changes to the standard set or any additions to the reservation including food, special AV or other needs MAY not be granted.
5. If the sponsor does not agree to those conditions, the request automatically becomes an Event Request and will be handled by the USC&A Event Planning staff.

### C. Complex Events

1. Student organizations planning events that are defined as “complex” are required to participate in a specialized advising/planning process. This process ensures that all aspects of the event are planned and coordinated to meet all applicable University guidelines, procedures and policies. (See Complex Event Advising Process).
2. A complex event is any event which involves large attendance, security, admission fees, multiple venues or spaces, performance contracts or other activities which require significant time and effort by the sponsor and University support structure.
3. Only two large events of similar nature (i.e.: dances, concerts, new member shows) can be scheduled during the same week in the same USC&A managed facility.
4. Complex events that duplicate or appear to duplicate already established programs will be subject to additional review by USC&A staff. USC&A reserves the right to require co-sponsorship or to deny events which may unnecessarily duplicate use of University resources.
5. Because of the nature of USC&A facilities and a significant history of security problems, open parties, dance parties, open floor concerts, and similar events are prohibited in USC&A managed facilities and student organization events on VCU campuses. Exceptions are made for invitation only restricted events at which advance tickets or invitations are available to a fixed guest list. Such events may include wedding receptions and formal dances. The Director of USC&A must approve all exceptions in advance. All other complex event restrictions apply.

### D. Academic Space Reservations

1. USC&A has been charged with coordinating the reservation of space in academic buildings for use by student organizations and non- University affiliates. In some cases, USC&A will also coordinate the reservation of space by University departments.
2. Use of academic space by student organizations and non-University affiliates without a confirmed reservation is prohibited. For ALL reservations of academic facilities, student organizations must seek approval through UCS&A.
3. USC&A will make available on MERA specific academic spaces under the following conditions.
  - a. Academic space is only reservable through USC&A for weekends throughout the calendar year except when the University is closed for winter closing or government holidays.
  - b. Academic space is only available at the following times:
    - a. Friday: 5:00 pm – 11:00 pm
    - b. Saturday: 12:00 noon – 11:00 pm
    - c. Sunday: 8:00 am – 11:00 pm
  - c. Any request for academic space outside of those time periods requires a “special reservation” request and will be subject to approval of the “office of Academic Space Scheduling” on the Monroe Park or MCV Campuses.

4. Sponsors reserving academic space must agree to the following:
  - a. There will be no technology or facility support available for the room during weekends.
  - b. The sponsor may need to contact VCU Police to gain access to facility. VCU Police will have a list of all authorized reservations and may ask for proof of identity of sponsor before granting access to the facility.
  - c. Sponsor agrees to return room(s) used to the original or better condition than it was found. This includes but is not limited to chairs set neatly in rows, trash removed, data projector off, screen up, white boards erased.

#### E. Outdoor Events

The Commons Plaza, Harris Hall Lawn, Park Plaza, Park Court, Shafer Court and Linden Court serve as major thoroughfares for pedestrian traffic on the Monroe Park Campus. The Patterson Memorial Garden was made possible by a gift to the University and is significant to the life of the MCV Campus. The following procedures for the reservation and NON-EMERGENCY use of the aforementioned areas related to programs with valid reservations.

1. Any event occurring in the Commons Plaza, Harris Hall Lawn, Park Plaza, Park Court, Shafer Court, and Linden Court on the Monroe Park Campus and the Patterson Memorial Garden on the MCV Campus must have a signed Facility Use Agreement prior to use.
2. Events which restrict pedestrian flow generally will not be approved during normal class days (Monday through Friday) between the hours of 10:00 am and 2:00 pm for Shafer Court, Park Court or Linden Court.
3. Events with amplified sound will be permitted only from 12:00 – 1:00 pm Monday through Friday. Events on Friday evening after 5:00 pm, Saturdays and Sundays will be permitted on a case by case basis.
4. Outdoor events with anticipated attendance of less than 400 participants are highly encouraged to reserve rain space within a USC&A managed facility. Cancellations and/or a “rain call” must be made according to the Rain Call instruction in the Facility Use Agreement.
5. Outdoor events which are planned to have attendance in excess of any possible facility which would allow rain space (more than 400 participants) must either establish a “rain date” or be prepared to cancel the event in case of inclement weather. Cancellations and/or “rain call” must be made no less than 4 hours in advance of the set up time for the event.

