

# Guidelines for Students Seeking Advice on the Use of Open Spaces within Yale-NUS Campus

Yale-NUS College is committed to academic freedom and to facilitating across campus the fullest expression of its community. The College's core statement on the Freedom of Expression on Campus reads:

*"We are firmly committed to the free expression of ideas in all forms - a central tenet of liberal arts education. There are no questions that cannot be asked, no answers that cannot be discussed or debated. This principle is the cornerstone of our institution."*

How do we best encourage wide-ranging academic expression across all spaces on the Yale-NUS Campus in a way that does not cause harm (physical, personal and/ or legal) to our college community?

This document seeks to assist in achieving this objective by providing clear guidance for students wishing to hold events or erect free-standing installations or displays in our open spaces.

## Arrangements for Managing Open Space on Campus

Students wishing to hold an event or erect a free-standing installation in an open space must seek permission from either a Rector or the Dean of Students, or the Dean's delegate, depending on the chosen location for the event. For events to be held on Residential College grounds, the permission of the relevant Rector is required, while events to be held in the central courtyard (i.e. the area between the Oculus and the Agora) or the open field adjacent to Cendana require the permission of the Dean of Students or the Dean of Students' delegate.

If they choose to, students may obtain advice beforehand from the Advisory Committee on Expression in College. The Advisory Committee may also provide advice to the Rector or Dean of Students to help inform his/ her deliberations when making the approval decision.

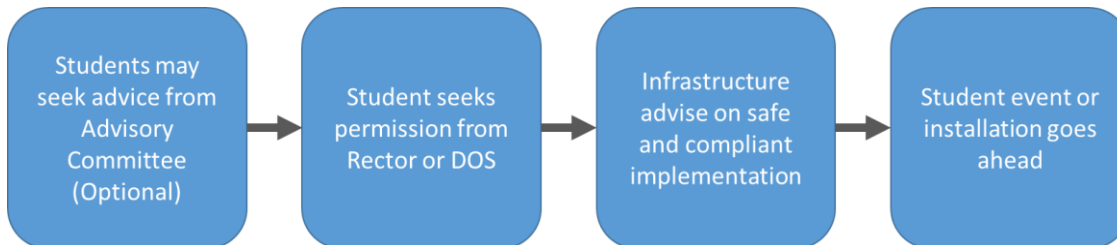
The Committee will be able to obtain a legal opinion in cases where it is uncertain what the legal position might be with regard to a particular proposed event and/ or its publicity materials.

Students may also, if they wish, seek the advice of the committee on matters of virtual space: e.g. they could seek advice before posting something online or having a virtual gathering. These scenarios do not require the Rector's or Dean of Students' intervention.

Once the Rector or Dean has granted permission, the student, or in some cases the Rector, will liaise with Infrastructure, Safety and Security (Infra) to discuss issues of implementation such as safety, security, and the maintenance of the surrounding grounds and structures.

Infra will provide advice on issues related to their responsibilities at the College.

The event or free-standing installation may then go ahead in compliance with any implementation advice or instructions given by Infra.



### **Events and Installations without Permission**

If a proposal for an event or free-standing installation has not gone through the above process and Infra staff are therefore surprised by an event or installation, they will seek advice from the Rector or Dean of Students. If both parties are clear that permission was not given for the event or installation, a combination of the Rector or Dean and/or Infra will intervene. If it is deemed necessary, the removal of the installation may be requested or the event may be cancelled. If Infra staff conclude that the event or installation poses an immediate threat to safety and security or a significant issue to grounds maintenance, Infra may remove it first before liaising with the Rector or Dean of Students. For these reasons, students should ensure that they obtain approval in advance and follow all advice from Infra.

### **The Advisory Committee on Expression in College**

The Advisory Committee will act as an advisory body to all student proposals for events or free-standing installations in open spaces across Campus in order to promote full, appropriate and consistent use.

The Advisory Committee will work in the spirit of facilitating the fullest possible expression of our community. In particular, it will seek to ensure that students are not unduly censoring themselves or curtailing the extent of their activities through misplaced oversensitivity towards the law. The Committee will have a strong academic voice to advocate for academic expression within the law.

The Committee will be able to obtain a legal opinion in cases where it is uncertain what the legal position might be with regard to a particular proposed event and/ or its publicity materials.

The Committee does not approve student proposals. Its role is to provide advice, when requested, to help students make informed decisions in planning their own events or installations. The Committee may also provide advice to the Rector or Dean of Students to assist in their decision-making process when approving a student proposal.

A record of key deliberations by the Advisory Committee will be retained and made available to College stakeholders to facilitate the sharing of 'case law' knowledge that can better inform the organising of future events on campus.

The Advisory Committee on Expression in College can be contacted via [ACEC@yale-nus.edu.sg](mailto:ACEC@yale-nus.edu.sg).

Membership:

- A rector (representing all three rectors) appointed by EVP (AA)
- A faculty member appointed by Dean of Faculty
- A member of Arts staff appointed by the Dean of ERT
- A representative of the Dean of Students' Office appointed by the Dean of Students
- 2 students as nominated by the Student Government

### **Other Considerations for Activities in Open Spaces**

The College's courtyards and open spaces were designed as common space for all members of the community. The overarching objective of the Infrastructure, Safety and Security team who maintain the campus is to provide a clean, healthy and sustainable green environment for all. Activities carried out in the courtyards should pose no safety risks to users.

Safe everyday uses include:

- Walking, sitting and strolling
- Leisure activities, such as picnicking and star gazing
- Light, short-time and infrequent activities such as orientation games

However, the College's green spaces may be adversely affected by certain activities such as those that involve large numbers of people, heavy objects/ loads, paint or chemicals, heat (e.g. BBQs), etc. that may cause damage to the courtyards, particularly if the ground is wet. For such activities, students should therefore discuss their plans with Infra. For example, each courtyard has differing capacities for supporting heavy loads and one activity that is suitable for one courtyard may not be the case in another.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

1. Do I need permission to hold an event or erect an installation in an open space on Campus?

Yes, you must obtain the permission of either a Rector or the Dean of Students, or his/ her delegate, depending on the location you are proposing. For events to be held on Residential College grounds, the permission of the relevant Rector is required, while events to be held in the central courtyard (Oculus to Agora space) or the open field adjacent to Cendana require the permission of the Dean of Students or the Dean of Students' delegate.

2. Who do I go to and how do I get approval?

For events to be held on Residential College grounds, you should contact the relevant Rector for permission. For events to be held in the central courtyard or the open field adjacent to Cendana, contact the Dean of Students' Office at [deanofstudents@yale-nus.edu.sg](mailto:deanofstudents@yale-nus.edu.sg)

3. Must I contact the Advisory Committee on Expression on Campus?

No, it is your choice whether you contact the Advisory Committee. The Committee can be reached at [ACEC@yale-nus.edu.sg](mailto:ACEC@yale-nus.edu.sg)

4. Does the Advisory Committee approve my event or installation?

No, the Advisory Committee can provide advice that may help inform the approval decision but it does not hold approval powers: approval lies with the relevant Rector or the Dean of Students, depending on the location.

5. What type of advice will the Advisory Committee provide?

The Committee will advise on the best and most efficient way for the student(s) to succeed in the planned event/installation by acting as an intermediary body, where necessary, with the relevant College department.

The Committee may also be able to share information about similar past events and can obtain a legal opinion if necessary.

6. Does Infra provide advice on the concept or subject matter of my event or installation?

No, Infrastructure's remit is to provide advice on implementation. They do not take a view on the conceptual or thematic aspects of the event.