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Comprehensive Standard 3.9.1

The institution publishes a clear and appropriate statement of student rights and responsibilities and disseminates that statement to the campus community.

Judgment: Compliant

Response:

The University of South Carolina publishes a clear and appropriate statement of student rights and responsibilities and uses multiple venues to communicate these expectations to students from the time they apply for admission. The rights and responsibilities are found in the Carolina Community, the University's online student handbook, and are linked from numerous other websites to make it easy for students to access the statement and corresponding rules and regulations. The rules and regulations have been developed over the years responding to local, state, and national requirements and standards as well as changes in the campus climate. Importantly, the rights and responsibilities along with the related rules and regulations rest on a foundation of values called the Carolinian Creed that speaks to our expectations for civil behavior by all members of the University community.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

[The Carolinian Creed](http://www.sa.sc.edu/creed/) - <http://www.sa.sc.edu/creed/>

The Carolinian Creed was developed by students, faculty and staff of the University in 1989 to clearly articulate the expectations and values expected of those who choose to join the University community. It was approved by the student senate, faculty senate, Alumni Association and Board of Trustees. The development and subsequent use of the Creed as an educational tool has received national recognition for its effectiveness and support throughout the University community. Students sign the Creed as part of the application process for admission to the University, and it is discussed during Orientation, opening Convocation, University 101 class (a first-year student seminar class designed to help new students make a successful transition to the University), and in residence hall meetings. Campus wide programming is accomplished via Creed Day in the Fall Semester, and Creed Week in the Spring Semester.

[Carolina Community](http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/) - <http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/>

The Carolina Community is the comprehensive online USC Student Handbook and policy guide that outlines student rights and responsibilities and the various policies that support those rights and responsibilities. The specific section on **student rights and freedoms in the academic community** was approved by the student senate, faculty senate and Board of Trustees of the University. Students are made aware of these rights and responsibilities in multiple ways, beginning with their application to the University, orientation sessions, and University 101 classes among others. Additionally, training on the Carolina Community is provided to Resident Mentors and Orientation Leaders, who in turn share information about university policies with students. These **policies** are also listed on the Provost's website.

[Students' Academic Freedom](http://www.sc.edu/policies/staf628.pdf) - <http://www.sc.edu/policies/staf628.pdf>

Academic institutions exist for the transmission of knowledge, the pursuit of truth, the development of students, and the general well being of society. Free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the attainment of these goals. As members of the academic community, students should be encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Institutional procedures for achieving these purposes may vary from campus to campus, but the minimal standards of academic freedom of students outlined below are essential to any community of scholars.

Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facts of academic freedom. The freedom to learn depends upon appropriate opportunities and conditions in the classroom, on the campus, and in the larger community. The University's Academic Freedom Policy provides that student academic performance should be evaluated solely on an academic basis and that students are free to take reasoned exceptions to the data or views offered in any course of study. The policy further provides that students should have protections against prejudiced or capricious academic evaluation.

Students should exercise their freedom with responsibility. The responsibility to secure and to respect general conditions conducive to the freedom to learn is shared by all members of the academic community. The University has developed policies and procedures in the Carolina Community that provide and safeguard this freedom. Such policies and procedures were developed within the framework of the general standards with the broadest possible participation of the members of the academic community.

[Student Orientation](http://orientation.sc.edu/) - <http://orientation.sc.edu/>

During the spring semester, a group of student leaders are trained to discuss information disseminated to new students via the Carolina Community handbook and a variety of other sources. In addition to discussing students rights and responsibilities overall, the orientation leaders also discuss student life, health services, student housing, campus recreation, the honor code, conduct code, judicial programs, student organizations and student governance with our incoming first year students and transfer students during summer orientation and/or orientation sessions held at the beginning of each semester before classes begin.

[Honor Code](http://www.sc.edu/academicintegrity/) - <http://www.sc.edu/academicintegrity/> and <http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/housing.htm#Academic%20Responsibility>

The University adopted the current honor code after a task force of faculty, students and staff spent a year discussing how to increase student and faculty awareness of issues of academic integrity. New students are provided information about the Honor Code at Orientation via a "Personal Responsibility" handout. Information on the Honor code and academic integrity are part of the learning outcomes of University 101, and individual presentations are made to the students in this class.

University of South Carolina Honor Code:

It is the responsibility of every student at the University of South Carolina Columbia to adhere steadfastly to truthfulness and to avoid dishonesty, fraud, or deceit of any type in connection with any academic program. Any student who violates this Honor Code or who knowingly assists another to violate this Honor Code shall be subject to discipline.