#### F. Demonstrations (University Policy)

"Free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the objectives of an institution of higher education. To this end, peaceful, reasonable, and lawful picketing and other orderly demonstrations in approved areas shall not be subject to interference by the members of the University community. Nor shall any member of the University community be subject to limitation or penalty solely because of the lawful exercise of these freedoms. However, those involved in picketing and demonstrations may not engage in conduct that violates the rights of any member of the University community."

1. All aspects of demonstrations shall be governed by the “Guidelines for Demonstrations on the Campuses of Virginia Commonwealth University.”

#### G. Parking, Loading and Unloading

1. Parking, loading and unloading for deliveries related to any meeting or event must be coordinated through the USC&A facility managers, and approved in advance as part of the reservation process. Only those vehicles necessary for delivery of equipment, food, or other materials directly related to the program or exhibit will be given access to any loading area or part of the outdoor locations.
2. All vehicles used for loading or unloading of equipment and not directly necessary for the function of the program must be removed immediately after loading or unloading prior to the start of the event.
3. Sponsors must notify the USC&A Event Planner at the time of the Event Request that vehicles will need access to the facility or outdoor area. Sponsors are required to provide details about the number of vehicles expected and the general type and size. If specific reservations are not made for vehicles, sponsors will be required to unload any equipment or materials from a pre-approved loading area.
4. All parking of vehicles for service access or programs must avoid driving or parking on non-supported surfaces and grass areas. The USC&A Event Planning staff can inform Sponsors of appropriate places to park vehicles. USC&A requires that ½” to ¾” plywood boards be placed under the wheels of large vehicles to keep them from displacing bricks.
5. Due to size, weight, or other restrictions, certain vehicles may not be permitted access to the outdoor areas. USC&A may consult with Facilities Management staff to determine if a vehicle should be restricted from access.
6. Any violation of parking restrictions may result in fines, towing, or both.

#### H. Security

The safe and secure management of all events and facilities is a priority at VCU. The University reserves the right to require uniformed police officers and/or trained security personnel at any event determined to have security risks. The guidelines below will determine if and when security will be assigned to an event.

1. VCU Police and/or security are required at the following:
  - a. Events occurring outdoors with an expected attendance of 200 or more;
  - b. All events where alcohol will be served;
  - c. Large Indoor Events which are likely, based on historical precedent and experience, to attract crowds near to or in excess of the established room or space capacities;
  - d. Events with a history of security problems;
  - e. Any event where cash or other valuables are being accepted;
  - f. Any planned demonstration regardless of anticipated attendance; and,
  - g. Events where the nature of the presentation, speaker, or other factor may create security issues.

2. USC&A automatically assigns police coverage for events where security is required or when deemed appropriate by the nature of the event. The VCU Police have the final authority to require security for any event.
3. Even if VCU Police do not require security, USC&A reserves the right to require security at any event USC&A management believes requires a security presence. Additionally, Sponsors may request coverage through the USC&A Event Planner if they feel the need.
4. Event sponsors must pay for police/security coverage. Sponsors that have a University account are billed directly for police services. Sponsors that do not have University accounts are required to pre-pay for security charges.
5. If the event or security services are cancelled less than 48 hours prior to the event or no later than 5:00 pm on Thursday for events occurring on Saturday or Sunday, the organization must pay for the coverage assigned.

## I. Catering

USC&A strives to provide locations for meetings and events that include food and beverages. USC&A managed facilities are not limited to any specific catering contract and follow all local, state and federal health codes. As such the following guidelines are enforced to protect the sponsors and attendees of programs from health related problems. The following guidelines must be strictly adhered to for all reservations with a Facility Use Agreement in which the provision of food or beverage is included. For the purposes of these guidelines and procedures, the terms cater, caterer and catering are used to refer to the provision of food and beverages for a meeting or event.

### 1. General Catering Guidelines

- a. Sponsors are permitted to contract with any registered and licensed food service provider (caterer) to serve or provide food and beverages for meetings and events.
- b. VCU departments and registered student organizations are permitted to self-cater events including “pot-luck” style within certain restrictions.
- c. The sponsor is required to dispose of all trash, food waste and service products in proper receptacles at the end of their function.
- d. If the event requires a food staging or preparation area, water, refrigeration, etc, the sponsor is required to use a food service preparation area and a service fee will apply.
- e. Non-University Affiliated events may not be Self-Catered.

USC&A recognizes three forms of catering, Full Service Catering, Delivery-Only Service, and Self-Catering. Each form of catering has specific requirements which must be met.

2. Full Service Catering: when food and/or beverages are being served and a catering staff member is present throughout the event. The sponsor is responsible for making sure that the following occurs:
  - a. Copy of caterer’s business license is provided to the USC&A Event Planner
  - b. Copy of caterer’s certificate of insurance is provided to the USC&A Event Planner.

