

# **Living Our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook**

*Effective Date: August 29, 2024*

## **USC Mission**

The central mission of the University of Southern California is the development of human beings and society as a whole through the cultivation and enrichment of the human mind and spirit. The principal means by which our mission is accomplished are teaching, research, artistic creation, professional practice and selected forms of public service.

## **USC Unifying Values**

We act with *integrity* in the pursuit of *excellence*.

We embrace *diversity, equity and inclusion* and promote *well-being*.

We engage in *open communication* and are *accountable* for living our Values.

## **A Message from USC President Dr. Carol Folt**

Dear Trojan Students,

We are delighted to have you as part of our Trojan family. Your USC journey will be one filled with discovery, friendship and enrichment. We are committed to providing the learning environment that will help you become independent thinkers and engaged citizens. We are equally dedicated to a culture of ethics and responsibility at USC.

The **Living Our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook** describes the rights, responsibilities, and obligations you have as a student member of this community and what you can anticipate from USC in upholding our expectations. I hope that you will familiarize yourself with this helpful resource as you navigate through your student experience.

Please know how grateful I am to you for living our Unifying Values each and every day and for your willingness to commit to and understand all that this handbook offers.

Fight On!

*Carol L. Folt*  
President

## A Message from the Vice President for Student Life

Dear Trojan Students,

As members of the USC community, we strive to live as our whole selves, [matching our values](#) to our actions. We embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion, promote well-being, and engage in open communication in pursuit of excellence.

You play a role in shaping the USC student experience for yourself and your fellow Trojans. Together, we can create and maintain a healthy, safe, and welcoming community where we all can thrive.

The [USC Student Commitment](#) describes the responsibilities we share as a Trojan Family. When every student embraces the commitment in a way that is meaningful to them, it gives us shared language, binds us together as a community, and offers us guidance when confronting complex challenges.

We encourage you to carefully review the student policies, community expectations, and resources. If you have any questions about our community expectations or the disciplinary process, the [Office of Community Expectations](#) and the [Office of Academic Integrity](#) are available to assist you.

Fight On!

*Monique S. Allard, Ed.D.*  
Vice President for Student Life

## **A Message from the Vice Provost for Academic Programs and Dean of the Graduate School**

Dear Trojan Students,

USC is committed to creating a Trojan culture of ethical decision-making, respect, honesty, and responsibility, and fostering and supporting these behaviors in our students and faculty.

Academic Integrity is a foundational principle of the university. The knowledge that USC students earn their degrees through their own efforts, using their own research, discoveries, and powers of insight is what gives a USC degree its value in the world. To engage in academic dishonesty, or to fail to challenge it when you see it taking place, fundamentally devalues a USC degree for all Trojan students and alumni.

The [Office of Academic Integrity](#) is a student-centered office dedicated to educating and training students and faculty on how to best uphold the values of academic integrity to which we aspire. The office is not about penalties and sanctions (although these exist) but corrective actions, teachable moments, and supporting the community to be our best selves. We promise to resolve cases promptly, efficiently, and with the sensitivity this work requires.

Questions about academic information contained in this Handbook apart from academic integrity may be directed to the Office of the Provost by contacting (213) 740-2101 or [uscprovost@usc.edu](mailto:uscprovost@usc.edu), or by visiting Suite 102 in the Bovard Administration Building on the University Park Campus.

Fight On!

*Andrew McConnell Stott, Ph.D.*

Vice Provost for Academic Programs and Dean of the Graduate School

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# Integrity and Accountability

## STUDENT COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

As an academic community, the University of Southern California (USC) seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment for all students. The university protects its educational environment by establishing and maintaining standards of conduct for its students as individuals and as members of groups, implementing processes for addressing allegations of student misconduct in a fair and caring way. These standards reflect the very nature of an academic community and are reinforced through [USC's Integrity and Accountability Code](#), tying all that we do to our mission and [Unifying Values](#).

Students are expected to make themselves aware of and abide by the university community's standards of behavior as articulated in this student handbook, in the [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#), and in related policy statements. Students accept the rights and responsibilities of membership in the USC community when they are admitted to the university. In almost all cases at the university, as elsewhere, ignorance will not withstand scrutiny as an acceptable justification for violating community standards. Similarly, lack of intent is not a valid explanation for violating them.

Students play a vital role in creating a healthy and safe community at USC. To that end, students are expected to not merely be bystanders when a violation of university policy is occurring. Rather, they should actively engage with their peers to prevent or stop the misconduct, notify an appropriate university official, and/or remove themselves from the situation and seek help. Being a student at USC means taking responsibility for oneself and recognizing a broader responsibility to other students and the USC community at large.

Because the functions of a university depend on honesty and integrity among its members, the university expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid disciplinary action. Likewise, while many of the university's standards of conduct parallel the laws of society in general, USC's standards may exceed those found elsewhere in society.

Activities of students may result in violation of law, and students who violate any law may incur penalties prescribed by law enforcement authorities. However, the university reserves the right to review such incidents independent of action by civil or criminal authorities, recognizing that the university's authority and its disciplinary process serve its educational mission and interest, a function separate from action by civil or criminal authorities.

The university's function with reference to student conduct differs from the community's function in method as well as scope. Recognizing its role in developing a sense of responsibility in students, the university uses informal and formal processes to address student misconduct, focusing on educational outcomes. Although every USC student is presumed to have sufficient maturity, intelligence, and concern for the rights of others to help maintain the standards of the academic community, when a student's behavior demonstrates otherwise, the university will consider disciplinary action as appropriate.



The general principles set forth above and the specific policies that follow below in the form of prohibited conduct are intended to provide clear guidelines for students as to what is expected of them as members of the university community, to inform students of types of conduct that may result in university disciplinary action, and to reinforce USC's [Unifying Value of accountability](#)—taking responsibility for our decisions and actions, especially when they are contrary to USC's values. While this student handbook articulates violations that are most common and readily identifiable, other conduct violating university community standards (including violations of local ordinances and state and federal laws) that is not specifically mentioned may still be subject to disciplinary action. Students who are found responsible for violating university policy may face outcomes as described in this handbook.

## Student Commitment

As Trojans, we always conduct ourselves in alignment with USC's [Unifying Values](#) – which were created cooperatively by students, faculty, staff, and administration to reflect the unique spirit of our community and to guide us in our actions, interactions, and ethical decision-making every day, on campus and off.

**In making this commitment, together we build and strengthen the culture of USC.**

- We act with **integrity** in all situations.
- We work to foster a safe, civil, and equitable campus environment where **well-being** matters.
- We treat each other with respect, even when we have differences.
- We are **accountable** for our actions and decisions.
- We believe that **diversity** - of experiences, cultures, identities, and perspectives - is a cornerstone of our community.
- We value honest, **open communication** and robust debate.
- We strive for **excellence** in rigorous learning and in all scholarly, scientific, professional, artistic, and athletic endeavors.
- We champion ideological diversity and embrace freedom of expression.
- We refuse to engage in discrimination, harassment and hate in any form and on any platform.
- We avoid taking part in behavior that may be harmful to ourselves or others and offer/seek support if we witness dangerous behavior from our peers.

- We promote a culture in which people do not rush to judge others. Our actions are guided by empathy and grounded in facts and truth.

## **Academic Integrity**

USC's [Unifying Value of integrity](#) is a foundational principle that inspires the community to match its values to its actions. Academic integrity is ultimately the sole guarantor of the legitimacy of one's education, and therefore, is vitally important not just for oneself, but for the entire USC community. The value of all USC degrees is negatively impacted by violations of academic integrity.

In the classroom, general principles of academic integrity include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. Instructors may include additional classroom and assignment policies, as articulated on their syllabus.

Academic Integrity violations (academic dishonesty) include, but are not limited to:

### *Plagiarism*

- The submission of material authored by another but represented as the student's own work, whether that material is paraphrased or copied in verbatim or near-verbatim form.
- Re-using any portion of one's own work (essay, term paper, project, or other assignment) previously submitted without citation of such and without permission of the instructor(s) involved.
- Improper acknowledgment of sources in essays or papers, including drafts. Also, all students involved in collaborative work (as permitted by the instructor) are expected to proofread the work and are responsible for all particulars of the final draft.
- Acquisition of academic work, such as term papers, solutions, or other assignments, from any source and the subsequent presentation of those materials as the student's own work, or providing academic work, such as term papers, solutions, or assignments submitted by another student as their own work.

### *Cheating*

- Submitting material that was substantively drafted or revised by another.
- Any use or attempted use of external assistance in the completion of an academic assignment and/or during an examination; or, any behavior that defeats the intent of an examination or other classwork or assignment, unless expressly permitted by the instructor. Examples of unacceptable behaviors include communicating with fellow students during an exam period; soliciting or providing information about an exam during an exam period; accessing online resources or learning platforms during an exam; copying or attempting to copy material from another student's exam; allowing another student to copy from an exam or assignment; possessing or using unauthorized notes, materials, calculator, cell phone/other device during exams; and/or, removing or sharing without authorization exam materials.

- Submission of work altered after grading shall be considered academically dishonest, including but not limited to changing answers after an exam or assignment has been returned or submitting another's exam as one's own to dispute a grade and/or gain credit.
- Obtaining for oneself or distributing any academic work, such as solutions to homework, a project or other assignment, or a copy of an exam or exam key, without the knowledge and expressed consent of the instructor.
- Unauthorized collaboration on any academic work, such as an exam, a project, homework, or other assignment. Collaboration will be considered unauthorized unless expressly part of the assignment in question or expressly permitted by the instructor.
- Taking a course or completing any coursework or exam for another student, or allowing another individual to take a course, complete coursework or a portion of a course, or exam in one's stead.
- Accessing, altering, and/or using unauthorized information.

#### *Other Violations of Academic Integrity*

- Fabrication: Submitting material for lab assignments, class projects, or other assignments which is wholly or partially falsified, invented, or otherwise does not represent work accomplished or undertaken by the student.
- Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to any information created by another, distributed to students, or displayed for use in relation to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other method. Distributing course material without the instructor's permission will be presumed to be an intentional act to facilitate or enable academic dishonesty and is strictly prohibited. (Also see **Class Notes** on page 38.)
- Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an OSAS accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future and, thus, infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor.
- Failure to comply with protocols, policies, procedures, or instructions as it applies to exams or other academic work.
- Falsification, alteration, or misrepresentation of official or unofficial records or documents including but not limited to academic transcripts, résumés, academic documentation, letters of recommendation, admissions applications, or related documents.
- Any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage may be considered a violation of academic integrity.
- Furnishing false information to any university official, faculty member, or office. This includes but is not limited to furnishing false information in academic petitions or requests, financial aid documents, student employment documents, applications, financial statements or other documents, or intentionally evading university officials and/or obligations to the university. Students are responsible for verifying the accuracy of any information submitted to the university by any third party on their behalf.

- Any attempt to hinder the academic work of another student or any act which may jeopardize another student's academic standing, including but not limited to tearing pages out of a library book, tampering with or removing another student's academic work (either physically or electronically), or manipulating electronic systems to gain an advantage in class registration or other academic status.

## Alcohol

All members of the USC community are expected to abide by all federal, state, and local laws, including those governing alcohol possession, consumption, and distribution. Under California law, it is illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to purchase or consume alcohol or for anyone to possess an open container of alcohol in a public space. It is also illegal for anyone to furnish alcohol to an individual under the age of 21. RSOs are considered in violation of this provision if they do not take reasonable steps to prevent the acquisition or consumption of alcohol by anyone under the age of 21 at their events or in their facilities.

The selling, either directly or indirectly, of alcoholic beverages (including beer and wine) except under the authority of a California Alcoholic Beverage Control Board license is prohibited. This includes selling cups, mixes, ice, tickets for admission, required donations, etc.

The serving of alcohol to an intoxicated person or to the point of intoxication is prohibited.

The following additional provisions regarding alcohol apply:

- The act(s) of being drunk and disorderly in public view, including on public sidewalks and walkways, is prohibited.
- The possession of open alcoholic beverages in a public place (unless licensed for consumption of alcohol on the premises) is prohibited. This includes a prohibition of alcoholic beverages in public areas of academic facilities, recreation fields, university housing corridors, and lounges.
- Operating a motor vehicle, bicycle, skates, skateboard, scooter (or any other coasting device) while under the influence of alcohol is prohibited.
- The possession of an alcoholic beverage in any open container in a motor vehicle, or while operating a bicycle, skates, skateboard, scooter (or any other coasting device) is prohibited regardless of who is driving and whether one is intoxicated.
- Behavior that is disruptive or abusive to others as a result of using alcohol is prohibited.
- Any event being sponsored or hosted by a student, faculty, staff, university-recognized group, department, or office, must get approval to serve alcohol (for additional information, see *Appendix V: Event Planning and Facility Reservation/Use* on p. 71). Serving alcohol at events may require the presence of a Department of Public Safety (DPS) officer. The university may limit the number of alcoholic drinks per person at an event.
- Alcohol is not permitted inside the Coliseum, except that which is available for purchase.
- Being under the influence of alcohol is not an excuse for engaging in prohibited conduct and will not be considered a mitigating circumstance.

