



APPENDIX II

Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities

Preamble

Students, faculty, and administrative officials at USC, as members of the academic community, fulfill a purpose and a responsibility. The purpose is the humane and critical examination of major issues of social, political, economic, ethical, and aesthetic importance which have in the past confronted, and which will in the coming years constantly confront, the society as a whole.

The responsibility is to understand the spectrum of viewpoints on an issue, and, equally, to be actively involved in the solution of the problems these issues delineate.

The university must, therefore, provide an optimal learning environment, and all members of the university community have a responsibility to provide and maintain an atmosphere of free inquiry and expression. The relationship of the individual to this community involves these principles:

1. The fundamental human rights of others.
2. The rights of others based upon the nature of the educational process.
3. The rights of the institution.

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PREAMBLE (CONTINUED)

Each member of the campus has the right to organize and maintain their own personal life and behavior, so long as it does not violate the law or agreements voluntarily entered into and does not interfere with the rights of others or the educational process.

Each member has the right to identify themselves as a member of the campus but has a concurrent obligation not to speak or act on behalf of the institution without authorization. Every member of the academic community shall enjoy the rights of free speech, peaceful assembly, and the right of petition.

Relationship to the Institution

Student Participation in the University Government

As members of the academic community, students are free, individually and collectively, to express their views on issues of university policy and on matters of interest to the student body. The student body shall have clearly defined means to participate in the formation and application of university policy affecting academic and student affairs. The actions of the student government within the areas of its jurisdiction shall be reviewed only through orderly, prescribed procedures. Students shall maintain professional standards of discretion concerning information gained about other students and members of the academic community in the course of active participation in university affairs.

Student Right to Be Informed

All students shall have the right of free access to statements of policy which affect the student body. The university shall have the corresponding responsibility to publish or in other ways make known those policies which vitally affect students.

Financial Matters

Students have a right to a full statement of tuition and fees for which they are liable and to be informed, as extensively as possible, as to how such monies are spent. Fees which students, through the student government, impose on themselves, shall be allocated by students within governmental and university policies and regulations.





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RELATIONSHIP TO THE INSTITUTION (CONTINUED)

Political Activity

Students have the same rights as any individual to engage in political activity either individually or in groups. However, the university will not permit its name or emblems to be used by any person in connection with a campaign, or its campus, facilities, or equipment to be used for campaign activities. Nothing in this policy statement is intended to prohibit candidates or others from making public addresses on campus pursuant to campus policies and procedures or the traditional activities of recognized campus organizations.

Utilization of Campus Facilities

The university has the responsibility to provide students the use of

campus facilities according to campus regulations. The university reserves the right to prohibit individuals and groups who are not members of the campus from using its name, finances, or physical and operating facilities for commercial activities.

Authorized Search of University Premises

In university-controlled housing and offices, the university reserves the right to have its authorized agents or employees enter the premises to make necessary inspection for services, maintenance, and repairs. Authorized agents or employees may enter the premises any time for the security of resident(s) or for other emergency reasons.

Student/Faculty Relations

Because the university is essentially an academic community in which students and faculty are co-participants, both must conduct themselves in a manner conducive to the welfare of such a community and to the free interchange of information and ideas without which that community cannot exist. The nourishment of that sense of community bestows certain rights and responsibilities upon the members of that community.

Rights

- **Protection of Freedom of Expression.** Students shall be free to take reasoned exception to the data or view offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion. As



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RELATIONSHIP TO THE INSTITUTION (CONTINUED)

students are free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study, so students are expected to respect the intellectual views of faculty and the reasoned process of academic debate.

- **The Importance of Teaching.** Teaching plays a primary role in the advancement of learning. Therefore, students have a legitimate concern about the nature and quality of instruction, and their evaluation of teaching shall be a criterion considered in faculty promotion and tenure. Students should know that faculty are required to meet with their classes as part of their academic responsibility (see the Faculty Handbook, <https://policy.usc.edu/faculty-handbook/>). Freedom to teach and to learn implies that faculty members have the right to determine the specific content of their courses, within the established course definitions, and the responsibility not to depart significantly from their areas of competence or to divert significant time to material extraneous to the subject matter of their courses.
- **Protection Against Improper Disclosure.** Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudiced or capricious academic evaluation. The method of grading by professors shall be made known to students. Students can expect that faculty will be willing to explain and discuss any grade, and students have the right to appeal any grade. (See “Selected Academic Policies,” and the Faculty Handbook at <https://policy.usc.edu/faculty-handbook/>.)

- **Assurance of Accessibility.** Because the interchange of ideas between student and professor is of the utmost importance, and because such interchanges are often most productive informally, the university shall provide for student access to members of the faculty in appropriate settings outside the classroom.

Responsibilities

- **Freedom of Expression.** As students are free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study, so students are expected to respect the intellectual views of faculty and the reasoned process of academic debate.
- **The Importance of Teaching.** As faculty are required to meet with their classes, students are expected to attend classes and to observe courtesy toward their instructors and their fellow students.





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RELATIONSHIP TO THE INSTITUTION (CONTINUED)

- **Standard of Performance.** Students share responsibility for maintaining standards of academic performance and classroom conduct conducive to the learning process. It is the responsibility of the student to uphold the academic integrity of the university. Cheating on examinations, plagiarism, improper acknowledgment of sources in essays, and the use of a single essay in more than one course are considered very serious offenses and shall be grounds for disciplinary action.
- **Student Participation in Faculty Evaluation.** In faculty evaluation, students have the responsibility to perform such evaluation according to academic criteria and not on the basis of opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic performance.