- c. Caterer meets with the USC&A Event Planner to go over all policies and procedures
  - d. Copy of the Catering Services Agreement (provided by the USC&A Event Planner) signed by the caterer
  - e. Service fee for use of one of the designated food service preparation areas is paid
  - f. Sponsor is required to reserve a food service prep area when holding a full service catered event
  - g. All of the above criteria must be provided to the USC&A Event Planner no later than 3 weeks prior to the event date
3. Delivery-Only: when a licensed caterer delivers food and no catering staff member is present throughout the event.
    - a. Sponsor is not required to present the USC&A Event Planner with a copy of their caterer's business license or certificate of insurance
    - b. For large deliveries and/or Delivery-Only events, USC&A reserves the right to require use of and charge for a designated food service preparation area
  4. Self-Catering: when the sponsor is responsible for delivering, setting up and cleaning up food and/or beverages at a meeting or event.
    - a. Sponsor is not required to present the USC&A Event Planner with a copy of their caterer's business license or certificate of insurance
    - b. For large deliveries and/or Self-catering events, USC&A reserves the right to require use of and charge for a designated food service preparation area
    - c. All food consumed at self-catered events should be prepared in a licensed kitchen but "pot-Luck" style events are permitted within certain restrictions. Please review the USC&A Catering and Food Services detailed guidelines.
    - d. Self-catering by a Non-University group is not permitted

#### J. Alcohol

1. Alcohol is not permitted in any USC&A managed facility or at any event unless provided through a licensed vendor. The unauthorized possession, distribution, consumption or sales of alcohol will result in action by the VCU Police.
2. Events at which alcohol will be served must conform to state law and University regulations regarding the sale and/or service of alcohol in campus facilities. Refer to the *Procedures for Consumption and Distribution of Alcohol at University Events*.
3. An Alcohol Authorization Agreement form must be completed and signed by the appropriate University officials 30 days prior to the event.
4. A vendor licensed by the Virginia Alcohol Beverage Control Board must provide alcohol service. Exceptions must be obtained by the University Office of Risk Management at least ten days prior to the event. A copy of the alcohol license must be provided to the USC&A Event Planner.

## K. Publicity Spaces

USC&A provides registered student organizations, University departments, VCU Affiliates, Non-University Affiliated organizations and community agencies and businesses the opportunity to market and/or sell products in USC&A managed facilities. In order to maintain the most efficient and effective use of these limited areas, the following guidelines will be adhered to strictly by USC&A in the reservation and provision of Publicity Spaces.

### 1. General guidelines

- a. All Publicity Spaces (banners, rolling display boards, information tables and literature distribution areas) require advanced reservation, must be reserved through the MERA system and have specific restrictions for reservation periods. (see Publicity Space Time Table)
- b. The solicitation and sale of any form of credit card or credit program is prohibited. The sale or solicitation for general banking services (checking, debit and savings accounts) may be permitted if allowed under other existing University contracts.
- c. No product may be distributed or sold that duplicates or is similar to those sold by contracted vendors in USC&A managed facilities without prior written approval by VCU Business Services or USC&A management.
- d. Non-University sponsors may not reserve banners, rolling display boards, information tables or literature distribution space.
- e. The University reserves the right to remove displayed materials at any point should the content or condition of the contents become of concern. USC&A will maintain procedures for addressing any concerns raised.

### 2. Banners

- a. Registered student organizations and University departments may reserve indoor and outdoor banner space without charge. Banner space reservations are subject to specific restrictions and limitations.
- b. Banner space must be reserved through the MERA system.
- c. USC&A reserves the right to remove banners at any point should the content or condition of the banner become of concern.
- d. Registered student organizations may not credit corporations or businesses as “co-sponsors” but may state that the event is “being presented by”, “in association with,” or that the business is “underwriting,” the specific event being promoted.

### 3. Rolling Display Boards (RDB)

- a. Registered student organizations and University departments may reserve a rolling display board without charge.
- b. RDB space must be reserved through the MERA system.
- c. RDB space reservations are subject to specific restrictions and limitations.
- d. Materials in RDB are subject to the same guidelines as posting in USC&A managed facilities. (See USC&A Information Distribution Guidelines)

#### 4. Information Tables

- a. Registered student organizations and University departments may reserve an information table without charge. Non-University affiliate users must be sponsored either by a registered student organization or University department. A representative from the sponsoring organization or department must be present at the table.
- b. Information Table space must be reserved through the MERA system.
- c. Information Table space reservations are subject to specific restrictions and limitations.
- d. Information may not be distributed in areas away from the reserved table space.
- e. Sponsors may not reserve an information table and literature distribution area on the same day.
- f. Any use of an information table to promote the use or purchase of a commercial product or service or for fund raising will be considered a sales or service solicitation table and must follow the procedures governing those practices. USC&A reserves the right to determine the classification of tables.