## Health and Safety Intervention Policy

At USC, our community cares for one another as described by our [Unifying Value](#) of well-being. Students and RSOs are encouraged to reach out for help when needed, which includes taking immediate action in the case of an emergency. The university wants students and RSOs to seek assistance for themselves and others who are experiencing distress while under the influence of alcohol or other substances. Therefore, students and RSOs who seek medical assistance for themselves or another, by contacting a university official such as a Resident Assistant, or the Department of Public Safety (213-740-4321), or calling 911, will not be held responsible through the USC disciplinary process for their consumption or distribution of alcohol and/or use of other substances. This policy also extends to students for whom help is sought. However, as part of the university's care for students, and to prevent future situations in which students may be harmed, students (and RSO membership as applicable) may be required to complete educational interventions. Failure to complete such interventions may result in administrative holds or disciplinary action by the Office of Community Expectations (OCE). This policy does not apply if a DPS officer, a Resident Assistant, or university staff/faculty member encounters the student before help is requested. This policy also does not preclude disciplinary outcomes due to any other violation of the student handbook beyond alcohol consumption or distribution and/or use of other substances. Should a student/RSO be subsequently found responsible for a violation of any alcohol or drug policy after an incident falling under this provision, the OCE staff member or review panel considering the matter will be informed of the prior application of the Health and Safety Intervention Policy for purposes of determining effective outcome(s). Details regarding the application of the Health and Safety Intervention Policy to students who report potential violations of the [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#) are set forth in that policy.

## Bicycles, Motorcycles, Motorized Scooters, and Coasting Devices

Any person operating a bicycle, motorcycle, motorized scooter, or coasting device on USC property implicitly accepts responsibility for adherence to all state and local laws governing its operation, as well as the policy described in *Appendix VI: Bicycles, Motorcycles, Motorized Scooters, and Coasting Devices* (p.79).

## Computing

Because the use of computers and computing facilities is central to the learning experience at USC, it is important for all students to understand the policies governing the use of computing resources and appropriate behaviors in an electronic community. To that end, the university has developed a set of computing policies for members of the university community regarding electronic communications, the use of computing resources at USC, compliance with the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) and other related topics. Such prohibitions include, but are not limited to, unauthorized access and/or use of university computing systems/network.

All computing policies are available online at <https://policy.usc.edu/acceptable-use/>. Students are expected to read and abide by all policies located at this site and check this page for updates, as these policies are subject to change. All electronic information under this website supersedes all printed computing policies.

Additionally, USC protects its students' rights of free speech and academic freedom on student websites. Because student websites are hosted on official university servers, however, the university automatically places a disclaimer on each student site. The disclaimer reads as follows: "USC does not control the content herein and takes no responsibility for any inaccurate, offensive, indecent, or objectionable content, which is the sole responsibility of the individual student author." Students may not remove or otherwise take steps to modify or hide this disclaimer. Any attempt to do so will be cause for disciplinary action.

## **Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**

Conduct that involves discrimination or harassment, including sexual misconduct, based on a protected characteristic (i.e., race, gender, or disability, etc.) or related retaliation, falls under the [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#) and should be reported to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity and Title IX (EEO-TIX). Reports can be made by emailing [eeotix@usc.edu](mailto:eeotix@usc.edu); calling (213) 740-5086, or visiting the EEO-TIX Office at King Hall, 1025 W. 34th Street, Suite 101. EEO-TIX offers a variety of services, including supportive measures (such as academic accommodations), through its Intake, Outreach, and Care Team. For more information, please visit the [EEO-TIX website](#).

## **Disorderly Conduct**

Disorderly conduct is prohibited and is defined as one or more of the following:

- Any unreasonable or reckless conduct by a student/organization that is inherently or potentially unsafe to other persons or their real or personal property.
- Any behavior by a student/organization that disrupts the peace or interferes with the normal operation of the university or university-sponsored activities including but not limited to study, teaching, examinations, research, officially invited speakers, university administration, public safety, or fire, police or emergency services, or other authorized activity.

Disorderly conduct includes but is not limited to reckless driving, excessive noise/violating published USC guidelines regarding amplification equipment and noise, climbing on or entering university fountains or statues, blocking access on a public walk/throughway, and/or urinating in public. (Also see *Appendix IV: Free Expression* on p. 68.)

## **Trojan Spirit Code Guidelines for USC Athletic Events**

Always do your best to live up to the high standards of the Trojan Family.

Treat all fans, students, staff, players, coaches, and officials in a respectful and courteous manner— win or lose, at home or away.

Remember that you are responsible for your actions and how they may affect other fans and athletes, as well as the university.

Obey all rules and regulations as set forth by USC and by host universities at away games.

Join in the Trojan Spirit by supporting all student athletes and their commitment to academic and athletic excellence.

Avoid making negative remarks or gestures that disrespect opponents, their fans, or their institutions.

Never forget the Unifying Values of a Trojan — integrity, excellence, diversity, equity, and inclusion, well-being, open communication, and accountability.

Send a positive message to our opponents about USC, our teams, students, and fans wherever USC is playing.

*Alcohol is not permitted inside the Coliseum, except that which is available for purchase. Unauthorized possession of alcohol, drunk or disorderly behavior, or threatening or obscene language may result in eviction from the Coliseum and permanent loss of the privilege of buying tickets in the future.*

## **Drugs, Drug Paraphernalia, and Tobacco**

Use, possession, or dissemination of unauthorized or illegal drugs, or drug-related paraphernalia, is against university policy. USC is a [smoke-free campus](#), which includes the prohibition of tobacco possession or use on campus property. Although California law permits adults aged 21 or older to possess and consume cannabis under certain circumstances, federal law still prohibits the possession, use, or distribution of cannabis, including for medical purposes. Thus, use or possession of cannabis, including CBD and cannabis concentrates, is not permitted on university property. Exceptions are limited to: FDA-approved drugs (Epidiolex, Marinol, Syndros and Cesamet); hulled hemp seed, hemp seed protein powder, and hemp seed oil; and cosmetics containing cannabis or cannabis-derived ingredients. (See *Appendix III: Information and Resources Concerning Substance Use* on p. 66 for additional information.)

The university's policy is to conform to all applicable laws and follows the current stance of the medical and mental health professions regarding the use of other psychoactive substances including stimulants, depressants, narcotics, inhalants, and hallucinogens including cannabis.

## **Events and Facilities**

Guided by USC's [Unifying Values](#), the university supports opportunities for students to promote an array of diverse views and to positively enhance the campus community through events and social programs. USC especially encourages events that directly support the academic mission of the university, expand the cultural awareness of USC students, and/or are primarily intellectual or educational in nature.

USC has adopted guidelines for major social and sponsored events in order to enrich the academic experience while maintaining the importance of safety and security within the campus community. See *Appendix V: Event Planning and Facility Reservation/Use* for details (p. 71).

## **Failure to Comply/Noncompliance**

Failure to comply with directives of university officials acting in the performance of their duties or resisting or obstructing such university officials in the performance of their duties—including failure to identify oneself as a USC student when asked, to carry and/or provide upon request appropriate USC student identification, regardless of whether on USC property or not—is prohibited. This policy also includes failure to comply with the terms of any outcomes imposed or interim measures issued through the disciplinary process.

## **Falsification/Fraud**

[Integrity](#) is one of USC's [Unifying Values](#) and students and student groups may be held accountable for any of the following actions:

- The manufacture, possession, use, or provision of any invalid identification, including state identification card, driver's license, or certificate of birth or baptism.
- Forgery, unauthorized alteration, or unauthorized use of any university document, records, keys, or university instruments of identification, or of documents or records related to functions of the university.
- Unauthorized presentation of oneself as a representative of the university.
- Any intentional misrepresentation of fact (either by action, concealment, or omission), including to any university official.
- Inducing someone to surrender a right, benefit, or property under any intentional misrepresentation of fact (either by action, concealment, or omission).
- Giving false information to any university official acting in their official capacity.
- Initiating or causing to be initiated any false report, warning, or threat, such as that of fire, explosion, or other emergency in the university community or at university-sponsored activities.

## **Fire Safety**

Fire safety equipment and evacuation procedures are designed to keep the university community safe in the event of fire. It is a violation of university policy to engage in any of the following behaviors in the university community or at university-sponsored activities:

- Misusing or damaging fire safety equipment or other emergency equipment.
- Failure to evacuate during a fire alarm, whether the alarm is activated as a drill or in a genuine emergency.
- Inappropriate use of flammable substances or equipment, or use of such items without proper authorization.
- Tampering with, obstructing, or affixing objects (such as coat hangers or decorations) to hardware for fire alarms, exit signs, fire sprinklers, fire hydrant valves, or building systems pipes.
- Tampering with or covering smoke detectors without permission from Facilities Planning Management or USC Fire Safety.
- Using any device that creates an open flame without permission from USC Fire Safety.



- Using, possessing, charging, and/or storing of electronic skateboards, including self-balancing hoverboards/scooters and other similar equipment is prohibited in all university housing.

## Free Expression

USC is committed to fostering a learning environment where free inquiry and expression are encouraged and celebrated and for which all its members share responsibility. The university's policy on free expression is set forth in *Appendix IV: Free Expression* (p.68).

## Hazing

Hazing is a serious violation of university policy and is a fundamental breach of USC's [Unifying Values](#). The California Penal Code (245.6) defines hazing as:

*any method of initiation or preinitiation into a student organization or student body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury to any former, current, or prospective student of any school community college, college, university, or other educational institution in this state. The term hazing does not include customary athletic events or school-sanctioned events.*

In addition to California law, the university's policy with respect to hazing prohibits students from engaging collectively or individually in any of the following practices as a part of any programs or general activities. The "choice" to participate in an activity does not make the activity in accordance with these guidelines. In hazing situations, such a "choice" is typically offset by the peer pressure and power dynamics that exist when individuals are seeking to gain membership into an organization. Hazing includes, but is not limited to:

- Forced excessive or strenuous physical activities.
- The application of foreign substances to the body.
- Forced creation of content that would cause ridicule or embarrassment.
- Activities such as scavenger hunts, which result in illegal or otherwise prohibited activity, such as pledge ditches, kidnaps, and the like.
- Depriving students of sufficient sleep (eight consecutive hours per day minimum), decent and edible meals, means of bodily cleanliness (minimum of one shower per day), or means of communications (such as access to their cell phones).
- Forcing, coercing, or permitting students to eat or drink an excess of any substance.
- Forcing, coercing, or permitting students to undress, or dress in a degrading manner.
- Branding, tattooing, or burning any part of the body.
- Psychological hazing, which is defined as any act or peer pressure which is likely to compromise the dignity of any student affiliated with the organization; cause embarrassment or shame to any student affiliated with the organization; cause any student affiliated with the organization to be the object of malicious amusement or ridicule; and/or, cause psychological harm or emotional strain.

All students and RSOs must observe and fully comply with California law and university policy against hazing. In addition, all students and RSOs are expected to adhere to related regulations

set forth by their respective inter/national, regional or local organizations, and university department(s). It is the responsibility of students and officers of organizations to be informed of all the regulations and to ensure they are brought to the attention of the rest of the membership.

Anyone with information about a possible hazing incident has a responsibility to report it to the Department of Public Safety (213-740-6000, or [dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu)). Additional opportunities for reporting hazing include:

- [LiveSafe smartphone app](#).
- [USC's Report & Response](#) for concerns (213-740-2500).
- [Trojans Care for Trojans](#).
- [Office of Community Expectations \(OCE\)](#).
- [Office of Professionalism & Ethics](#).
- Organization advisor, or university representative.
- Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity and Title IX (EEO-TIX) (if it involves protected characteristics) (213-740-5086 or [eeotix@usc.edu](mailto:eeotix@usc.edu)).

Students and/or RSOs engaging in activity which is considered hazing as defined by California law may be reported to the Los Angeles Police Department.

(See *Recognized Student Organizations* on p. 53 regarding group accountability for hazing.)

## **Physical Harm**

Causing, intending to cause, or threatening physical harm against a person or group, or behavior that reasonably causes apprehension of harm, is prohibited. This includes fighting or other physical acts that may jeopardize the health, safety, or welfare of an individual or group. This also includes refusal to allow university administrators access to private property for purposes of addressing an emergency situation, such as where information indicates that a USC student on that property is facing a serious health or safety risk.

## **Property Damage**

Destroying, damaging, or defacing university property or the property of others is prohibited.

## **Public Health Measures**

Students and RSOs are required to comply with behavioral expectations set forth by the university based on public health needs, including but not limited to control of communicable disease or any other health and safety, natural disaster, or other emergency response. Given the community health risks posed by the failure to adhere to these expectations, the university will hold students and RSOs accountable for their non-compliance. If the university receives notice that a student or RSO is repeatedly failing to comply, students may lose their access to university premises, which may consequently delay their ability to complete their coursework. Tuition refunds will not be granted to students who lose their ability to access university premises under these circumstances. Failure to comply with such behavioral expectations may also result in a referral to the university's disciplinary process.

## Retaliation

Threatening, attempting, or committing acts against anyone who, in good faith brings a complaint under any university policy or applicable law; or participates in investigation of such a complaint; or protests in good faith alleged discrimination, harassment or retaliation against another; or acts in the performance of their official university duties, is prohibited. Such acts may include but are not limited to:

- Coercion, intimidation, interference, harassment, or vexatious behavior.
- Excluding or blocking someone from a team, activity, organization, or course participation due to that person's having filed a complaint or been a witness as part of an investigation.

For additional information about how to report concerns of retaliation related to situations involving protected characteristics, see the [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#).

