

Connecticut College Arboretum

Teaching Support Policy

The Connecticut College Arboretum Mission Statement specifies seven topics or areas of activity: Teaching, Research, Conservation, Plant Collections, Cultural Resource Stewardship, Public Education and Recreation. Policies provide history, context, management guidance and goals for Arboretum staff, College community and others. The portion of the mission related to teaching is:

“To provide outdoor teaching, laboratory and performance space for use by faculty and students in all college departments and programs. In both teaching and research, the Arboretum is a unique and valuable academic resource and support facility”

Since before the Arboretum’s official establishment in 1931, the college property that is now the Native Plant Collection and the Bolleswood Natural Area was owned by the college beginning in 1911 and utilized by the campus community for teaching and recreation. When the Arboretum’s first mission statement was formalized in 1990, it was a simple task to articulate the traditional activities and uses that had been under way for decades. The Arboretum evolved as a project of the Botany Department and had always been led by a botany professor. When it became a separate department with a full time administrative director in the early 1990s, it remained within the Academic Division and the director was appointed an adjunct faculty member in the Botany Department. Teaching and research are viewed as top priorities because of the rich history of faculty and student academic use of the Arboretum, and because these activities most directly relate to the College’s mission. Supporting a parent institution’s academic mission, and being administratively embedded in that institution, is what makes college and university arboreta quite different from independent botanical gardens and arboreta.

It is Arboretum policy to invite, support, facilitate, and promote faculty and student academic use of the Arboretum, with the director as the primary liaison. As requested, staff will help determine appropriate locations within Arboretum Natural Areas, Plant Collections (including the New London Hall greenhouse) and Managed Lands for various activities including experiments, demonstrations, observations, collection of living organisms or inorganic samples, performances, art installations, etc. The Arboretum will make staff, information, tools and equipment available as requested and feasible to support these academic activities.

Faculty of any department planning to use the Arboretum for teaching are encouraged to contact the Arboretum Director before the semester begins to ensure space is available and staff support is available to assist with any special needs. Following the semester, any class reports, individual study reports, undergraduate honors thesis, undergraduate thesis or special reports should be shared with the Arboretum office to be included in the cumulative research bibliography. Any faculty publications that utilize the Arboretum shall also be submitted to the Arboretum office.

GOALS

- Create an accessible entrance to the Native Plant Collection and connecting loop trail for the benefit of all students and faculty at the college.
- Continue to find ways to make faculty from all departments aware of the option to utilize the Arboretum in their teaching program.
- Enhance Buck Lodge as an optional teaching and meeting space. Possible projects include winterization (supplemental heat and running water during cold weather); providing college network access; improving pedestrian access to the building entrance door.