



University of South Carolina



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
SACS

South Carolina's Flagship University

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**Comprehensive Standard 3.2.4**

**The governing board is free from undue influence from political, religious, or other external bodies, and protects the institution from such influence.**

**Judgment:** Compliant

**Response:**

South Carolina State Code of Laws regarding the ethical behavior of public officials and the access and allowable interactions of public officials with external constituents, coupled with the manner in which Board members are selected ensure that the Board is free from undue influence.

As stated in the narrative addressing Comprehensive Standard 3.2.4, the University of South Carolina Board of Trustees members are public officials, and must therefore abide by the South Carolina Code of Laws. In particular, **Section 8-13-700** specifies conflict of interest situations that are prohibited. Board members must also follow the South Carolina State Ethics Commission **Rules of Conduct**. The Rules of Conduct further delineate the expected ethical conduct of public officials, and also specify the penalty for misconduct: "Anyone who is found guilty of violating these rules is subject to prosecution by the State Ethics Commission and the Attorney General's Office."

Also, each member of the Board of Trustees is required to file the **State of South Carolina State Ethics Committee Statement of Economic Interest form** with the State to ensure that there are no known external conflicts of interest for these members. Please refer to **Comprehensive Standard 3.2.3**.

If a possible conflict of interest arises, it must be reported as specified in Board of Trustees Policy **BTRU 1.18**:

In circumstances in which it is necessary and in the best interests of the University for any University official to conduct business with the University, the University official shall report in writing such business activities to the Internal Auditor of the University with a full description of the nature of such activities and the full amount of compensation and/or remuneration received.

As discussed in the narrative addressing Core Requirement 2.2, the Board consists of 20 members. The Governor (or his designee), the State Superintendent of Education, and the President of the Greater University of South Carolina Alumni Association which three members shall be ex officio members of the Board, and seventeen other members, including one from each of the sixteen judicial circuits, elected by the general vote of the General Assembly as hereinafter provided, and one at-large member appointed by the Governor. The Governor shall make the appointment based on merit regardless of race, color, creed or gender and shall strive to assure that the membership of the Board is representative of all citizens of the State of South Carolina.

The Secretary of the University Board of Trustees meets with all newly elected/appointed Board of Trustees members prior to the start of their terms, to provide a **New Board of Trustees Orientation**. New members are provided a copy of the Board of Trustees By-laws, the Board of Trustees Policies and Procedures, the current Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule, and a copy of the State Ethics Commission Rules of Conduct.

**Supporting Documentation:**

Source	Location
<b>State of South Carolina</b>	
Section 8-13-700, <i>et seq.</i>	<a href="http://www.scstatehouse.net/code/t08c013.htm">http://www.scstatehouse.net/code/t08c013.htm</a>
State Ethics Commission Rules of Conduct	<a href="http://ethics.sc.gov/rulesofconduct/">http://ethics.sc.gov/rulesofconduct/</a>
State Ethics Committee Statement of Economic Interests form	<a href="http://ethics.sc.gov/economicinterests/">http://ethics.sc.gov/economicinterests/</a>
<b>University Policies &amp; Procedures Manual</b>	
Board of Trustees BTRU Policy 118	<a href="http://www.sc.edu/policies/btru118.pdf">http://www.sc.edu/policies/btru118.pdf</a>
<b>University of South Carolina</b>	
New Board of Trustees Orientation	<a href="http://ipr.sc.edu/pdf/BOTOrientation.pdf">http://ipr.sc.edu/pdf/BOTOrientation.pdf</a>

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