## Smoking

The university is committed to promoting a healthy, safe, and comfortable environment for all students, faculty, staff, and visitors. [Smoking](#) is prohibited in all indoor and outdoor facilities on university owned and leased property with no exception, including within vehicles parked on those properties. This includes all university owned and leased housing, dining, hotel, retail, athletic, and performance facilities and all teaching, research, clinical, and office space. In addition to university owned and operated student housing facilities, this policy also applies to any property owned, controlled, or occupied by any RSO.

For purposes of this policy, smoking is defined as inhaling, exhaling, burning, carrying, or possessing any lighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, electronic cigarette, hookah, or other lit product and including the use of any substance, including but not limited to tobacco, cloves, or cannabis.

Refusal by faculty, staff, or students to comply with this policy may result in appropriate disciplinary action. Visitors who refuse to comply will be asked to leave and could be subject to arrest for trespassing should they persist.

Smoking may be permitted:

- In connection with research if approved by the USC Institutional Review Board or other appropriate research committee through the Office for the Protection of Research Subjects.
- For ceremonial use on USC property with prior approval of the sponsoring department and the Office of Cultural Relations and University Events.
- For university-sponsored theatrical and performance purposes where simulation of smoking may be permitted under approved guidelines.

For information on smoking cessation, contact Student Health at 213-740-9355, or <https://studenthealth.usc.edu>.

## **Theft**

Theft and possession of stolen property are prohibited. Theft includes, but is not limited to, taking or possessing property without the expressed permission of the rightful owner. This includes possessing any property that the student knew, or reasonably should have known, was stolen. Misappropriation of university resources, including the USC name and logo, is also a violation of this policy.

## **Unauthorized Access/Entry**

Unauthorized entry, presence in, or use of university premises, facilities, or property is prohibited. Unauthorized entry into, or presence in, the dwelling or property of another is also prohibited.

## **Unauthorized Recording**

Audio, video, or still-image recording of an interaction or meeting in a location where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy without explicit consent of all parties involved is prohibited under this policy and may be a criminal act under California law. This includes when students meet with faculty during office hours, in meetings between students and staff, the recording of a virtual meeting (either using the meeting software or a third-party device, including a cell phone), and classroom instruction (without permission of the instructor and an announcement to the class, or as an accommodation approved by OSAS).

## **Weapons/Firearms/Explosives**

Except as expressly permitted by authorized individuals/offices of the university, the use or possession of firearms or replicas, ammunition, explosives, fireworks, knives, flammable substances or other weapons, or parts thereof, in the university community or at university-sponsored events is prohibited.

## **Other Violations**

Other violations for which students or student groups may be subject to disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:

- Knowingly violating the terms of any disciplinary outcome imposed in accordance with this student handbook; this includes further violations during a period of disciplinary probation.
- Violating any other published, posted, or distributed university regulation not specifically mentioned in this student handbook, including policies governing residence in university-owned or administered property (e.g., rules outlined in the USC Housing & Hospitality Services Contract & Living Agreement), standards or policies established by FSLD, including but not limited to the Trojan Greek Standards & Accreditation.
- Violating any policies, rules, directives, or regulations of the university including but not limited to administrative rules of campus offices.
- Acting as an accomplice through action or negligence to the commission of any prohibited act.
- Attempting or intending to commit any violation of laws and/or university policies.

- Violating local ordinances or state or federal laws (as determined through the university's disciplinary process).

# THE USC DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

## Student Procedural Rights and Protections

The university is committed to the timely and fair resolution of alleged student/organization misconduct. Although students/organizations are afforded significant procedural protections under the disciplinary process described in this student handbook, this does not include the right to confront accusers or be represented by counsel.

***The Keck School of Medicine and the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry have been delegated the authority to conduct independent reviews, render decisions, and determine appropriate sanctions/outcomes in cases of alleged academic integrity or professional standards violations. This authority does not preclude the university from adjudicating matters concerning the behavior of students from these schools. These graduate/professional schools must meet standards of procedural fairness in processing alleged violations.***

***The above does not apply to reports of discrimination and harassment, including sexual misconduct, based on a protected characteristic or related retaliation. Such reports for these schools, as with any others, must be referred to the [EEO-TIX Office](#).***

For allegations resolved through the [Office of Community Expectations \(OCE\)](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity \(OAI\)](#), students/organizations are granted the following procedural protections:

- Written notice via email of the incident report that specifies the nature of the alleged behavior and the university policy or policies at issue, including the date or period of time and location (or course, for academic dishonesty) of the alleged incident.
- Written notice of the website location of the student handbook, which includes an outline of rights, disciplinary procedures, and avenue of appeal.
- Written invitation for the student/organization to meet with staff in OCE/OAI (an “administrative review”). The university reserves the right to proceed with the disciplinary process in absentia when a student/organization fails to respond after proper notice has been given or after the university has exercised reasonable effort to notify the student/organization of the allegations. In any meeting (including an administrative review or review panel), the student/organization and/or advisor (if present) may take notes but is prohibited from creating a recording or transcription of the meeting.
- A fair and impartial review of the incident. If the student/organization identifies concerns about potential/actual bias or conflict of interest by individuals involved in resolution of the matter, they should promptly notify the Office of Professionalism and Ethics (OPE) at [ope@usc.edu](mailto:ope@usc.edu) and copy [OCE](#) or [OAI](#). Actual bias is an articulated prejudice in favor of or against one party or position; it is not a generalized concern about the personal or professional backgrounds, positions, beliefs, or interests of the decision makers in the process. Similarly, disagreement by a student with a decision made by individuals involved in the matter does not in and of itself establish bias. Where actual bias or conflict of interest is established, the university will eliminate the identified bias or conflict by identifying other individuals to manage resolution of that incident.

- The opportunity for the student/organization to be present at an administrative review or review panel; to inspect relevant documents and relevant information gathered; and, to provide names of relevant witnesses and relevant information. This opportunity does not entitle the student/organization to a copy of documents and information.
- A presumption that the student/organization is not responsible for the alleged conduct unless and until a preponderance of evidence standard is met. Students are encouraged to participate fully and are expected to be truthful throughout the university disciplinary process. However, if a student/organization declines to participate, this will not be construed as an admission of responsibility.
- A written explanation of the decision. If a student/organization is found responsible for the violation(s), the student/organization may be issued outcome(s) that could impact student/organization status and/or require the student/organization to engage in or complete certain activities.
- The opportunity to appeal an administrative review or review panel decision within 10 business days of the date of the written decision.
- The right to have an advisor of the student's or organization's choosing accompany them at any meeting with staff in OCE/OAI or at a review panel. The advisor may not be a witness or have any conflicting role in the process or with a party. The role of the advisor is to provide support and assistance to the student/organization in understanding and navigating this process. To protect the privacy of those involved, all advisors are required to sign an advisor form prior to attending a meeting with OCE or OAI staff or otherwise participating in the university's process. The university's focus is on the student/organization, not the advisor. All communication is made directly with the student/organization, including replies to messages received from an advisor, which will be sent to the student along with a reminder that they are responsible for participating in the process on their own behalf. The process will not be unreasonably delayed to accommodate the schedule of the advisor. An advisor must be familiar with university policy and may be required to meet with OCE/OAI staff in advance of participation in university proceedings. The advisor may only quietly confer with the student/organization during any meeting with OCE/OAI staff or in an administrative review, or review panel, but may not author written submissions, speak as a representative of the student, or in any other way act as an active participant in the process. Advisors are also prohibited from disrupting the process. Staff of OCE/OAI has the right to determine what constitutes appropriate behavior of an advisor and take reasonable steps to ensure compliance with this policy.
- The opportunity for students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations to participate in a disciplinary procedure to request those accommodations by contacting the [Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#).

### **Scope of Authority and Evidentiary Standard**

- The university has the authority to enforce its standards of conduct regardless of where the conduct occurred. Therefore, university jurisdiction and discipline shall **not** be limited to: conduct which occurs on university premises or within the university community, is associated with university-sponsored or related activities, adversely affects the university community and/or the pursuit of its objectives (including student-to-student sexual misconduct), or that violates federal or state law.

- A finding for a violation of university policy is based upon the preponderance of evidence standard.
- It is the responsibility of staff in the Office of Community Expectations (OCE) and the Office of Academic Integrity (OAI) to determine the relevance of information to be considered as part of an administrative review or review panel. Staff in OCE/OAI may exclude information that is not relevant or is not considered credible or reliable. Opinions by those who did not see, hear, or otherwise experience an incident may not be considered relevant. Rules of evidence and discovery used by federal and state judicial proceedings shall not be applicable to the disciplinary process. For instance, polygraph tests will not be considered in the disciplinary process. Character witnesses, statements, or letters are also not considered (examples of character evidence include statements, résumés, transcripts, and letters from friends, family, or faculty).
- Where there is a delay between the conduct and the reporting of the potential violation, the definitions set forth in the version of this student handbook in effect at the time of the alleged conduct shall be used. However, allegations of student misconduct will be addressed and resolved according to the most recent procedures described in the version of the student handbook as of the date of OCE's/OAI's initial correspondence to the student/organization under review.
- The Vice President for Student Life or designee may, in their sole discretion, modify procedures utilized by OCE, except to the extent such revision would alter student/organizational rights as set forth in this student handbook. The Vice Provost for Academic Programs or designee has similar discretion for OAI in allegations of academic dishonesty.
- Administrative holds affecting registration transactions, posting of degree, or a student's ability to acquire copies of their official transcript, may be placed under certain circumstances. Such circumstances may include failure to respond to a written notice to meet with a designated university official, including from OCE, OAI, the [Office of Campus Support & Intervention \(CSI\)](#), the [Office of Campus Threat Assessment & Management](#), and [OPE](#), or failure to complete disciplinary outcomes by an established due date. This restriction normally will remain in effect until disciplinary obligations are met or resolution of the matter is complete.
- When a student is under investigation by an outside law enforcement agency, the status of the student may be altered prior to the initiation of the student conduct process by the university in accordance with the process for imposing Interim Measures as set forth below. Changes in status may include exclusion from all or part of university housing, exclusion from specified activities or areas of campus, interim suspension, or prohibition from representing the university in any capacity such as playing on an official team, serving in student government, or performing in an official band, ensemble, or production.
- An alleged violation may be reviewed and processed under the student handbook even if it is made after the student has left the university and a degree has been granted at the discretion of the Vice President for Student Life and/or the Vice Provost for Academic Programs.
- For cases in which criminal investigations and/or proceedings are concurrent or pending against the accused student directly, the university normally may proceed independently of such investigations or proceedings. The student or the reporting party may request that



the university delay its proceeding. Such requests should be submitted in writing to staff in OCE (or OAI, if appropriate), stating the requested action and the supporting rationale for the request; such requests may or may not be granted. Staff in OCE/OAI may coordinate with law enforcement to ensure the university process does not interfere with the integrity or timing of the criminal investigation. At the request of law enforcement, the university may temporarily defer its process. Neither a decision by law enforcement not to proceed with arrest or prosecution, nor the outcome of a criminal proceeding in favor of the accused, will influence the university's proceeding or the determination of a university policy violation. However, conviction of a criminal offense may be sufficient to find a student responsible for a related policy violation and to issue (an) outcome(s).

- A hold may be placed on the conferral of a student's degree and/or the distribution of the student's diploma by OCE/OAI contingent upon the resolution of any outstanding allegation or assigned outcome(s).

## **Receipt and Timeliness of Report**

The Office of Community Expectations (OCE) is responsible for receiving and processing reports of alleged non-academic misconduct by students/organizations, except for those involving discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics (including sexual misconduct, and related retaliation), which are processed by EEO-TIX. OCE may refer reports of alleged misconduct in residential areas to Residential Education for resolution.

The Office of Academic Integrity (OAI) is responsible for receiving and processing allegations of student/organization academic misconduct, except those cases in certain schools where separate review processes exist (Keck School of Medicine and Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry). Students having specific information regarding academic violation(s) of a classmate and wishing to report this academic misconduct are encouraged to contact the faculty member of the course or OAI.

When a report involves both academic and non-academic misconduct, OCE and OAI will determine which office resolves the report. When a report involves discrimination and harassment based on a protected characteristic (including sexual misconduct and/or related retaliation) and other alleged university policy violations, OCE, OAI, and/or EEO-TIX may confer to determine which office(s) resolve(s) the report, but the Vice President for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX may require the matter to be reviewed by EEO-TIX if they believe that is necessary.

Reports are actionable by OCE/OAI through the disciplinary process when it has been filed within one year of discovering the alleged violation. This timeframe may be extended at the discretion of the Vice President for Student Life or the Vice Provost for Academic Programs. Reports involving discrimination and/or harassment based on a protected characteristic, including sexual misconduct and related retaliation, may be actionable by the EEO-TIX Office at any time.

## Investigation

Upon receiving a report that a student/organization has allegedly violated university policy, staff may seek information from relevant parties and sources to determine whether a particular incident report has merit. Staff may choose to dismiss the matter or proceed with a resolution process.

If the matter is not dismissed, staff will send email notification of the report to the student/organization, initiating either an informal or formal resolution process.

When an incident involves allegations against more than one student/organization, staff will determine whether the investigation and resolution of that incident will be conducted separately with each student/organization.