Conduct Code – <http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/housing.htm#Student Code of Conduct>

Students at the University of South Carolina are governed by a set of conduct policies that are communicated in multiple ways. New students are provided information about the Code of Conduct at Orientation via a "Personal Responsibility" handout. Also, training about the Conduct Code is provided to Resident Mentors and Orientation Leaders, who then share information about the Code with students. The policies and protocols for responding to violations of the Code are found online in the Carolina Community handbook referenced above.

The Office of Student Judicial Programs (<http://www.housing.sc.edu/osjp/>) is the designated office that provides leadership for educating students about the Conduct Code and the adjudication processes developed for alleged violations of the Code. The office conducts outreach presentations to University 101 classes, Greek Life, Athletics and others on the Code and student rights. The Director of Judicial Affairs, working with USC Law Enforcement & Safety, attends meetings of heads of local law enforcement agencies. The local law enforcement agencies are made aware of the office and its resources along with our expectations for student conduct both on and off campus.

Student Housing Policies - <http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/> and <http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/housing.htm>

All students living on campus agree to the terms and conditions of their housing contract and must certify that they have read the policies pertaining to living on campus prior to submitting their housing application. After students are assigned to a specific room on campus, they must certify again that they have read the policies pertaining to living on campus. Assignments are not complete until students complete this certification by signing and returning their housing contract for the specified academic term. Graduate students and students with dependents who wish to live on campus are provided a hard copy with instructions for accessing the on-line Carolina Community guide book with all housing policies and other student rights and responsibilities. These methods of informing residents about our conduct policies clearly communicate, from the beginning of the housing application process, the departmental expectations for all residents and the community of standards for living on campus.

The Residence Life live-in staff members educate students about student rights and policies. All policies are outlined in handouts distributed from the housing offices in each area of the campus. Meetings are conducted at the beginning of each fall semester to inform students of policies and procedures. Community standards, including policies and procedures, are a component of floor meetings facilitated by Resident Mentors. Full-time and graduate assistant live-in staff members plus the Associate Director and Director of Residence Life adjudicate most violations of student housing policies. These adjudication processes provide students many opportunities to learn about their rights and responsibilities while living on campus.

Student Academic Grievance policies - http://www.sc.edu/policies/facman/Faculty_Manual_Columbia.pdf

Students have a right to file an academic grievance for a violation of the Teaching Responsibility policies contained in the Faculty Manual or a violation of the policies on the Protection of Freedom of Expression or Protection Against Improper Disclosure, as stated in the Carolina Community (<http://www.sc.edu/policies/staf628.pdf>). However, the procedures in the academic grievance policy do not extend to matters of grading student work where the substance of a complaint is simply the student's disagreement with the mark or grade placed on his work. Such matters must be discussed by a student and his or her teacher, with the final grading authority remaining with the teacher.

Student Non-Academic Grievances policy - <http://www.sc.edu/policies/staf627.pdf>

The University of South Carolina is committed to a policy of treating all members of the University Community fairly in regard to their personal and professional concerns. The non-academic grievance procedure is designed to provide students an opportunity to address non-academic complaints and problems that they have not been able to resolve through other channels. The primary objective of the grievance procedure is to insure that concerns are promptly dealt with and resolutions reached in a fair and just manner. It is essential that each student be given an adequate opportunity to bring non-academic complaints and problems to the attention of the University administration with assurance that each will be given fair treatment. The grievance procedure cannot be used for appeals of disciplinary decisions, housing appeals decisions, residency classification decisions, or traffic appeal decisions, or any other type of decision where a clearly defined appeal process has already been established.

The University has a Student Ombudsman who handles non-academic grievances in a fair and impartial manner. Once a student brings a grievance to the attention of the student ombudsman, the ombudsman gathers facts and arranges for the student to meet with the appropriate administrative staff to address the grievance. If the student is unsatisfied with the initial response to their grievance, the ombudsman then arranges for the student to meet with the supervisor of the administrative staff member to further discuss the grievance. If the student considers the grievance to still be unresolved following the meeting of the supervisor, the student can appeal to the Grievance Committee. If the Grievance Committee determines there are sufficient grounds to base the appeal, a hearing of the Grievance Committee will be convened to make a final decision on the original grievance.