#### 5. Literature Distribution Areas

- a. Sponsors may reserve one space per day and may not reserve the same space for more than two days in any week. Non-University organizations are not permitted to distribute literature from any location.
- b. Distribution of literatures from reserved Information Tables either inside or outside USC&A managed facilities must follow guidelines for Information Tables. Sponsors distributing literature are responsible for cleaning up any literature that is not discarded in proper trash receptacles in and around the facilities. Cleaning should take place throughout the reservation period. Failure to maintain cleanliness will result in the sponsor being denied the privilege to distribute literature in the future.
- c. USC&A maintains procedures for display boards, literature racks, table tents, (Refer to VCU Dining Services Policy and Procedures for Table Tents in dining areas) or other display areas within USC&A managed facilities. Refer to Information Distribution guidelines and procedures. These areas are NOT reserved through MERA.

#### 6. Chalk Drawings

- a. Only registered student organizations or University departments can reserve space for chalk drawings by contacting the sponsors assigned Event Planner.
- b. Drawings are permitted in designated areas only. Drawings may only be on cement, never on bricks or other surfaces. ([see Chalking Procedures](#))
- c. Only water-soluble chalk can be used. Sponsor must clean up the drawings at the end of their reservation period, should the weather not do so first. Failure to do so will result in the loss of future reservation privileges.

L. Sales and Solicitation Procedures

1. Sales: The use of University facilities for the sale of goods or services is strictly regulated. Any exchange of funds (cash, check, debit, credit or similar) for goods or services shall be considered a sale.
  - a. Sales of goods or services are limited to information/sales tables located in designated areas. Any other use of University facilities for commercial purposes is strictly prohibited unless governed by a specifically negotiated University contract.
  - b. Sales must be conducted or sponsored by registered student organizations or University departments. A registered student organization or University department must sponsor vendors and non-University affiliated users.
  - c. Sales of services including, but not limited to, wireless communications services, internet services, credit services, telephone services, and other contracted services are covered under [Service Solicitation Tables](#)
  - d. Sponsoring organizations or departments will be permitted one sales period per semester. A sales period is defined as up to five consecutive days of sales, although sponsor may choose to sell for fewer days.
  - e. Fees for all Sales Area will be charged based on the currently approved USC&A Space Rental Rates (See [Space Rental Rates](#) chart).
  - f. Failure to cancel a sales area reservation at least 24 hours prior to the reservation date/time will be subject to applicable charges.
  - g. The University's disclaimer, printed on the reservation card provided to each Sponsor, must be clearly displayed at all times.
  - h. If a registered student organization or University department sponsors a vendor, the terms of the commission must be negotiated between the parties in advance, but should not be less than the current rental rate.
  - i. Individuals or firms must carry liability insurance with a minimum coverage of \$300,000 and provide USC&A with a copy of a certificate of insurance coverage before the request for sales table will be confirmed.
  - j. Any business licenses required by the Commonwealth of Virginia and/or the City of Richmond, Virginia must be obtained and copies of those licenses must be provided to USC&A management before a request for sales will be confirmed.
  
2. Service Solicitation Tables: The act of requesting monetary or other forms of compensation for the provision of a service or the act of requesting individuals register for services even if provided without compensation shall be designated a Service Solicitation and is subject to the following guidelines. Service Solicitation includes but is not limited to: credit cards, debit cards, banking, internet services, cable or satellite television, telephone service and other contracted services.
  - a. Non-university affiliated service solicitation vendors must be sponsored by a registered student organization or university department.
  - b. A representative of the sponsoring organization must handle requests and sign the Facility Use Agreement. The sponsor is responsible for providing the vendor with all pertinent information and regulations including parking restrictions, sign/display limitations, location directions, etc.
  - c. The sponsoring student organization or University department must pay USC&A a rental fee for the service solicitation table space. (See [Space Rental Rates](#))