## Interim Measures

In most cases, the status of a student or organization will not be altered, and disciplinary outcomes will not be implemented, until completion of the disciplinary process. In some cases, interim measures are imposed by the university after the university learns of law enforcement proceedings and/or receives a report of prohibited conduct but prior to a determination of responsibility for an alleged violation of university policy. Such measures do not indicate the university has decided the veracity of the allegation(s), but are put in place to protect the health, safety, and/or welfare of the university community or any member of it.

Interim measures may be imposed when there is information that, if assumed true\*, indicates the student and/or organization poses a substantial threat to any of the following:

- The safety or well-being of anyone in the university community.
- The property within the university community.
- University operations.

*\* As noted above, a decision by the university to impose interim measures does not reflect the university's determination regarding the veracity of the information reported, as such measures are imposed prior to the conclusion of the investigation/disciplinary process.*

Some factors considered in determining whether to authorize interim measures include:

- The nature and scope of the alleged conduct and/or crime, including whether the reported behavior involved the use or threat of use of a weapon or force, or significant loss of property, or impacted a vulnerable person .
- The risk posed to any individual or to the campus community including the risk of additional violence or significant disruption of university life or function.
- Whether there have been other reports of other prohibited conduct or other misconduct by the student and/or organization.
- Whether the report indicates a pattern of misconduct related to prohibited conduct at a given location or by a particular group.
- The university's obligation to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment.
- The timing of the investigation in the academic calendar.
- The ability of an interim measure to reduce or mitigate the threat.

Interim measures may include:

- exclusion from all or part of university housing, or reassignment within university housing;
- exclusion from specified activities or areas of campus;
- prohibition from representing the university in any capacity such as playing on an official team, serving in student government, and performing in an official band, ensemble, or production;
- loss of RSO status;
- restriction on hosting or organizing parties or other events as a student organization;
- or interim suspension (exclusion from all classes, seminars and programs; prohibition of participation in university-sponsored activities; and exclusion from university premises).

*Note: An Avoidance of Contact Directive (“AOC”) is not considered an interim measure subject to this process. See the Glossary (p. 98) for more information about AOCs.*

Interim measures are imposed by the Interim Action Committee when information indicates that the student and/or organization presents a substantial threat. At least three Interim Action Committee members must vote to authorize the interim measure(s). The Interim Action Committee is comprised of the following individuals (or, in the event they are not available, a single designee):

- Assistant Vice Provost, Community Expectations (chair).
- Associate Vice Provost, Student Development and Engagement.
- Assistant Vice President, Threat Assessment and Intervention.
- Associate Vice Provost, Campus Support and Intervention.
- Associate Vice Provost, Campus Wellbeing and Education.
- Vice Provost for Academic Programs.
- Vice President, Professionalism and Ethics.
- Vice President, Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX.
- Chief, Department of Public Safety.
- Chief Campus Health Officer, USC Student Health.

A student or organization subject to interim measures is given prompt written notice of the basis for the interim measure. The Interim Action Committee’s decision may be appealed by the student or organization by submitting a written request to the Office of the Vice President for Student Life within five business days of the notice. Any interim measures imposed by the Interim Action Committee will not be postponed during the interim measures appeal. The sole basis for an interim action appeal is that less restrictive measures could adequately reduce or mitigate the threat. A decision on the interim action appeal will be made by the Vice President for Student Life or their designee.

Failure to comply with interim measures or an AOC is a separate and independent violation. A student or organization may be found in violation for failure to comply with an interim measure or an AOC without being found responsible for the underlying report of prohibited conduct. The imposition of interim measures does not relieve a student from financial obligations to the university.

If a student is subject to interim measures that restrict them from attending classes or completing exams, and such measures remain in effect at the conclusion of a semester, the student will receive marks of “MG” for those courses. If the student is ultimately found not responsible or issued outcomes that do not result in suspension or expulsion from the institution, the Office of Community Expectations (OCE) will work with the student and the student’s department and instructor(s) to support the student in resolving those MG marks.

Interim measures may be modified at any time and may be kept in place pending final resolution of the university’s disciplinary process and/or conclusion of law enforcement proceedings.

## **Resolution of Allegations of Non-Academic Misconduct<sup>1</sup>**

Allegations of non-academic misconduct are typically resolved by the Office of Community Expectations (OCE), which, at its discretion, may utilize either an informal or formal resolution process.

*At the discretion of OCE and Residential Education, some allegations of non-academic misconduct outlined in the student handbook or the USC Housing & Hospitality Services Contract & Living Agreement for student residents in university housing may be resolved through a Residential Education Review conducted by a Residential Education staff member.*

### *Informal Resolution*

In an informal resolution, a student/organization is invited to meet with a staff member to discuss the report. If the student/organization responds to the meeting request and subsequently actively engages in a conversation about the report, the matter will be closed without disciplinary action. The student/organization will have no disciplinary history that is reported to any entity outside of USC because of the report. Recommendations for resources or suggested follow-up may be shared with the student/organization. If the student/organization elects not to participate in this process, OCE staff may proceed with the formal resolution process.

### *Formal Resolution*

There are two avenues for formal resolution of an allegation of non-academic misconduct: an administrative review and a review panel.

- **Administrative Review.** In an administrative review, a student/organization is invited to meet with OCE staff to discuss the incident and answer questions. The student/organization has an opportunity to submit a written account of their/its perspective to staff in advance of the meeting. At the meeting, the student/organization can present any information regarding the incident. This review may occur over the course of multiple meetings at the discretion of OCE staff. OCE staff may consult with

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<sup>1</sup>Upon written request to OCE, the university will provide an alleged victim of a crime of violence the final results of a disciplinary proceeding involving that alleged victim. Final results are available only after the appeal process has been exhausted and the university has made a final determination in the matter. Final results are limited to information related to the outcomes imposed by the university that affect the alleged victim.

any relevant parties at any time during this process. The student/organization is not permitted to create a recording or transcription of any meeting, but may take notes.

- **In Absentia.** If the student/organization fails to respond to the written notice or chooses not to participate in the administrative review process, OCE staff may decide responsibility and outcomes in the student's or organization's absence so long as the outcome does not include the issuance of suspension, expulsion, revocation of admission, revocation of degree, or revocation of group recognition. Otherwise, OCE staff will refer the matter to a review panel for its consideration. The student/organization may appeal as outlined below.
- **Determination of Responsibility.** Responsibility for violations of university policy is based on the preponderance of the evidence standard. If the student/organization is determined to be responsible for one or more of the alleged violations, OCE staff will consider appropriate outcomes in consideration of a student's/organization's previous disciplinary history (See Assigning Outcomes, below).
- **Assigning Outcomes.** If the student/organization is determined to be responsible for one or more of the alleged violations, their previous disciplinary record with OCE and/or any other university office (e.g., OAI, EEO-TIX, Residential Education) and current status (e.g., whether they are currently subject to disciplinary probation or a deferred outcome) will be considered in determining (an) appropriate outcome(s).

If the student/organization accepts responsibility for the alleged violation(s) and agrees with the proposed outcome(s), the matter is considered resolved, and no appeal is available.

If the student/organization challenges the findings and/or proposed outcomes, OCE staff may assign outcomes without referring the matter to a review panel should the outcomes not include the issuance of suspension, expulsion, revocation of admission, revocation of degree, or revocation of group recognition. Otherwise, OCE staff will refer the matter to a review panel for its consideration (See Referral to Review Panel on p. 28). The student/organization may appeal as outlined below.

- **Proposed Resolution.** At OCE's discretion, a resolution may be proposed to the student/organization in writing without a meeting. If the student/organization accepts responsibility and agrees to the outcomes in the resolution, then the matter will be considered resolved, and no appeal will be available. If the student/organization does not agree to the resolution, then the student/organization will be invited to meet with OCE staff to discuss the incident, and the alleged policy violations and potential outcomes may not be limited to those in the proposed resolution.
- **Referral to Review Panel.** A Review Panel will be convened if the OCE proposed outcomes include suspension, expulsion, revocation of admission, revocation of degree, or revocation of group recognition and the student/organization challenges the determination of responsibility and/or the outcomes proposed by OCE.

Any information obtained by OCE staff during the administrative review may be shared with the review panel. Prior to a review panel's occurrence, the student/organization or OCE staff may choose to resolve the case without a review panel (if, for example, a student accepts responsibility and outcomes or OCE staff determines through additional information that a violation did not occur).

- **Review Panel.** In a review panel, OCE staff will convene three to five members, designated by the Vice President for Student Life or designee, comprised of any combination of faculty, staff, and students, to consider the report/documentation and to hear from/ask questions in real time of the student/organization and any relevant identified parties. The review panel shall determine by a preponderance of evidence standard if the student/organization is responsible for the alleged violation, and, if applicable, outcomes.

If the student/organization is determined to be responsible for one or more of the alleged policy violations, then the review panel will be informed of any previous disciplinary record with OCE and/or any other university office (e.g., OAI, EEO-TIX, Residential Education) and current status (e.g., whether they are currently subject to disciplinary probation or a deferred outcome), if applicable. The previous disciplinary records will be considered in determining (an) outcome(s) for the matter(s) under consideration.

Decisions of responsibility and outcomes are determined by a majority vote of the review panel. The review panel shall be facilitated by a trained staff member from OAI or OCE, who, although not a voting member of the panel, may offer guidance to the panel regarding the findings and outcomes.

- **Appeals.** Information related to the grounds and process for appealing determinations of responsibility and (an) outcome(s) in academic and non-academic cases is described under the Appeals section below.

## **Resolution of Allegations of Academic Integrity Violations**

USC empowers and expects its faculty to respond to suspected acts of academic dishonesty that occur in their courses. Academic dishonesty undermines the integrity of the learning and evaluative process for not only the student who engages in dishonesty, but for the other students in the course. Both the instructor and the university have a vested interest in responding to such alleged misconduct: the instructor through assessment of the student's performance (i.e., grading) and the university through its disciplinary process for a violation of the university's expectations for its students. Such an approach respects the academic freedom of faculty in their classroom while also holding all students accountable to the [Unifying Values of USC](#) through fair and impartial means.

Instructors are encouraged to submit a report (up to one year after the date of discovery of the alleged incident) with the Office of Academic Integrity (OAI) if either they, an academic unit, or an appropriate university official has reason to believe, based on observation or other information, that a student has violated the university's academic integrity standards. This

timeframe may be extended at the discretion of the Vice Provost for Academic Programs. The Office of Academic Integrity manages reports of alleged academic misconduct for all undergraduate and graduate students, except those involving a student in either the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry or the clinical programs at the Keck School of Medicine.

Allegations of academic dishonesty are typically resolved by OAI, unless resolved informally between faculty and student through a Faculty-Student Resolution (FSR).

### *Informal Resolution*

- **Faculty-Student Resolution (FSR).** A Faculty-Student Resolution is an opportunity for an instructor to resolve minor violations of academic dishonesty directly with a student if the student accepts responsibility for the allegation and the instructor's proposed resolution. OAI will confirm completion of the FSR once all documents have been signed and received. However, if the student has previously been held accountable for academic dishonesty at the university through the formal or informal process, they will not be eligible for the FSR. Instead, the case will be routed to the Administrative Review process for consideration of additional outcomes.

Some appropriate examples for the FSR process may include but are not limited to: minimal plagiarism; turning in an assignment with minimal unauthorized collaboration or unauthorized access to resources; submitting the same assignment to more than one instructor without instructor approval; or, indicating attendance/participation in a course on behalf of an absent student.

OAI staff and the college's/school's Academic Integrity Ambassador (AIA) are available to consult with faculty on the appropriateness of an FSR and possible resolutions. Resolutions in an FSR should include a grade penalty (either a reduced grade on the assignment or in the course) and may additionally include a re-do of the assignment, additional assignments, and/or educational initiatives, as agreed to between instructor and student. Instructors are not required to consult with OAI or their AIA before implementing an FSR, but are encouraged to consult if the extent of the violation warrants an "F" in the course.

The instructor should complete the FSR form available on the OAI website. The FSR form and any relevant documents must be submitted to OAI when the matter is resolved. OAI will then check its records to determine if the student has any prior academic or non-academic violation of university policy (including a previous faculty-student resolution).

If the student has a prior academic dishonesty violation, OAI will contact the student to consider outcomes in addition to the FSR. If an agreement cannot be reached between the student and OAI regarding the outcomes, OAI may convene a review panel. The review panel will assess the student's complete disciplinary history and determine outcomes that may impact the student's status and/or involve educational initiatives.

### *Formal Resolution*

- **Referral to OAI.** FSRs are not applicable if any of the following criteria are met:

- *The student denies responsibility for the alleged violation.*
- *The student does not agree to the instructor’s proposed outcome(s)*
- *The student has previously been determined to be responsible for a violation of academic integrity at the university, including through the FSR process.*

In such an instance, instructors are expected to submit to OAI a formal report (form available on the OAI website) along with an explanation of the circumstances surrounding the alleged violation, any supporting documents, and/or any relevant additional information.

An instructor may not issue a grade penalty for an academic integrity violation unless or until a determination of responsibility is made by OAI. If OAI determines the student is not responsible, the instructor may not assign any grade penalty.