Student Government - <http://www.sg.sc.edu/PDF/codes/SG%20Constitution.pdf>

The student body of the University of South Carolina is organized through Student Government (SG) and the Constitution of Student Government. The Executive Branch consists of the elected Student Body President, Vice President, and Treasurer. Members of the Executive Branch are supported by an Executive Staff comprised of the President's Chief of Staff, Deputy Chief of Staff, Communications Director, and Special Assistant to the President, as well as the Vice President's Chief of Staff, Sergeant at Arms, Clerk, and Parliamentarian. The role of the Executive Branch is to develop the strategic vision for SG and to ensure that the daily operations of the Cabinet

and Senate are quickly and effectively executed. The Executive Branch is deeply engaged in addressing student concerns and current university issues.

In addition to the Executive Branch, students elect senators to represent colleges and department constituents as the legislative arm of SG. The Vice President of SG serves as the presiding officer of the Student Senate. The Senate has the opportunity to pass legislation in all non-academic areas. Legislation addresses issues that range from the allocation of funding to university administrative policy. The legislation must first be filed with the Senate Clerk who presents the document to the Rules Committee (made up of the committee chairs) which then votes on the question of whether the legislation should be sent to the floor of the full Senate. If the Senate votes to pass the legislation (presuming it is a bill, not a resolution), it is sent to the desks of the Student Body President and the University President. The Student Body President's signature may be overturned by a two-thirds vote of the Senate, but the University President's veto is binding.

The Senate is comprised of 50 Senators and 10 committees. Student Senators take office upon inauguration in March. The first Senate meeting occurs within one or two weeks. Vacancies left by retiring senators are filled through the processes regulated by the Powers & Responsibilities Committee of the Student Senate. Students interested in applying for vacant seats fill out an application.

The Student Government Constitutional Council operates as the Judicial Branch of Student Government. The Council consists of four Associate Justices and one Chief Justice who are nominated by the President of the Student Body and appointed by the Senate. Their duties include handling constitutional challenges, election appeals, and impeachments. Each governing body (Executive, Legislative, and Judicial) is governed by the SG Constitution which articulates the rights and responsibilities for each group and specific positions.

Student Organizations - <http://www.sa.sc.edu/studentorgs/index.shtml>

Student Organizations are the heart of the University of South Carolina. Students on Carolina's campus have created groups with interests ranging from the appreciation of techno music to playing winter sports, from politics to dance, and from foreign language to community service. With over 300 registered student organizations on campus, students are encouraged to find one that meets their interests, or to start one of their own. Each student organization is required to have a constitution outlining the purpose and procedures for the organization as well as a faculty or staff advisor and officers that are in good academic standing with the University. Student organizations can use University facilities and apply for student activity funding.

Student Disability Services - <http://www.sa.sc.edu/sds/policies.htm>

At the University of South Carolina, academically qualified individuals with disabilities have an equal opportunity and access to a high quality college education. The Office of Student Disability Services provides services and accommodations to meet the varying needs of students with disabilities at the University, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended. The professionally trained staff works to make all University programs, services and activities accessible. The policies presented online are in addition to the University's overall student rights and responsibilities which govern all students with or without a disability.

Student Health Services - <http://www.sa.sc.edu/shs/rights.shtml>

The University of South Carolina's Student Health Services places the highest priority and takes great pride in our dedication to treat patients with respect, consideration and dignity. Patients are provided with appropriate privacy and disclosures, and their records are treated confidentially as required by law. Patients are given the opportunity to approve or refuse the release of their records, and they are also provided with the most complete information possible concerning their diagnosis, evaluation, treatment and prognosis. When it is medically inadvisable to give such information to a patient, the information is provided to a person designated by the patient or to a legally authorized person.

Prior to receiving care, patients are informed of their rights and responsibilities. The Statement of Patient Rights and Responsibilities is available through the Student Health Services' web site, and is in compliance with the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC) and the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The Statement of Patient Rights and Responsibilities also delineates patient and provider conduct. A brochure outlining these rights and responsibilities is distributed to patients utilizing student health clinical services (http://www.sa.sc.edu/shs/NOP_Brochure_2007.pdf).

Alcohol and Drug Policies - <http://www.sa.sc.edu/adp/index.htm> or <http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/a&d.htm#Alcohol&DrugPrograms>.

The University of South Carolina is concerned with both the welfare of the University community and the academic and personal development of each student. The University strives to create a healthy environment where the illegal and/or improper use of drugs does not interfere with learning, performance or development. Abuse of drugs disrupts this environment and places the lives and well-being of the members of the University community, as well as the potential for students to contribute to society, at risk. It is important for all members of the University community to take responsibility for preventing the illegal and/or improper use of drugs from negatively affecting the community's learning environment, and the academic, physical and emotional well-being of its students.