Student Affairs

As members of the academic community, students bring to the campus a variety of interests. They shall be free to organize and join campus associations to promote their common interests.

Freedom of Inquiry and Expression

Students and student organizations shall be free to examine and discuss all questions of interest to them and to express opinions publicly and privately. They shall be free to support causes by all orderly means, which do not disrupt or substantially interfere with the regular and essential operations and activities of the university, since such disruption or substantial interference violates the responsible exercise of free inquiry and expression. Students and organizations shall make it clear to the academic and larger communities that in their public expressions they speak only for themselves.

Students believing that their right to freedom of inquiry and expression has been abridged may present the issue to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. (See [*Appendix IV: Free Expression.*](#))

The distribution of literature is an integral part of expression and of support for a cause. Rules governing such distribution shall ensure the maximum degree of freedom, which is consistent with the regular and orderly operations of the university and the rights of students. (See the policy on [*Advertising, Promotion/Publicity, and Literature Distribution.*](#))



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STUDENT AFFAIRS (CONTINUED)

Student Participation in Student Governments

The Undergraduate Student Government and the Graduate Student Government are the official representative student governments of USC with power to make studies, reports, and recommendations to the president of the university in any and all matters pertaining to the well-being of the student body. The role of the student government within the areas of its jurisdiction shall be reviewed by the university administration only through orderly procedures and channels.

Student Publications

The university shall provide editorial freedom for student publications to maintain their integrity as vehicles for free inquiry and free expression in the academic community. The editorial freedom of student editors and managers entails a responsibility to abide by the canons of responsible journalism. Libel, indecency, undocumented allegations, attacks on personal integrity and the techniques of harassment and innuendo shall be considered violation of those canons. As safeguards for the editorial freedom of student publications, the following provisions are guaranteed:

- i. The student press shall be free of censorship and advance copy approval, and its editors and managers shall be free to develop their own editorial policies and patterns of news coverage.
- ii. All university-published and/or -financed student publications shall state explicitly on the editorial page that the opinions

expressed are not those of the university or its student body as a whole.

- iii. Editors and managers of student publications shall be protected from arbitrary suspension and removal because of student, faculty, administrative or public disapproval of editorial policy or content. Only for proper and stated causes can editors be subject to removal, and then by orderly and prescribed procedures.

Freedom of Association

- i. The university has the right to recognize student organizations and to withdraw recognition for failure to abide by campus regulations and federal, state and municipal laws and regulations.





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STUDENT AFFAIRS (CONTINUED)

- ii. Student organizations shall be allowed to invite and to hear any person of their choosing in accordance with recognized university speaker procedures, required by the university before the guest speaker is invited to appear on campus. Such procedures shall be designed only to ensure that there is orderly scheduling of facilities and adequate preparation for the event. Control of campus facilities shall not be used as a device of censorship. Sponsoring organizations shall make clear to the academic and larger communities that sponsorship of guest speakers does not imply approval or endorsement of the views presented, either by the sponsoring group or the university.
- iii. The membership, policies and action of a student organization shall generally be determined by a vote of only those persons who are bona fide members of the university community and of that organization.
- iv. Affiliation with an extramural organization shall not of itself disqualify a student organization from university recognition.
- v. When student organizations are encouraged to have advisors, or when campus advisors are required, each organization shall be free to choose its own advisor. Institutional recognition shall not be withheld or withdrawn solely because of the inability of a student organization to obtain an advisor, except where advisors are required. Campus advisors may advise organizations in carrying out their responsibilities, but they shall not have the authority to control the policies or finances of such organizations.
- vi. Student organizations, including those affiliated with an extramural

organization, shall be open to all students without respect to race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion (except for those religious qualifications which may be specified by organizations whose aims are primarily sectarian), sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. (Consult the [Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX](#) for the provisions of Title VI and IX.)

- vii. Student organizations capable of maintaining financial autonomy shall be allowed to do so. Provision by the university for handling budgets and accounts, banking and other financial services shall in no way indicate a prerogative on the part of the university to control funds, except through prescribed procedures designed to redress justified grievances or uphold university regulations.
- viii. Student organizations, in consultation and coordination with the university, may publicize their events and solicit participation in them from the university and outside community. (See [Recognized Student Organizations](#).)

(Portions of this section excerpted from the AAUP's Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students)

Adopted by the Board of Trustees, subject to the resolution on Power of the Board. It has been updated to reflect current policies.



APPENDIX III

Information and Resources Concerning Substance Use

The illegal or abusive use of alcohol and/or other drugs by members of the university community has a detrimental effect on the university's commitment to provide continual excellence in teaching, research, and education. Misuse of drugs by students, faculty, and staff members poses hazards both to the individual involved and to the community. Students, faculty, and staff share the responsibility for creating attitudes conducive to eliminating the abuse of alcohol and other drugs within the university community.

USC's comprehensive approach to addressing substance abuse emphasizes:

- Taking effective steps to create and maintain a drug-free workplace and educational environment for students, faculty, and staff.
- Providing continual prevention, education, and counseling services along with referrals to off-campus treatment facilities as appropriate.
- Engaging in a robust health promotion process that includes reorienting all sectors towards prevention, the development of personal skills and systemic environmental management.