



Policy on Photographing of and Videotaping in Harvard Buildings and Facilities

1. Purpose - As an educational institution, Harvard University seeks to further its mission of education, research and public service and to minimize activities that disrupt or are inconsistent with that mission. In furtherance of this, this policy requires advance permission for, and in some cases, limits or does not allow, photography and videotaping of University buildings, facilities and property, with the exception of still photography and video work produced on behalf of Harvard University and its schools.[\[1\]](#)

2. Advance Permission Required - Any individual or organization wanting to engage in photography or video-taping on Harvard property for broadcast or public dissemination of any type needs advance permission.

All requests should go initially to the Communications or Press Office of the School involved, or to the University News Office (617/495-1585) if there are questions about the University policy. In determining whether permission should be granted, the university or local news officer may consult with the News Office, President and Provost's Office, Dean of the affected school and other university officials who may be appropriate.

3. Criteria and Limits - Generally, photography or videotaping which is carried out by the university or its schools or an educational or non-profit entity and is intended for educational or public affairs use will be permitted (subject to logistical and security concerns detailed below). Similarly, photography or videotaping which is carried out by a commercial or entertainment entity designed primarily for entertainment or commercial use, will generally not be permitted.

For example, the makers of an educational documentary on the life of Franklin Roosevelt might be permitted to video footage of Harvard Yard, while the makers of the video version of a best selling novel about Roosevelt set at Harvard would not be.

Videotaping or photography for advertising or promotion of commercial products or services is not allowed.[\[2\]](#)

Access to a School's campus or university property for videotaping or photography by the news media will be at the discretion of the Communications or Press Office of the individual School involved, or the Director of the Harvard News Office.

A. In reviewing any request for photography or videotaping, the following will be considered:



- Whether the purpose of the photography or videotaping furthers the University's educational mission, as explained above.
- The level of potential disruption to students, staff and faculty.
- The expense, inconvenience and/or potential damage to property of the University.
- The potential for misrepresentation or misunderstanding of university association with the project.

4. Exterior and Interior Videotaping - Generally, permission to photograph or video will be limited to pictures of the exterior of buildings or facilities.

Videotaping of Harvard exteriors from a location not on Harvard property also cannot disrupt University activities. For example, a video crew trying to photograph a scene of Harvard Yard from a public space on Massachusetts Avenue cannot cause disruption by say, placing floodlights in such a way that they disturb students in the Yard buildings, or by trying to block pedestrian access through the gates for a clearer shot.

1. In the exceptional case where videotaping or photography of interior property is permitted (for example, a video or still photographs being produced by Harvard for its own use or in the unusual case of a public panel discussion to be videotaped for later broadcast), a number of special circumstances in addition to the general ones of disruption, etc. listed above need to be considered, including:

- Have all the participants (including students or audience members) been notified of and given permission to the videotaping?
- Are alternative seats available for any audience member who does not wish to be videotaped?
- Have copyright permissions been granted from all potential copyright holders?
- Are all representations of Harvard University or its schools consistent with the University Policy on the Use of Harvard's name? (For example, promotional material for a video, even if it is educational, should make sure that any reference to Harvard University is consistent with the policy and has advance permission).

5. Signs or Insignia of the University or its units - Because of the trademark implications, any photography or videotaping (with the exception of that by press invited in to cover University or school events) which portrays official signs, insignia or emblems of Harvard University or its schools (e.g. clearly identifiable banners, diplomas, shields) needs advance permission of the Trademark Program. (Schools may develop with these offices in advance categories of banners, insignia, etc. that will generally be and for which "blanket" pre-approval may be given.)



6. Promoting a Video -The names and trademarks of Harvard University or any of its units may not be used in promoting a video or other project without specific advance permission of the Director of the Harvard News Office or the Trademark Program, even when permission to photograph or videotape has been given.

7. Compensation and Indemnification - When permission is granted, the individual or entity engaging in the videotaping or photography must agree to (a) pay any location fee assessed by the Harvard News Office, (b) indemnify the University against any loss resulting from the activities, (c) compensate the University for any costs or damage, (d) agree to any other terms or limitations, including specific ones to minimize disruption or security risks.

8. Individual faculty and students - Individual faculty members with questions should contact their school's Public Information Officer. This is not intended to limit current practice of permitting a School or the University to video educational activities for their own non-commercial use, nor of limiting the University News Office or individual faculty members from permitting limited, non-disruptive videotaping or photography for educational or institutional purposes (such as an interview with a news program or videos and photography for use in university communication) in their offices or other university space.

However, as is also current practice, offices or other university property should not be used for private purposes such as photography which would promote a commercial product, nor should faculty permit the more public videotaping of their classes or other activities in university facilities for broadcast or public dissemination without discussing it with their local news officer or the Harvard News Office as above.

Students may not engage in videotaping or photography on university property intended for commercial distribution or public dissemination without advance permission as described above. Any student video or photography project using university facilities must comply with the University Use of Name policy.

9. Third-Parties using University Facilities must follow these rules - When rooms or facilities are rented to, or otherwise used by, third-parties not affiliated with the University, they must agree to be bound by these rules, as well as the University policy on the use of Harvard's name. Local units that rent or donate space for outside use should include these rules in any agreements with the third-parties, or otherwise ensure notification and compliance.

10. Questions - Questions on the application and interpretation of this policy should go to the Director of the Harvard News Office or his/her designee (617/495-1585).



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[1]. This policy is intended to guide university officials in their dealings with outside entities who wish to photograph or videotape on university property. The restrictions in this policy are not intended to limit photography or videotaping by official university representatives, such as the Harvard News Office or the Communications Office of a school, for university purposes. Students involved in non-commercial projects should be guided by their schools (see section 8).

[2]. In the case of a request for photography which is connected with a product officially licensed by the University through its Trademark Program, the University News Office and the Trademark Program will work together to determine appropriate permissions and conditions.