In accordance with federal requirements, each student receives information on alcohol and drugs. Additionally, all students under the age of 23 are required to complete an on-line alcohol education program and pass a test based on the material presented. University 101 classes and other venues are used to re-enforce the policies and healthy practices regarding drugs and alcohol to all students throughout the year.

Computer and Network Access and Use - <http://www.uts.sc.edu/network/guidelines.shtml>.

The University's technology services (UTS) publishes student guidelines for responsible computing. Topics covered include authorized access, privacy, harassment, and other related statutes such as copyright and the reasonable use of the University's network and bandwidth.

International Student Services - <http://www.sa.sc.edu/iss/>

Students from more than 100 countries around the world come to USC to pursue their educational goals. New international students are provided with a specialized comprehensive orientation program, offered at the beginning of both fall and spring semester. While the student rights and responsibilities for the University cover international students as well, these students also are subject to immigration, visa, and other state and federal requirements.

An electronic newsletter provides information to international students on an ongoing basis, and programs regarding immigration related topics are offered throughout the year.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) –
http://registrar.sc.edu/pdf/notification_of_student_rights_2008.pdf .

Students' educational records are protected under the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Notification of student rights under FERPA is provided in the University's academic bulletins.

Emergency Communications – www.sc.edu/carolinaalert

The University of South Carolina uses an automated local emergency response technology known as the Carolina ALERT system for all current students, faculty and staff. Carolina ALERT notifies system subscribers about severe emergencies or life threatening situations. The University may also provide detailed emergency communications and updates at the USC Carolina ALERT Web site. By using the Carolina ALERT system, students agree to provide accurate, current and complete information about themselves, update their subscription data to maintain its accuracy, assume personal responsibility during an emergency, comply with Carolina ALERT messages and instructions, and evacuate to a safe area away from danger and take protective cover. Students also agree to follow instructions of law enforcement or university officials and support others to do the same, share accurate emergency instruction with others, and provide assistance for those with disabilities.

Student's Freedom of Inquiry and Expression - <http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/rights.htm>

Students and student organizations are free to examine and to discuss all questions of interest to them and to express opinions publicly and privately. They are also free to support causes by lawful and orderly means which do not disrupt the regular and essential operation of the University and which do not interfere with the rights of others. At the same time, it should be made clear to the academic and larger community that in their public expressions or demonstrations, students or organizations speak only for themselves.

Students are allowed to invite and to hear any person of their own choosing subject to those routine procedures provided for off-campus speakers. These procedures are designed to insure that there is orderly scheduling of facilities and adequate preparation for the event, that the occasion is conducted in a manner appropriate to an academic community, and that the safety of individuals, the University, and the community are not endangered. While the University is properly concerned with the prevention of unlawful conduct, the institutional control of campus facilities is not used as a device of censorship of ideas. It should be made clear to the academic and larger community that sponsorship of guest speakers does not necessarily imply approval or endorsement of the views expressed, either by the sponsoring group or the institution.

Student Publications – <http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/rights.htm>

Student publications and the student press are valuable aids in establishing and maintaining an atmosphere of free and responsible discussion and of intellectual exploration on the campus. They are means of bringing student concerns to the attention of the faculty and the institutional authorities and of formulating student opinions on various issues on the campus and in the world at large. Student publications are also used as a vehicle to inform students about their rights and responsibilities.

In the delegation of editorial responsibility to students, the University provides sufficient editorial freedom and sufficient financial autonomy for the student publications to maintain their integrity of purpose as vehicles for free inquiry and free expression in an academic community. The editorial freedom of student editors and managers entails corollary responsibilities to be governed by the canons of responsible journalism, such as the avoidance of libel, indecency, undocumented allegations, attacks on personal integrity, and the techniques of harassment and innuendo.

Freedom of Access to Higher Education - <http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/rights.htm>

The admissions policies of the University are a matter of institutional choice provided that the University makes clear the characteristics and expectations of the students which it considers relevant to success in the institutional program. Under no circumstances is a student barred from admission on the basis of race, creed, sex, handicap, religion, ancestry, or national origin. Thus, within the limits of its facilities, the University is open to all students who are qualified according to its admission standards.

Regional Campuses

Each Regional Campus publishes, in written and electronic form, student rights and responsibilities statements. Each campus locates and disseminates this information as is best for its unique structure and student body. The following conveys information salient to each campus.