*Students accused of academic dishonesty are expected to continue participation in the course while OAI resolves the matter. The instructor should assign a mark of “MG” (missing grade) until notification is received from OAI that a final decision has been made. Students may not withdraw from a course in which they have committed or have been accused of committing an academic integrity violation. Students found to have withdrawn from a course in which an academic integrity violation is alleged or determined will be re-enrolled in the course.*

*Students found responsible for an act of academic dishonesty in a course in which they have participated but have not enrolled (auditing), may be retroactively enrolled and assigned an appropriate outcome. Furthermore, students may not replace the resulting grade by repeating the course, and a letter grade will be assigned when a grading option exists, even if enrolled in the course on a pass/no pass basis.*

- **OAI Response to Report.** When a report of an alleged academic integrity violation has been submitted to OAI and it has not been resolved through an FSR (or is ineligible for such), the office will evaluate the report and notify the student of the allegation in writing. A copy of the notification will be sent to the involved instructor. Academic units will be provided with information regarding the number and scope of academic integrity issues in their school throughout the academic year.
- **Administrative Review.** The student will be invited to meet with OAI staff (an “administrative review”) to discuss the incident and answer questions. The student has an opportunity to submit a written account of their perspective to staff in advance of the meeting. At the meeting, the student can present any information regarding the incident. This review may take place over the course of multiple meetings at the discretion of OAI staff. OAI staff may consult with the instructor or any other relevant parties at any time during this process. The student is not permitted to create a recording or transcription of any meeting.
- **In Absentia.** If the student fails to respond to the written notice or chooses not to participate in the administrative review process, OAI staff may decide responsibility and outcomes in the student’s absence so long as the outcome does not include the issuance of suspension, expulsion, revocation of admission, or revocation of degree. Otherwise,



OAI staff will refer the matter to a review panel for its consideration. The student may appeal as outlined below.

- **Determination of Responsibility.** Responsibility for violations of university policy is based on the preponderance of the evidence standard. If the student is determined to be responsible for one or more of the alleged violations, OAI staff will consider appropriate outcomes in consideration of a student's previous disciplinary history (See Assigning Outcomes, below).
- **Assigning Outcomes.** If the student is determined to be responsible for one or more of the alleged violations, their previous disciplinary record with OAI and/or any other university office (e.g., OCE, EEO-TIX, Residential Education) and current status (e.g., whether they are currently subject to disciplinary probation or a deferred outcome) will be considered in determining (an) appropriate outcome(s).

If the student accepts responsibility for the alleged violation(s) and agrees with the proposed outcome(s), the matter is considered resolved, and no appeal is available.

If the student challenges the findings and/or proposed outcomes, OAI staff may assign outcomes without referring the matter to a review panel should the outcomes not include the issuance of suspension, expulsion, revocation of admission, or revocation of degree. Otherwise, OAI staff will refer the matter to a review panel for its consideration (See Referral to Review Panel). The student may appeal as outlined below.

- **Referral to Review Panel.** A Review Panel will be convened if the OAI proposed outcomes include suspension, expulsion, revocation of admission, or revocation of degree, and the student challenges the determination of responsibility and/or the outcomes proposed by OAI.

Any information obtained by OAI staff during the administrative review may be shared with the review panel. Prior to a review panel's occurrence, the student or OAI staff may choose to resolve the case without a review panel (if, for example, a student accepts responsibility and outcomes or OAI staff determines through additional information that a violation did not occur).

- **Review Panel.** In a review panel, OAI staff will convene three to five members, designated by the Vice Provost for Academic Programs or designee, comprised of any combination of faculty, staff, and students, to consider the report/documentation and to hear from/ask questions in real time of the student, instructor (if available) and any relevant identified parties. The review panel shall determine by a preponderance of evidence standard if the student is responsible for the alleged violation, and, if applicable, outcomes.

If the student is determined to be responsible for one or more of the alleged policy violations, then the review panel will be informed of any previous disciplinary record with OAI and/or any other university office (e.g., OCE, EEO-TIX, Residential

Education) and current status (e.g., whether they are currently subject to disciplinary probation or a deferred outcome), if applicable. The previous disciplinary records will be considered in determining (an) outcome(s) for the matter(s) under consideration.

Decisions of responsibility and outcomes are determined by a majority vote of the review panel. The review panel shall be facilitated by a trained staff member from OAI or OCE, who, although not a voting member of the panel, may offer guidance to the panel regarding the findings and outcomes.

- **Outcomes.** If a student is found responsible for a violation, the student may receive any of the outcomes listed in this student handbook. Grade penalties are determined and assigned by instructors after a decision is final. Any challenge to a grade penalty should follow the grade dispute process (p. 38).
- **Appeals.** Information related to the grounds and process for appealing determinations of responsibility and (an) outcome(s) in academic and non-academic cases is described under the Appeals section below.

## Outcomes

If the disciplinary process results in a determination that a student/organization is responsible for a violation of university policy, one or more outcomes may be issued. An outcome is a required activity, educational intervention, or change in student/organization status, or restriction on a specified activity that is designed to hold a student/organization accountable for their actions; to promote their physical, intellectual, social, and emotional well-being; to protect the integrity of the educational environment of the university; and/or, to ensure the safety of every member of its community.

Outcomes will be considered in light of the nature of the violation, a student's/organization's comprehensive disciplinary history, university response to prior instances of similar conduct, and any mitigating or aggravating factors identified during the disciplinary process. Outcomes for repeated offenses may be more significant. Failure to comply with the terms of any outcome (or an interim measure issued by the Interim Action Committee) may be considered an additional violation.

Outcomes including but not limited to those listed below may be issued when a student/organization is found responsible for a violation of university policy through the disciplinary process. Typically, an outcome is not implemented until the disciplinary process has concluded, which is when a final decision has been rendered on appeal or where no appeal is submitted.

### *Disciplinary Probation*

Disciplinary probation is a status for a duration of time that indicates that a student/organization has engaged in unacceptable behavior. Any further violation of university policy may result in more significant outcomes such as removal from university housing, suspension, or expulsion from the university. Students/organizations placed on disciplinary probation may continue to

participate in university activities unless specific outcomes or other campus and organizational rules or regulations restrict such participation.

### *Expulsion from the University*

Expulsion is permanent termination of student status from USC. A permanent notation will appear on the student's transcript indicating that the student was expelled and the date of the action. The student will be excluded from all classes, seminars, and programs; will not be allowed to participate in any university-sponsored activity; may not receive a USC degree; and is permanently barred from university premises (a USC Housing & Hospitality Services Contract & Living Agreement will be canceled if applicable). If the expulsion becomes effective during a semester for which the student currently is enrolled, the student's enrollment will be withdrawn by the university resulting in marks of "W" for the enrolled courses on the student's academic transcript and the student will not receive a refund of tuition or fees.

### *Organizational Outcomes*

All student organizations, clubs, and similarly organized groups are responsible for compliance with university rules and regulations. Upon a determination that a group has engaged in violations, encouraged violations, or did not take reasonable steps as a group to prevent violations of university rules and regulations, the group may be subjected to permanent or temporary removal of recognition, social probation, denial of the use of university facilities, or other appropriate outcomes (see **Accountability of RSOs** under *Recognized Student Organizations* on p. 53).

### *Removal from a Course or Section of a Course*

Removal precludes a student from participation in and attendance of the course or section, or any of its sessions. In multiple section courses, the student will be informed whether they are permitted to transfer to another section. If they are not, or they are removed from the course entirely, the student will be withdrawn from the course by the university, resulting in a mark of "W" for the course on the student's transcript and the student will not receive a refund of tuition or fees.

### *Restitution*

Reimbursement for damage to university property or for misappropriation of university property or services may be imposed in combination with other disciplinary action where appropriate. Such reimbursement may take the form of monetary payment or appropriate service to repair or otherwise compensate for damages. Reimbursement for damage to personal property may also be imposed.

### *Restriction or Loss of Computing Privileges*

Computing privileges may be restricted on a temporary or permanent basis. Such restrictions may include access to specific facilities or resources, limits on the use of university computing resources (e.g., for specified academic work only), and/or loss of privileges for the use of university computing resources for any purpose, including academic work.

### *Revocation of Admission*

A revocation of admission means that the student loses admitted status to the university. The student may not continue enrollment or enroll for future semesters and may not receive a USC degree. Revocation of admission precludes the student from the opportunity to apply to or be admitted to any program at the university in the future. A permanent notation will be made on the student's transcript indicating that admission was revoked and the date of the action. If the revocation of admission becomes effective during a semester for which the student currently is enrolled, the student's enrollment will be canceled by the university resulting in marks of "W" for the enrolled courses on the student's academic transcript and the student will not receive a refund of tuition or fees.

### *Revocation of Degree*

When a degree is revoked, an individual loses the right to claim their degree as earned. Posting of the degree will be removed from the individual's transcript and a permanent notation will be made on the transcript indicating the revocation, the degree involved, and the date of the action. Furthermore, the student will be permanently prohibited from reapplying and re-enrolling at the university.

### *Suspension from the University*

Suspension from USC is termination of student status for a specified but limited period of time. During the period of suspension, the student will be excluded from all classes, seminars, and programs; will not be allowed to participate in any university-sponsored activities; is barred from university premises (including if applicable, cancellation of a USC Housing & Hospitality Services Contract & Living Agreement); and, may not complete academic work elsewhere that may be counted toward the completion of a USC degree. A restriction will be placed prohibiting the student from performing any registration transactions during the period of suspension. The restriction will not be removed, and the student will not be allowed to perform registration transactions, until OCE/OAI notifies the University Registrar that they anticipate that all disciplinary obligations will have been met by the conclusion of the period of suspension and that the registration restriction may be released in order to permit the student to register for courses for the semester following conclusion of the suspension. A notation will appear on the student's academic transcript indicating the dates of suspension. Upon earning a degree from the university, the suspension notation will be removed from the student's transcript.

Violation of the conditions of suspension, university policies, or regulations during the period of suspension may be cause for further disciplinary action, which may include a lengthier suspension or expulsion from the university.

If a suspension becomes effective during a semester for which the student currently is enrolled, the student's enrollment will be withdrawn by the university resulting in marks of "W" for the enrolled courses on the student's transcript and the student will not receive a refund of tuition or fees.

### *Warning*

A warning is a written notice to a student/organization that continued or repeated violations may be cause for disciplinary action.

### *Deferred Outcomes*

Deferred outcomes (e.g., deferred suspension) are issued for violations serious enough to warrant issuing the outcome (e.g., suspension) but where circumstances mitigate the offense or for repeated less serious violations. They are provided for a designated period during which a student must demonstrate compliance with university policies.

Deferred outcomes do not impose any restrictions on university attendance or participation in activities. However, additional policy violations, including minor violations, during the period of the deferred outcome will likely result in the deferred outcome being implemented. OCE/OAI staff and review panelists will not, in determining whether a new violation should cause a deferred outcome to be implemented, reassess the original decision to assign the deferred outcome and they will direct the implementation of the deferred outcome unless extraordinary circumstances exist that justify not doing so. Outcomes that may be deferred include, but are not limited to, removal from housing, suspension, expulsion, and loss of group recognition. A decision by a review panel or OCE/OAI to implement a deferred outcome does not prevent them from applying additional or more significant outcomes (e.g., expulsion).

### *Other Outcomes*

Other outcomes may be imposed instead of or in addition to those specified in the above list. Examples include but are not limited to university housing reassignment or removal, denial of a USC Housing & Hospitality Services Contract & Living Agreement, restrictions upon or denial of driving privileges on campus, prohibition of serving in student leadership roles or participating in extracurricular activities, counseling, community service work, research projects, seminars, classes, or other educational experiences deemed appropriate.

All outcomes are assigned and implemented in accordance with the university's [Notice of Non-Discrimination](#).

## **Appeals**

### *Appeal Eligibility*

The determination or outcome(s) of an administrative review or review panel in OCE or OAI may be appealed by the student/organization.

Students/organizations may not appeal an administrative review in which they accepted responsibility for the alleged violation(s) and reached an agreement as to (an) outcome(s) or an administrative review or review panel in which the student/organization was not found responsible for a violation of policy.

### *Appeal Grounds*

Appeals are permitted by the student on one or more of the following grounds:

– *New information is now available that is sufficient to alter the determination of responsibility, and which the student was not aware of or could not have reasonably obtained at the time of the initial review.*

– *Procedural error(s) materially impacted the determination of responsibility. (Procedural or technical irregularities will not be sufficient to sustain an appeal unless found to have materially affected the determination of responsibility.)*

– *The outcome(s) assigned is (are) disproportionate to the determination of responsibility.*

***Note: If the student believes there are mitigating circumstances which should be considered in determining (an) outcome(s), the student must present such considerations in the administrative review or in a review panel.***

### *Appeal Process*

A student/organization must submit an appeal to the appeal manager within 10 business days from the date of issuance of the written decision. Any request for an extension is at the discretion of the appeal manager. Typically, the status of a student/organization will not be altered, and disciplinary outcomes will not be implemented, until a final decision has been issued in response to the submitted appeal. However, any interim measures in effect will remain in place pending resolution of the appeal.

The administrative review/review panel decision, the student's/organization's appeal, and information/documents considered in the review will be collected by the appeal manager and sent to the appellate authority. The appealing student/organization should be aware that appeals do not include an in-person/virtual presentation. Written submissions should be as complete as possible and no longer than five single-spaced typed pages with a font no smaller than a size of 10 point. Any supporting documentation must be directly related to the appeal ground(s) for consideration.

