

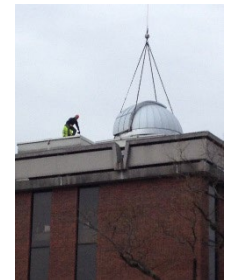
CLARK SCIENCE CENTER ACCESS TO ROOFS – GUIDELINES AND PRACTICE

For two Science Center buildings – Ford Hall and McConnell Hall -- roofs hold special features and facilities. Our access policy treats these spaces as if they are labs: access is controlled, but available to those with legitimate reasons to visit them, provided certain safety precautions are followed. For the remaining three of the five Science Center buildings (Bass, Sabin-Reed, Burton Halls), the only reason to access the roof is for building or equipment maintenance. Therefore, access to these three roofs is limited and controlled by Facilities Management.

- Ford Hall has a well-established green roof that is a point of pride for the College and a site of interest and curiosity. The roof may be accessed only via elevator and through an equipment room that houses systems controls for the building's HVAC and other essential infrastructure. The safety issues inherent in keeping the building systems in good working order mean we must limit access.



- McConnell Hall roof is the site of the McConnell Rooftop Observatory, accessed only by stairs on the western side of the building. The Observatory houses two telescopes on permanent piers inside locked enclosures, a shed storing a number of portable telescopes, and is enclosed by a wooden deck with railings encompassing the protected area of the Observatory viewing platform. The roof is also the site of the Physics Solar Energy Station with a large solar array and other equipment. The Rooftop Observatory has been in continual operation since McConnell was completed in the 1960s and is used for teaching and/or research 5-6 nights every week and sometimes during the day for solar observing. Users include classes of up to 25 students, small groups supervised by trained student TAs, public stargazing sessions with up to 100 attendees, and campus tours. The safety issues inherent in a roof with fenced, but still open sides, as well the presence of expensive lab equipment, means roof access is limited to authorized use.



Access policy:

Roof access is authorized only for pedagogical, scholarly, admissions, community relations, maintenance, or similar reasons. For roof access that is for authorized purposes:

- **Only approved faculty and staff key holders may access a Science Center roof unaccompanied.**
 - Facilities Management and Public Safety staff may access a Science Center roof unaccompanied if their work requires it. The door to the roof has the “Science All” clearance which key div-3 admin staff have. (Due to partitioning C-Cure, we cannot see if other groups on campus outside of the sciences, Facilities, Campus Safety etc. have access to this door or not.)
 - A faculty or staff member with a *permanent need* to access research equipment or to prepare facilities or equipment for teaching may be on Ford or McConnell roof unaccompanied. Such access is given only upon completion of [a key/card](#)

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[access request form](#) at least 2 weeks in advance and Science Center Administrative Director and Facilities Management approval, plus - in the case of McConnell - the approval of the Astronomy Department Chair.

- Remember: If working alone on the roof, make sure that someone knows where you are and when you expect to be finished.
- **Smith College faculty or staff member may visit or lead a group to the Ford Hall or McConnell Hall roof.**
 - A Smith College faculty or staff member may visit or lead a group to the roof by borrowing the key(s) from the designated roof key holder Ford Stockroom, for Ford Hall). McConnell Hall roof access is strictly via OneCard. Access needs to be requested in advance as described above. A spontaneous visit may be possible with the help of an Astronomy department member.
 - For the McConnell Hall roof:
 - Please coordinate your visit with the Astronomy Department schedule of classes and events.
 - Please do not enter the locked enclosures without express approval of the Astronomy Department.
 - The safety instructions for McConnell are straight-forward: keep on the wooden platform, do not approach the edge of the roof, and ensure the door is locked behind you when you leave the roof.
 - For the Ford Hall roof, there will be a sign out sheet and a safety instruction sheet (available in the Ford stockroom). The purpose of the sign out sheet is to make clear who has borrowed the key, when they went to the roof, and when they returned.
 - The safety instructions for Ford are more comprehensive:
 - You activate the elevator to go to the penthouse (outside the elevator’s normal range) by turning the borrowed elevator key to the right to the “on” position. Once the elevator starts to move, turn the key left back to the “off” position. That way, no one else can use the elevator to go to the penthouse (they will be able to use the elevator within its normal range). You will be able to call the elevator back to the penthouse when you are finished on the roof;
 - Follow the marked route to the exterior door to the roof (staying within the path marked with tape keeps visitors away from the HVAC equipment and other sensitive instrumentation controlling building systems);
 - Keep visitors off the living roof and away from roof edges;