- d. The sponsoring student organization or University department must negotiate the terms of the financial agreement with the service solicitation vendor. It is recommended that the agreement be in writing and guarantee an amount no less than the current rental rate per day which the sponsoring organization will be required to pay in rental fees.
- e. Prepayment for the service solicitation table must be made 2 weeks in advance of the date on the Facility Use Agreement.
- f. Sponsoring student organizations or University departments are permitted one table period per semester, including service solicitation. A table period is defined as up to five consecutive days of solicitation; although, a sponsor may choose to sell for fewer days.
- g. Only one service solicitation table will be permitted on campus per day. Service solicitation tables will be permitted only during a five-week period starting on the third week of classes each semester.
- h. Individuals or firms must carry liability insurance with a minimum coverage of \$300,000 and provide the USC&A Event Planner with a copy of a certificate of insurance coverage before the request for sales table will be confirmed.
- i. Any business licenses required by the Commonwealth of Virginia and/or the City of Richmond, Virginia must be obtained and copies of those licenses must be provided to USC&A before a request for sales will be confirmed.
- j. Amplified music and/or speech are not permitted.
- k. No solicitation away from the table location or yelling to passers-by will be permitted.
- l. Sponsors/vendors *may not* provide their own tables and chairs. Tables are put in a specific, assigned location. Tables and displays may not be moved from the assigned location.
- m. Any special arrangements, such as demonstrations, mounting backdrops, or give-a-ways, must be approved by USC&A management prior to the date on the Facility Use Agreement.
- n. There are no electrical outlets available; extension cords from outlets will not be permitted. No other equipment and/or services, such as water or parking, will be provided by USC&A.
- o. Credit card sales or the solicitation for credit card services are not permitted in University Student Commons & Activities managed facilities.

### 3. Employment Recruiting

- a. USC&A will permit recruiters to reserve specified locations in the University Student Commons and Larrick Student Center with the following provisions of the USC&A Employment Recruiting Guidelines.
  - i. Recruiters must complete in full the official USC&A Employment Recruiter Reservation web form in advance as specified on the form.
  - ii. Recruiters must agree to all terms and conditions on the USC&A Employment Recruiter Reservation form.
  - iii. The recruiter must be a licensed employer and must be willing to provide documentation to verify status as a legal employer.
  - iv. The recruiter must pay for space in full and in advance. No refunds will be provided unless the University is closed for reasons beyond the control of USC&A.

- v. A recruiter may not reserve space for more than five consecutive business days (Monday – Friday) and may not reserve more than five days total in any 60 calendar day period.
  - vi. USC&A reserves the right to deny permission to recruit to any employer that may be in conflict with VCU Policies and Procedures, Ethics Guidelines.
  - vii. At no time during the approved reservation period for recruiting is the recruiter permitted to sell goods or services or solicit for goods or services. Failure to follow this guideline will mean the immediate termination of the reservation without refund.
- b. USC&A reserves the right to deny space to any recruiter for up to three (3) years for failure to follow any of the guidelines in Employment Recruiting guidelines or other applicable USC&A or VCU Policies and Procedures.

### III. Glossary of Terms

- **Complex Event** - A complex event is any event which involves large attendance, security, admission fees, multiple venues or spaces, performance contracts or other activities which require significant time and effort by the sponsor and University support structure.
- **Event** – for the purposes of these documents an “event” is any program, production, or other gathering of individuals or groups taking place in a defined event space.
- **Literature** – any printed materials of any size handed or otherwise delivered to individuals on the campuses of VCU.
- **Meeting** – for the purposes of these documents, a “meeting” is any gathering of individuals or groups taking place in a defined meeting space.
- **Meeting Request/Event Request** – the electronic process by which a sponsor seeks permission to hold an meeting or event in USC&A managed facilities through the MERA system.
- **Non-University Affiliate** – Any group, corporation, agency or other organization that has a permanent or temporary partnership with a Registered Student Organization or University Department for the purposes of conducting events in University managed facilities.
- **Registered Student Organization** - Student groups that successfully complete and submit a Student Organization Registration Form online with USC&A will be afforded associated privileges for Registered Student Organizations.
- **Reservation** – the operational term for the details and information by which USC&A will provide facilities and services to a sponsor.
- **Facility Use Agreement** - this is the document which provides all details of the facilities and services to be provided by USC&A to the sponsoring organization and specifies the terms of the agreement. The Facility Use Agreement is not valid until signed or electronically signed by the sponsor.
- **Sponsor** – the operational term used to refer to the organization, department or agency for a reservation has been made and confirmed.
- **Sponsor Contact** – the person responsible for all aspects of the event and with whom USC&A staff will generally conduct business.
- **University Department** – An academic and administrative area within the University.
- **VCU Affiliate:** An administrative department within the VCU Health System.