The appellate authority will evaluate the written appeal and information/documents considered in the review and provide a written decision to the student/organization and OCE/OAI. The appellate authority may uphold the initial decision in its entirety, send the case back to OCE/OAI for further review, modify the outcomes(s), reverse a finding of responsibility, or dismiss the case. This decision is final and binding.

The appellate authority for cases resolved by OCE will be the Vice President for Student Life or designee. The appellate authority for cases resolved by OAI will be the Vice Provost for Academic Programs or designee.

## **Retention and Reporting of Student and Organization Disciplinary History**

- **Retention.** A student's disciplinary record is maintained in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). For an explanation of university policy concerning student records, see **Student Education Records** under *Selected Academic Policies* (p. 45).

Student disciplinary records are maintained in the Office of Community Expectations (OCE) for non-academic misconduct and the Office of Academic Integrity (OAI) for academic misconduct for no less than seven years after the most recent student conduct incident, except in those cases that result in a notation on the student's transcript (i.e.,

notations on a transcript of suspension, expulsion, and/or revocation of admission or degree), in which case the OCE and OAI disciplinary records are kept for seven years following removal of the notation (in the case of a suspension) or indefinitely.

All records are maintained confidentially as provided in the university's policy concerning student education records (see **Student Education Records** under *Selected Academic Policies* on p. 45).

Records of organization disciplinary history are maintained by OCE for no less than seven years.

- **Reporting.** A student's disciplinary history may be shared internally (i.e., within USC) and externally (i.e., any entity outside USC) in accordance with FERPA and under the following parameters established by the university:
  - *Upon request, internal offices at USC may be provided student disciplinary history to evaluate student eligibility for study abroad, leadership opportunities, awards, or other university programs. Academic units seeking to evaluate a student's application for admission will follow the process below for External Parties. A student's disciplinary history for purposes of internal sharing includes all incidents in which a student was found responsible for a violation of policy, and includes cases resolved through the Health and Safety Intervention Policy and Informal Resolution process. Disciplinary history may be reported internally and externally for seven years after the most recent student conduct incident, except for outcomes of suspension, expulsion, and revocation of admission/degree, which are reported indefinitely.*
  - *External parties (graduate/professional schools, background checks for federal/state employment, private employers, etc.) may be given student disciplinary history, typically with a signed release by a student. Typically, information will only be shared with respect to cases from a student's disciplinary record that resulted in an outcome of suspension (temporary separation from USC), expulsion (permanent separation from USC), revocation of degree or revocation of admission, or dismissal from an academic program.*
  - *External reporting for student-athletes is subject to NCAA and athletic conference requirements and may differ from that described above.*

Organization disciplinary history (other than information that individually identifies current or former student members of an organization) may be shared internally and externally at the university's discretion.

Note: EEO-TIX maintains records of violations of the [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#).

## Selected Academic Policies<sup>2</sup>

### Class Notes

Notes or recordings made by students based on a university class or lecture may only be made for purposes of individual or group study, or for other usual non-commercial purposes that reasonably arise from the student's enrollment in the class or at the university. This restriction also applies to any information distributed, disseminated, or in any way displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email or otherwise on the internet, or via any other medium. Violations of this policy may subject an individual or entity to university discipline and/or legal proceedings.

### Disputed Academic Evaluation Procedures

Students who believe a grade has been assigned incorrectly are encouraged to first discuss the matter directly with their instructor. This initial step aims to preserve the student-instructor relationship and resolve issues through direct communication. If the discussion does not lead to a satisfactory resolution, students may initiate a formal appeal process.

All grade disputes must be submitted before the end of the term following the course in question. For example, a dispute regarding a fall course must be submitted before the end of the subsequent spring term. Students should note that this requirement applies to the initial submission of the dispute, not its resolution.

For most grade disputes, this appeal should be directed to the department chair and/or dean of the course. However, if the grade penalty was imposed in a course where due to a violation of academic misconduct was determined to have occurred, the student must instead appeal to the Vice Provost for Academic Programs. The Vice Provost may consult with relevant faculty and staff before making a final decision. Grade disputes submitted to the Vice Provost do not include an in-person/virtual presentation. The sequence of the appeal process for all other courses depends upon the structure of the school in which the academic evaluation occurred. The level(s) of appeal are as follows:

#### *Schools Organized by Departments*

For schools organized by departments, the first level of review, after speaking with the instructor, is by the department chair and, if needed, a second level of review by the dean.

The process described in the paragraphs (a) and (b) below applies to:

- USC Roski School of Art and Design
- USC Marshall School of Business
- USC School of Cinematic Arts
- USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism
- Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC (except the DDS)
- USC Price School of Public Policy

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<sup>2</sup> The latest editions of the [USC Catalogue](#), [Schedule of Classes](#), and the [Faculty Handbook](#) contain many current academic policies and procedures.



USC Viterbi School of Engineering  
USC Thornton School of Music  
USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences

- a. The department chair at their discretion may review the matter personally or conduct a formal review through an ad hoc or standing committee. The review committee is appointed by the department chair and consists of a faculty member from outside the involved department or academic unit, a student, a faculty member of the appealing student's choice, and two faculty members from the department or academic unit. A written decision will be given to the student after the department chair's decision or the review committee decision. Normally a decision should be sent to the student within approximately 15 days after the review. This time may be extended if necessary. The student should be informed in writing if the decision will be delayed.
- b. If either the student or faculty member who assigned the grade wishes to appeal the decision of the chair or the review committee, in the next level of appeal beyond the instructor and the department chair, they must appeal in writing to the dean of the academic unit within two weeks after receiving the written decision. The dean of the academic unit may review the matter personally or, if a formal review has not been conducted by the department, the dean may conduct a formal review. The review committee consists of the same categories of members within the academic unit as described above. The committee will make a recommendation to the dean who will make a decision which is final and binding. Normally a written decision should be sent to the student within 15 days after a review. This time may be extended if necessary. The student should be informed in writing if the decision will be delayed.

#### *Schools not Organized by Departments*

For schools not organized by departments, the second level of review beyond the instructor is by the dean. This applies to the following schools:

Iovine and Young Academy  
USC School of Dramatic Arts  
USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology  
USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance  
USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work

#### *Schools with Certain Professional Degrees*

The following degrees are governed by separate disputed academic evaluation procedures. Copies of these procedures can be obtained directly from the school.

USC School of Architecture (separate procedures for all degrees except Ph.D.)  
Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC (DDS Residency programs, Online and onsite masters programs)  
USC Rossier School of Education (separate procedures for all degrees except Ph.D.)  
USC Gould School of Law (J.D., MCL, LLM, MSL, MITLE, MDR)  
Keck School of Medicine of USC (M.D. the Physician Assistant Practice program, Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia, and Master's in Speech-Language-Pathology). Other degree programs

in the Keck School of Medicine, including undergraduate, master's and Ph.D. programs, fall into "Schools Organized by Departments" above.  
USC School of Pharmacy (Pharm.D., D.R.Sci.)

#### *Graduate Students who have been Dismissed from an Academic Program*

Please note that students accused of an academic integrity violation are subject to the procedures described in **The Disciplinary Process at USC**, above (p. 20).

For dismissals based on reasons other than academic integrity, the student may appeal in writing to the department chair or program director within 30 days of the date of dismissal. If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal, then, within 30 days of the date of the department's or program's decision, they may appeal in writing to the dean of the school. If the second appeal is unsuccessful, then the student may appeal in writing to the Dean of the Graduate School. Such an appeal must be received within 30 days of the dean's decision. Appeal panel guidelines can be found at

<http://graduateschool.usc.edu/current-students/student-resources/#appeal-panelguidelines>. For students in the professional programs in the Keck School of Medicine (M.D., P.A., Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia, Masters in Speech Language Pathology), and the J.D., and LL.M. programs in the Gould School of Law, the school dean is the final level of appeal. For students in the KSOM professional programs listed above, the time periods listed are 10 days instead of 30 days.

### **General Academic Petitions**

The Petition Services Office is responsible for processing student requests to deviate from general university policies. Faculty requests to change a grade that was originally submitted incorrectly is processed by the Grades Department (John Hubbard Hall B010). The actual decisions on these requests are made by a subgroup of the Committee on Academic Policies and Procedures (CAPP), which meets several times a month.

Not all requests for deviation from normal requirements are handled through the same process. Registration-related exceptions are initiated in the Petition Services Office. These include such requests as adding or dropping courses after enrollment deadlines and changing the grading option after the third week. Degree requirement-related exceptions are initiated in the student's academic unit. These include requests to count excess units in a course with a unit maximum and to extend time to complete an incomplete. Decisions on these types of exception requests are reported to the Petition Services Office by the CAPP petitions panel.

The following exceptions are those that a student may request under certain circumstances. There is no guarantee that the request will be approved. The panel will review the student's academic record and consider the circumstances that led to the student's situation. The circumstances must justify exempting an individual student from a rule or deadline that other students are being required to follow.

Students should take care that the material they submit is accurate, comprehensive, and well documented. It is important to initiate the petition process as soon as possible. A student who wishes to file a petition should speak with an academic advisor to determine whether the request is appropriate and whether it will actually resolve the problem.

### *Registration-related Exceptions*

A student wishing to request a registration-related exception should contact the Petition Services Office by visiting <https://arr.usc.edu/registration-counseling/petition-services/>. By contacting Petition Services, the student can determine whether there are grounds for an exception request and learn what documentation will be required. When all required documentation and endorsements are gathered, the student should submit the completed petition to the Petition Services Office. These requests are heard by the Registrar. Requests not approved by the Registrar are referred to the CAPP panel for review. Below are the registration-related exceptions with the guidelines.

- **Late or Retroactive Adding of One or More Courses.** The final deadline for original registration is the end of the third week of classes for fall or spring semesters. For summer sessions or special sessions, the student must look up the equivalent of the third week deadline. This is also true for the twelfth week drop deadline. Please assume that, in any reference to registration deadlines, the third or twelfth week refer to the fall and spring semesters and that an equivalent deadline will be applied for shorter sessions.

The end of the third week of classes is also the deadline to add courses. CAPP will consider petitions for exception to the add deadline only if the student has documented extenuating circumstances.

Extenuating circumstances are defined by CAPP as situations over which the student has no control (e.g., a family death). Situations over which the student has control (e.g., knowledge of the policy, being out of town, forgetfulness) are not considered to be extenuating circumstances.

In all cases, a petition to add a course must include a statement from the instructor indicating the quality of work and dates of attendance.

- **Late or Retroactive Withdrawal from One or More Courses.** The final deadline for dropping one or more courses is the end of the 12th week of classes or its equivalent for a given term. To officially drop a course, the student must process a drop form through the Registration Department or drop through Web registration. CAPP will entertain petitions for exceptions to the drop deadline when the student has documented extenuating circumstances, or the student was unable to evaluate their level of performance prior to the drop deadline.

Withdrawal petitions based on medical reasons may require accompanying documentation from the student's physician, which will be shared only with those with an absolute need to know the information. It is assumed that such requests will usually involve a complete withdrawal from all classes. If the request involves less than cancellation of the whole academic program, a complete explanation must be provided of courses to be dropped or retained, plans for completion of the remaining courses and an explanation of why the student's medical condition allowed completion of some courses but not all. In all cases, a petition to drop a course must include a statement from the instructor indicating the quality of work and dates of attendance.

Cautionary note: CAPP almost never approves requests for late withdrawals if the student has taken the final exam in a course. However, a student should not take this as an indication that they should purposefully miss a final exam because of a pending petition to drop. A student who misses a final exam because of a pending petition that results in a denied petition, will be in a worse position because the final exam grade will be calculated as an “F.”

- **Change in Registration Grading Option from Pass/No Pass to Letter Grade or Vice Versa.** The final deadline for changing the grading option of a course from pass/no pass to a letter grade or vice versa is the end of the third week of classes or its equivalent for a given term. Approval of requests to change enrollment status after the deadline is rare.
- **Time Limits for Registration-related Requests.** Exception requests for retroactive change of an official registration for a semester or special session must be submitted no later than 24 months from the last day of final examinations for the semester or special session in question. If appropriate, the time limit can be waived by the dean of the academic unit in which the student is seeking a degree but may not be waived if the courses in question occurred longer than five years previously.

## **Degree Requirement-Related Exceptions**

These requests are generated in the student’s major department or school. When the petition is completed, the school’s petition representative will submit the petition to Academic Review and Retention to be heard by the CAPP petitions panel. Below are the most common degree requirement-related petitions with the guidelines.

- **Extension of Time for Removal of an Incomplete (IN).** One calendar year is allowed to remove the mark of IN. A mark of IN cannot be removed by repeating the course, even if it is successfully completed within the calendar year requirement. If the IN is not removed within the calendar year, the course is considered “lapsed” and the grade is updated with a lapsed incomplete (IX). Lapsed incompletes are penalty grades and are calculated as grades of “F.” Courses offered on a Credit/No Credit basis or taken on a Pass/No Pass basis for which a mark of Incomplete is assigned will be lapsed with a mark of NC or NP and will not be calculated into the grade point average.

Extensions beyond this deadline are not likely to be approved if the student has enrolled in subsequent semesters, since it is assumed that the student’s first priority should be the removal of the incomplete.

In all cases, a petition for an extension of time for removal of an IN must include a statement from the instructor explaining what is needed to complete the course and why the instructor feels the student should be given even further time for completion.

Other degree-related exceptions include requests to count excess units for a course with a unit maximum.