USC Lancaster

USC Lancaster frames its expectation of students with the **Carolinian Creed**. From this global, foundation statement of expectations, the Lancaster campus in its **Student Handbook**, provides a Code of Student Conduct (pp. 21-35), and a Code of Student/Faculty Handbook (pp. 51-53). Both codes address expectations and procedures for addressing non-compliance. Additionally, the **USC Lancaster Academic Bulletin** provides a Student Conduct Statement.

USC Salkehatchie

USC Salkehatchie adheres to the **Carolinian Creed**. The Salkehatchie campus addresses, in its **Academic Bulletin**, the following areas regarding student expectations and regulations: Student Academic Responsibility, Rights and Freedoms, Freedom of Access, Classroom freedoms, Student Records, Student Affairs freedoms, Off Campus Freedoms, Procedural Standards in Disciplinary Proceedings (which includes a Code of Student Conduct), and General Conduct Regulations.

USC Sumter

USC Sumter adheres to the **Carolinian Creed**, in the USC Sumter **Student Handbook**. The handbook also addresses **Student Rights and Freedoms** (pp. 11-12), rights pertaining to **Inquiry and Expression** (pp. 16-17), and the **Code of Student Conduct** (with procedures) (pp. 24-30).

USC Union

USC Union adheres to the **Carolinian Creed**. Union addresses the following areas of student rights and responsibilities in its **Academic Bulletin**: Student Rights and Responsibilities, Code of Student Conduct, Code of Academic Conduct, Penalties, and Grievance Procedures. Dissemination of this information by each campus is accomplished during orientation programs and by referring students to this information on an individual basis.

Supporting Documentation:

Description	Source
Rights	
The Carolinian Creed	http://www.sa.sc.edu/creed/
Carolina Community	http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/
Student Rights and Freedoms	http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/rights.htm
Sumter	http://ipr.sc.edu/pdf/SumterHandbook.pdf#Rights
Student Health Services	http://www.sa.sc.edu/shs/rights.shtml
Student's Freedom of Inquiry and Expression	http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/rights.htm
Sumter	http://ipr.sc.edu/pdf/SumterHandbook.pdf#Inquiry
Student Publication	http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/rights.htm
Freedom of Access to Higher Education	http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/rights.htm
Student Life	
Lancaster	http://bulletin.usclancaster.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=2362
Salkehatchie	http://bulletin.uscsalkehatchie.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=20&navoid=2356
Union	http://bulletin.uscunion.sc.edu/
Codes	
Honor Code	http://www.sc.edu/academicintegrity/
Posted on Housing Website	http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/housing.htm#Academic%20Responsibility
Conduct Code	http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/housing.htm#Student Code of Conduct
Lancaster	http://usclancaster.sc.edu/studentlife/2009-2010StudentHandbook.pdf
Student Conduct Statement	http://bulletin.usclancaster.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=2362
Sumter	http://ipr.sc.edu/pdf/SumterHandbook.pdf#Conduct
Student Government Codes	http://www.sg.sc.edu/PDF/codes/SG%20Constitution.pdf
Policies	
Students Rights and Freedoms	http://www.sc.edu/policies/policiesbydivision.php#STAF
Academic Freedom, STAF 6.28	http://www.sc.edu/policies/staf628.pdf
Student Housing	http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/ or http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/housing.htm
Academic Grievances	http://www.sc.edu/policies/facman/Faculty_Manual_Columbia.pdf
Non-Academic Grievances	http://www.sc.edu/policies/staf627.pdf
Alcohol and Drug Policies	http://www.sa.sc.edu/adp/index.htm or http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/a&d.htm#Alcohol&DrugPrograms
Student Disability Services	http://www.sa.sc.edu/sds/policies.htm
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)	http://registrar.sc.edu/pdf/notification_of_student_rights_2008.pdf
Notice of Privacy Practices	http://www.sa.sc.edu/shs/NOP_Brochure_2007.pdf
Computer and Network Access and Use	http://www.uts.sc.edu/network/guidelines.shtml
Offices, Organizations, Programs	
Student Orientation	http://orientation.sc.edu/
The Office of Student Judicial Programs	http://www.housing.sc.edu/osjp/
Student Organizations	http://www.sa.sc.edu/studentorgs/index.shtml
International Student Services	http://www.sa.sc.edu/iss/
Emergency Communications	www.sc.edu/carolinaalert

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