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- Note that it is only one section of living roof that is accessible.
- Approved permanent key holders/card access may lead a group to the roof without formalities, provided they give suitable safety instructions to the group.
 - For McConnell, this will mean Astronomy and Physics faculty members and trained student TAs have access to the roof-top teaching facilities. For Ford – because of the need to secure elevator access to the penthouse mechanical room – only one set of keys will be held in Ford for faculty and staff use.
 - A limited number of Facilities Management staff are approved key holders for the Ford and McConnell roofs.
 - If there is interest in Ford Hall mechanical systems, , a representative from Facilities Management trades would provide access and escort to the Ford penthouse and roof.
 - If group access is not associated with a publicized event (e.g. scheduled class or “Star Gazing”), best practice would be to ensure that Public Safety or administrative staff (e.g. departmental admin assistants) are aware of the access.
- **As a general rule, Smith College students are not permitted access to the roof without an accompanying faculty or staff member. There are two exceptions:**
 - Trained Astronomy TAs may supervise students in their assigned classes during labs, conduct other coursework, and lead approved groups on the McConnell roof.
 - Trained Astronomy student researchers (e.g. special studies, honors thesis, AEMES, STRIDE) may pursue astronomy research projects on the McConnell roof without faculty supervision.
 - An Astronomy faculty member is responsible for supervising access arrangements (including giving safety instructions, requesting card access

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- and making sure that guidelines for access are adhered to by Astronomy TAs, student researchers, and other students).
- Trained Astronomy TAs may work unaccompanied on the McConnell roof to prepare materials and facilities for their assigned classes.
 - Trained Astronomy TAs and student researchers may not lead groups on their own.
 - Trained Astronomy TAs, student researchers, and their faculty supervisors will adopt additional safety practices:¹
 - TAs and student researchers will always carry a cell phone when working on the roof.
 - If going to the McConnell roof unaccompanied, the Astronomy TA or student researcher will sign a log in the Astronomy TAs room.
 - The Astronomy department will maintain a list of all trained Astronomy TAs, student researchers, and any other students who have a key to the Astronomy TA office (where one key to the roof is kept).
- **As a general rule, roof access to Ford is not permitted in inclement weather.**
 - There may be occasions when Facilities Management or other authorized key holders may need to access the roof during inclement weather for maintenance or precautionary measures. Suitable care should be taken, after an appropriate assessment of risks, if access in inclement weather is necessary.
 - Smith faculty and staff may not borrow roof key(s) from the designated key holders for Ford during inclement weather. If there is any question about what constitutes “inclement weather,” the Science Center Administrative Director will clarify after consultation with Public Safety or other college safety staff.
 - **Minors who are not Smith College undergraduates may go to the roof only if part of a visit associated with a regular Smith College class (e.g. if Northampton HS student taking a Smith class), program (e.g. SSEP), or pre-arranged public stargazing session or tour led by a Smith college faculty or staff member or trained Astronomy TA.**
 - Groups of minors on Ford roof (including SSEP classes and the like) are only permitted to visit the roof if supervised in the ratio 1 adult to 4 minors and all supervising adults must have been briefed in advance about hazards and safety considerations. In the case of McConnell roof, groups of minors with an astronomy directive, such as SSEP or visiting school classes, must be given safety instructions before visiting the Observatory.
 - Minors aged 8 or younger may visit the roof only if accompanied by an adult responsible for supervising that child (typically, a parent or relative).

¹ There are several additional safety precautions proposed for the McConnell roof. An emergency phone is added to the McConnell roof. A sign is added to the roof access door “Welcome to the McConnell Rooftop Observatory” with brief reminders of the main safety rules: keep on the wooden platform, do not approach the edge of the roof, ensure the door is locked behind you when you leave; all minors must be accompanied by a supervising adult.