- **Exceptions Made Elsewhere.** The Office of Admission and Financial Aid, Financial Services, and the Graduate School have similar processes for actions taken by their respective committees or deans. Still other requests are handled through the exception process which comes directly from the academic unit to the Degree Progress Department.
- **Registration in Graduate-level Courses by Undergraduate Students.** Exceptional undergraduate students may enroll in a graduate course. To do so, students must receive approval from the instructor. Students must also have prior approval from the chair of the major department to count the course for undergraduate credit or audit the course. The student's major department will notify the Registration Department in writing regarding the manner in which the graduate course will be used. In no case will a student be allowed to enroll in and receive credit for a graduate course if the student's cumulative USC GPA is below 2.0.
- **Graduate Credit for 400 and 500 Level Work Taken as an Undergraduate.** An undergraduate student who is within 12 semester units of the bachelor's degree and has a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 may request to enroll in and reserve for graduate credit a limited amount of work at the 400 and 500 levels during the last semester as a senior, provided that the semester program does not exceed 16 semester units. A written request from the student's academic advisor should be submitted to the Registrar's Office at [onestop@usc.edu](mailto:onestop@usc.edu) and should bear the endorsements of the chair of the student's major department and of the academic department in which the reserved work is to be taken. The Registrar's Office will verify that the reserved units do not fulfill requirements for the bachelor's degree.

### **Exceptions to the Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences Limits on Units in the Major or Limits on the College Basic Requirement**

Departments within the Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences awarding the B.A. degree cannot require fewer than 24 or more than 36 upper division units in the major. However, students may elect to take up to 40 upper division units within their major without a petition. A student wishing to exceed the limit must obtain the approval of the department with the final endorsement of the Dornsife Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs .

Students who major in the Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences must earn 104 units in the college departments. For students graduating with a minor or second bachelor's degree, this minimum is reduced to 96 units. Exceptions will be considered by the Dornsife Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs .

Students who are completing major degree programs in a professional school, but whose degree is conferred by the college, are exempt from this policy.

Substitutions of general education requirements and skill level requirements are generated in the student's academic unit and submitted to the Dornsife Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs. Substitution accommodations for foreign language requirements are evaluated by the Office of Academic Programs in consultation with the Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS).

## Grading Issues

- **Correction of Grade.** A student who believes an error was made in the assignment of a grade should consult directly with the instructor of the class. The instructor may request from the Grades Department and submit to CAPP a Correction of Grade form with appropriate endorsements. This process is initiated by the professor's department's grades coordinator.

A full description of the actual error will be required of the instructor. General descriptions such as "clerical error" will not be accepted. CAPP considers grade changes on the basis of the explanation given, but may void a request involving any of the following circumstances:

- *A request to change a grade of IN unless all work was completed prior to the end of the semester involved.*
- *A request to change a grade to any other mark than IN when work was completed subsequent to the end of the semester involved.*
- *A request that is missing the required endorsements (instructor, department chair and dean).*

- **Missing Grades (MG) Defaulting to Unofficial Withdrawals (UW).** Students have one year from the end of the semester in which they were assigned a mark of MG to resolve or clarify the mark of MG. (Note: Marks of MG assigned PRIOR to fall 2005 are not bound by this policy.) Missing grades can be resolved by the instructor of the course through the department's grade coordinator. The grades resolutions are handled by the Grades Department, (213) 740-5586, [grades@usc.edu](mailto:grades@usc.edu).

Failure to resolve the mark of MG within the one-year limit results in the assignment of the mark of UW (Unofficial Withdrawal). A mark of UW is a failing grade and will calculate in the student's GPA the same way that a grade of "F" is calculated in the GPA. Courses graded Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) in which a mark of MG is not resolved will result in a mark of NC.

- **Timeline for Degree Progress.** All undergraduate students must make reasonable progress, each year, toward their degree objectives.
  - I. All students are required to record their primary major through their academic advisor, by the start of the junior year (on completion of 64 semester units). Supplemental or secondary majors may be added after junior standing has been attained. Minors may be added at any time.
  - II. While there are no specific limits for completing bachelor's degrees (except in the case of discontinued programs), many departments change their major requirements over the years based on changing technology, etc. Occasionally, general education requirements are changed as well. Therefore, students who do not complete their academic degrees within six consecutive years from the beginning of the semester of their first completed USC course work will not be allowed automatically to continue following the pre-major, major, and minor requirements. (This time limit includes semesters during which students were not

enrolled.) The pertinent department chair will decide what pre-major, major and minor requirements each student must follow and communicate the decision to the student in writing.

Students who do not complete their degrees within 10 consecutive years from the beginning of the semester of their first completed USC course work will not be allowed automatically to continue their general education requirements. (This time limit includes semesters during which students are not enrolled.) The General Education Office will decide what general education requirements each student must follow and communicate the decision to the student in writing.

Changes in certain university-wide regulations, policies and procedures are immediate, regardless of the degree requirements in effect at entrance or transfer.

Students pursuing degree programs which the university discontinues may be required to immediately change majors and pursue other degrees. Some departments may allow students already in the program to complete the degree within a specified time limit, not to exceed five years. Beyond that time, such degrees will not be awarded.

## **Leave of Absence**

USC recognizes that students occasionally have needs that require them to take a pause from their academic program. It is the university's goal to support students in these circumstances so that they can address their needs and return to complete their program. For more information about a leave of absence, see <https://loa.usc.edu>.

## **Student Education Records**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The entire text of the university's policy concerning FERPA and student education records is located at <https://policy.usc.edu/student-records>. Additional information on FERPA can also be found by visiting the Registrar's FERPA website at <https://arr.usc.edu/records/ferpa/>.

Students who are 18 years of age or older, or who attend USC at any age ("eligible students") are afforded certain rights under FERPA with respect to their education records, which generally refers to records that directly relate to the student and that are maintained by USC or a party acting on behalf of USC.

- I. A student has the right to inspect and review education records pertaining to them, within 45 days after the day the university receives a request for access. Should a student wish to inspect a particular education record, a request to do so should be made in writing to the university office maintaining that record. Certain records (or information contained in records), such as parental financial records and information to which the student has waived access (e.g., confidential letters of recommendation), may be excluded from the student's right to inspection. Excluded categories of records and information are specified in the university's policy concerning the privacy of student education records.



- II. A student has the right to request an amendment of an education record that the student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Should a student believe their education record is inaccurate or misleading, a request for amendment or correction should be addressed, in writing, to the university office maintaining the record in question. The written request to amend an education record should clearly identify the part of the record the student wishes to change and specify why it should be changed. In instances where the custodian of records for that respective office decides not to amend the record as requested, the student may request a formal hearing by the university to resolve the issue. Questions about, and requests for, a formal hearing should be directed to the Office of the Vice President for Student Life. This provision for education record amendments does not apply to disputed grade information on academic transcripts. (See **Disputed Academic Evaluation Procedures** in *Selected Academic Policies* on p. 38 of this student handbook) or to student disciplinary records (which may only be modified through the appeal procedures set forth in the **Disciplinary Process** on p. 20).
- III. A student has the right to provide written consent before the university discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. Exceptions are noted in the university's policy concerning the privacy of student education records and include:
- a. Disclosure of information to a university official with a legitimate educational interest in the specific education record. The criteria for determining who constitutes a university official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest is set forth in the university's policy concerning student education records located at <https://policy.usc.edu/student-records>. A university official typically includes a person employed by the university in an administrative, supervisory, academic, clinical, research, or support staff position; a person elected to the Board of Trustees; a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or, a contractor or volunteer who performs an institutional service or function that would otherwise be provided by a university employee and who is under the direct control of the university with respect to the use and maintenance of information from the education records. A university official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility for the university.
  - b. Disclosure of information in connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, when disclosure is necessary to determine eligibility, the amount, conditions, or enforcement of the terms and conditions for the aid.
  - c. Disclosure of information to comply with a judicial order or legally issued subpoena.
  - d. Disclosure to officials of another institution of postsecondary education in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of FERPA.



- e. Disclosure concerning “directory information.” The university has designated “directory information” to include a student’s name, address (local and permanent), telephone number (local and permanent), university email address, student identification photo, student identification number (USC ID), USC attendance dates, USC degrees earned (with dates), academic honors, expected date of graduation, major/minor and degree objective, most recent previous school attended, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, whether or not the student is enrolled, and enrollment status. The university is under no obligation to release directory information upon request and considers such information proprietary and not for general release. Students wishing to restrict release of “directory information” for the duration of the academic year may do so by submitting their request to [registrar@usc.edu](mailto:registrar@usc.edu) from their usc.edu email address with “Request to Restrict Directory Information” in the subject line.
  - f. Any other disclosure of information permitted without obtaining prior written consent of the student under FERPA. Please note that the above exceptions represent a partial listing of those found in the university’s policy concerning the privacy of student education records.
- IV. A student has a right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the university to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The contact information for the office that administers FERPA is:

U.S. Department of Education  
Student Privacy Policy Office  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington DC 20202-8520

A student may also contact the USC Office of Culture, Ethics and Compliance at [compliance@usc.edu](mailto:compliance@usc.edu) to report a FERPA concern or complaint.

## **Falsification of Financial Aid Information**

The types of information covered by this policy include all documents and information submitted to apply for and/or receive need-based financial aid, scholarships, and private financing funds.

These documents and information include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- The Student Aid Report (SAR).
- The CSS Financial Aid/PROFILE Application and CSS Noncustodial Parent PROFILE Application.
- Financial Aid Supplement.
- Student and parent federal income tax forms, tax return information, and other income documentation.
- Documentation of U.S. citizenship or eligible non-citizen status.
- Documentation of housing/living arrangements.
- Academic documents relating to high school diploma or college course work.
- Loan applications, promissory notes, and related documentation.
- Specific program applications.
- Federal Work-Study time sheets.

- Any university financial aid forms and related documentation.
- Any written, electronic, or verbal statements sent to or made to a university employee regarding the student's financial aid application or other related documents.

The integrity of the documents and the honesty of the information presented through them are critical to the financial aid process. Students should be aware that they will be held responsible for the integrity of any financial aid information submitted either by them or on their behalf.

If the university determines that a student or a parent has provided falsified information, or has submitted forged documents or signatures, the following steps may be taken without prior notification to the student or parent:

- I. An incident report will be filed with the Office of Community Expectations (OCE) following procedures outlined in the student handbook. Pending resolution of the report, the Financial Aid Office may restrict the distribution of any further aid to the accused student.
- II. If the Financial Aid Office or the student conduct review process finds that a violation has occurred, the consequences may include but are not limited to the following:
  - *The student will be required to make full restitution of any and all federal, state, private, and/or university scholarship, grant, loan, or work funds to which they were not entitled.*
  - *Until full restitution is made, all federal, state, and university funds will be withheld from the student, including all funds disbursed in past or in current semesters.*
  - *No arrangements will be made with the Cashier's Office or Collections Office on the student's behalf to settle an account. The student will be responsible for all charges incurred on the student's account because of the loss of federal, state, or institutional financial aid funds.*
  - *If the student is determined to be ineligible for financial aid, based on a basic eligibility criterion, no further federal, state, or university funds will be awarded to the student in any future terms of enrollment at the university.*
  - *The student may become ineligible for future participation in some or all financial aid programs for a minimum of one year or longer. In some cases, the student will not be eligible to receive funds from that program in any future terms of enrollment at the university.*
  - *The student will not be awarded funds to replace those lost because of dishonesty.*
- III. In addition to any consequences directly related to the student's financial aid, the student may be referred to OCE for disciplinary action.
- IV. As required by federal and state law, the USC Financial Aid Office will report any infraction to the appropriate office or agency. These include but are not limited to the U.S. Department of Education Office of the Inspector General, state agencies, or other entities that may take whatever action is required by federal and state law. In this report, the Financial Aid Office will describe in detail the incident, the response of the Financial Aid Office and any additional actions taken by or pending with the university.

## Recognized Student Organizations

Recognized student organizations (RSOs) provide opportunities for students and other members of the university community to explore their academic, professional, political, social, recreational, artistic, cultural, spiritual, or community service interests. In addition, student organizations provide a space for the development of interpersonal, organizational and leadership skills in the members and officers. Such organizations exist to advance the educational mission of the university in accordance with USC's Unifying Values and the USC Student Commitment.

The existence of student organizations is sanctioned by the Board of Trustees, which has ultimate authority over student organizations and can, from time to time, direct USC Student Life on matters regarding student organizations. The responsibility for recognition of student organizations falls within Campus Activities in USC Student Life.

### Benefits of RSOs

Recognition as a student organization by USC provides benefits with the expectation that such organizations and their members accept certain responsibilities.

All recognized student organizations may:

- Post notices on campus, within the posting policy.
- Receive and post messages in the Campus Activities Newsletter .
- Use a campus mailing address and/or mailbox.
- Reserve campus facilities for events, programs, and meetings at a discounted rate. This includes discounts on staffing and equipment.
- Apply for university funding, including student program fee monies.
- Conduct fundraising efforts within the stated Policy on Sales and Fundraising by RSOs (see below).
- Access organizational email.
- Access banking services at the USC Credit Union and/or through Campus Activities.
- Use the name, logo, or other trademarks of the university, while making clear that the organization is a student organization at the university and not the university itself. Use of the name, logo or other trademarks must be consistent with the USC Identity Guidelines (<https://identity.usc.edu>), and Policy on Sales and Fundraising by RSOs (below).

### Student Organization Logos Policy

- All recognized student organizations are permitted to create and use their own logos providing the logos do not violate the USC Identity Guidelines or alter existing university logos. Student organizations are not allowed to use academic unit or department logotypes without permission from the academic unit or department. Student organizations are also not allowed to use the following university marks without special permission from the Department of Athletics or The Spirit of Troy: Interlocking SC, Baseball Interlocking SC, Football Helmet Trojan Head and the Trojan Marching Band's helmet. For more information, visit <https://identity.usc.edu>.

- Student organizations are permitted to identify their affiliation with the university through the proper use of USC official logos and trademarks on all products, publications, flyers, and documents. Student organizations are required to use authorized licensed vendors when sourcing products that feature any of USC's trademarks or wordmarks. For more information, visit <https://trademarks.usc.edu/campus-community>.
- Student organizations may use their own logos in the context of a website that meets the established USC Web publishing guidelines found at <https://itservices.usc.edu/web/>.
- Requests for permission to use any university logo or mark must be initiated by a student from the requesting organization. Requests from a national organization or other non-USC entity affiliated with the student organization will not be granted.

## Responsibilities of RSOs

Associated with benefits of being an RSO is a set of responsibilities that organizations and their members accept in order to remain in good standing with the university. An RSO must:

- Abide by all university policies, regulations, and procedures (as defined in this student handbook and elsewhere); all local, state, and federal laws; and any applicable governing regulations associated with national affiliation (if applicable). Student organizations affiliated with national or regional organizations are expected to make all decisions for their organization in keeping with the principle of local autonomy. This also holds true for relationships with alumni and organization advisors. RSOs are expected to take reasonable steps to prevent violations of university policy: (a) by their members and event attendees, (b) in facilities owned/operated/occupied by the RSO or a substantial number of an RSO's current or prospective members, and (c) at events organized or sponsored by the RSO or a substantial number of the RSO's current or prospective members.
- Limit participation to students, faculty, staff, and alumni of the university.
- Limit its voting members and officers to currently enrolled USC students.
- Refrain from discriminating in membership decisions, elections and all other matters on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, religion (including religious dress and grooming practices), creed, sex (except those exempted from Title IX compliance), age, marital status, national origin, citizenship status, employment status, income status, ancestry, military status, partnership status, medical condition (including cancer and genetic characteristics), pregnancy (including childbirth, breastfeeding, or related medical conditions), disability, political belief or affiliation, domestic violence victim status, military or veteran status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or genetic information. The RSO will include the following statement in its constitution and all promotional materials it posts: “[RSO] operates its programs in accordance with [USC's Notice of Non-Discrimination](#).”
- Refrain from using RSO/university funds for any activity, event, or program that endangers the health, safety, or welfare of others.
- Maintain an active membership roster on [EngageSC](#).
- It is the responsibility of each RSO to maintain meeting minutes, including results of any elections or votes. Meeting minutes provide a shared record of what is discussed and agreed upon during a meeting, including future plans, action items, and results of votes. Should any disputes or miscommunication arise, meeting minutes can be referred to for

clarification. As such, meeting minutes should be stored in a shared drive or folder that is accessible to all officers of the RSO.

- Not operate as a business. RSOs may not generate income for individuals and/or businesses. As student organizations recognized by the university, RSOs may solicit and receive tax-deductible contributions through the university (which is exempt from income tax under I.R.C. Section 501(c)(3)). RSOs are required to work with Campus Activities before engaging in any fundraising activities using the university's tax exempt status (see Sales and Fundraising by RSOs, below). RSOs that file their own application with the IRS or another government agency seeking tax exempt status without the prior approval of Campus Activities will no longer be recognized by the university as a student organization.

## **Recognition Process**

All applications for recognition of student organizations are reviewed and considered by Campus Activities, except "social fraternities and sororities" as defined by the Department of Education, which are reviewed and considered by Fraternity and Sorority Leadership Development (FSLD).

All student organizations must complete recognition through the online recognition portal, EngageSC, on an annual basis. Recognition status runs for the current academic year regardless of when an application is approved.

Organizations that do not complete the recognition renewal process by the specified time will lose all benefits.

The name and email of the primary contact on the application will be made available to members of the USC community. This student will also receive official communications from the university and is expected to share any pertinent information with their organization.

RSOs are required to upload the following information to EngageSC:

- Complete current membership profile and roster.
- Constitution and bylaws, consistent with university policies and regulations, ratified by the membership.
- Names and contact information of at least 10 current members.
- Name and contact information of the current USC full-time faculty/staff advisor. The advisor is required to complete an orientation training and to comply with all requirements of Designated Employees under the Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation, and of Campus Security Authorities under the Clery Act Policy.
- Agreement to abide by all university policies.
- Summary of the steps the RSO plans to take to prevent violations of university policy: (a) by their members and event attendees, (b) in facilities owned/operated/occupied by the RSO or a substantial number of an RSO's current or prospective members, and (c) at events organized or sponsored by the RSO or a substantial number of the RSO's current or prospective members.
- Completion of annual recognition trainings by five current officers of the RSO.

- Any plans to engage in certain activities, including those involving minors, use of hazardous materials, international travel, healthcare activities, and other activities as identified by Campus Activities from time to time. Organizations planning to conduct these activities may need to complete additional registration requirements before engaging in such activities.
  - RSOs engaging in health-related services, interventions, or distribution of goods, materials, or information (including medical, dental, pharmaceutical, mental health services) are subject to review and approval from USC University Clinical Services through submission of information to Campus Activities and additional meetings with University Clinical Services as required. No RSO may engage in such activities prior to receiving authorization from University Clinical Services.
  - RSOs planning to engage in a Covered Activity as defined by the university's Policy on Protecting Minors are required to obtain the approval of the Office of Youth Protection and Programming before engaging in any Covered Activity.
- For RSOs that own, operate, or occupy a residential facility (or whose members in substantial number own, operate, or occupy a residential facility), copies of any complaints received from their neighbors in the prior twelve months.

No student organization is entitled to recognition; recognition is a privilege that must be earned. USC reserves the right to revoke, limit, and/or suspend the privileges of an RSO should the organization fail to adhere to university expectations or adequately demonstrate on an annual basis that its members serve as upstanding citizens, positive role models for other students, and good neighbors. RSOs are expected to set a high bar of ethical conduct for their members and take proactive steps to ensure all members meet that bar.

Loss of recognition and/or benefits can result from but are not limited to:

- Incomplete recognition renewal application.
- Non-compliance with national governing body policies.
- Violation of the USC Student Handbook
- Hazing (see "RSO and Membership Accountability for Hazing," below).
- Misrepresentation (fronting).
- Acts of individual members (see **Accountability of RSOs**, below).
- Bank fraud, larceny, or theft.
- Failure to adhere to the educational mission of the university, including the Unifying Values and Student Commitment.
- The written request of an organization.

**Religious organizations** seeking recognition must also comply with expectations issued by the [Office of Religious & Spiritual Life](#).

Recognition of **social fraternities and sororities** at USC is guided by the Trojan Greek Community Standards and Accreditation, USC governing fraternity and sorority councils, and if applicable, inter/national organization policies. [FSLD](#) has oversight of these RSOs.

**Club Sports** seeking recognition must first be a university recognized student organization. Once approved the student organization seeking to join the Recreational Sports Council must

follow the guidelines outlined on the USC Recreational Sports website (<https://myrecsports.usc.edu>).

RSOs may be affiliated with other off-campus organizations. Before establishing such affiliation, the RSO must submit a copy of the constitution, articles of incorporation, or other governance document of the external organization for review and approval by Campus Activities.

Current policies and procedures related to RSOs can be found on the Campus Activities [website](#).

## **Accountability of RSOs**

USC has established the following policy for all RSOs to ensure that leaders and members of student organizations understand and accept responsibility for the actions of their group, its members, guests, and event attendees.

Every student organization member has the duty to take all reasonable steps necessary to prevent infractions of university rules growing out of or related to the student organization's activities. For RSOs, policies that may be particularly relevant include but are not limited to, those related to hazing, discrimination, sexual misconduct, vandalism, theft, alcohol or substance abuse, and misappropriation of organization or university funds.

Liability on the part of the student organization may be mitigated if members of the organization can demonstrate that they took reasonable steps to prevent infractions of university regulations by their fellow members. Such steps may include clear establishment of standards (preferably in writing), documented education of members as to the standards established, encouragement of members to follow the USC Student Handbook and Student Commitment, and documented enforcement of standards when violations occur. The specific steps necessary to avoid this liability (or to mitigate consequences) will vary according to the circumstances of the situation, the seriousness of the behavior, and the possible harms which could have arisen from the behavior.

Where more serious behavior and harm is in question, the student organization has the duty to take clear and firm action that is reasonably calculated to prevent and/or cease the behavior in question.

RSOs, their leaders/officers, and members may be held responsible for the acts of individuals. Such acts include but are not limited to:

- When a member of an organization is violating state law or university standards and other members present fail to indicate their disapproval, or by their continued presence without objection implicitly condone the behavior (e.g., hazing).
- When the acts grow out of or are directly related to the student organization's activities or an environment created by the organization.
- When the acts are those of guests of an organization, or by persons authorized or permitted to represent themselves as connected with the organization.
- When an organization places prospective members in a subordinate status prior to achieving full membership or imposes any kind of probationary period prior to full membership, and hazing occurs.

It is the responsibility and expectation of every member of every student organization to respond to the conduct of other members when they are engaged in behavior which violates the law or university regulations. Factors that may be considered in determining organizational responsibility include, but are not limited to, whether the violation arose during or is related to an official/registered event or activity; whether the violation arose during or is related to an unofficial/unregistered event, activity, or other gathering commonly considered associated with that RSO, was organized by one or more RSO members, and/or was attended by a substantial number of members; whether the RSO has promoted a culture or atmosphere that encourages, condones, or deliberately overlooks violations such as the one that occurred.

It is the responsibility of every organization to create a culture and atmosphere that makes clear to its membership that misconduct related to the student organization is inconsistent with membership in the organization.

This responsibility is not only to members who are engaged directly in the activity, but also to members not engaged in the activity who are present or who have knowledge of the activity. For instance, knowledge of involvement by other members in illicit activities is sufficient to being held accountable through the university's disciplinary process. All members must recognize that their conduct may result in both individual and group accountability through the university. Organizational leaders are expected to participate fully and truthfully in university investigations of student and organizational misconduct.

#### *RSO and Membership Accountability for Hazing*

Following a proven allegation of hazing, individual members and officers of the organization may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and expulsion from the university. Additionally, the student organization may lose its recognition with the university. Loss of recognition may begin immediately after a determination of hazing is made by the Office of Community Expectations (OCE) and/or Campus Activities. To regain recognition a student organization may be required to suspend activities such as:

- Recruitment of new members.
- Changes in membership status.
- Events, including social functions.
- Officer elections.
- Participation in voting groups of associated organizations (e.g., student assemblies, councils, etc.) or participation in their sponsored events.
- Participation in intramurals and accumulation of award points.
- Use of university facilities, including office space, meeting space or residence.
- All operations of the student organization.
- Internet access (email and website).

The restoration of recognition with the university will be followed by a period of probation for the organization. Probationary status for the organization may include some of the limitations imposed during suspension and may also involve projects, programs, and/or other criteria to be met by the organization. These stipulations will be designed to promote positive development of the organization.



(For additional information see **Hazing** in *Integrity and Accountability: Student Community Expectations and the USC Disciplinary Process* on p.16 of this student handbook.)

## Sales and Fundraising by RSOs

All RSOs are permitted to fundraise. However, RSOs (or individual members while acting in any capacity for the organization) may not:

- Conduct for-profit or commercial activities (or facilitate the for-profit or commercial activities of others).
- Conduct a business (or facilitate conducting the business of others).
- Act as (or create the appearance of acting as) a liaison, representative, agent, facilitator, face or front for another business, person, or entity.

Although all RSOs are permitted to fundraise on their own behalf, RSOs may only pursue fundraising activities to benefit their student organization, another university student organization, or an outside philanthropic agency or relief effort. Note: student organizations who solely exist to support an outside philanthropic organization will not be recognized. No individual student(s) may receive any type of benefit or payment in connection with any of these activities, either in the form of money, trade, discounts, and/or any other goods or services. All RSOs fundraising activities must comply with the following university policies:

- Fundraising Coordination – [Policies and Policy Governance](#)
- Gift Acceptance and Campaign Counting – [Policies and Policy Governance](#)

Specific questions should be directed to Campus Activities, which can help RSOs work with University Advancement.

### *Process*

- a. RSOs must complete the Fundraising Approval Request Form found on the Trojan Event Services website at <https://trojanevents.usc.edu/forms-and-permits>.
- b. The type of fundraising event must be identified:
  - i. Food sale – Approval signature is required from USC Hospitality. RSOs should email the form to [hosp.approvals@usc.edu](mailto:hosp.approvals@usc.edu). Note: All food must be supplied by a university-approved vendor. No “homemade” items will be approved. Sales are limited to a maximum of two, one-week periods per semester. Sales weeks must be held at least four weeks apart.
  - ii. Item sale – Approval signature is required from the University Bookstore. USC RSOs, departments, and athletic teams must obtain final permission to sell products on campus from the USC Bookstores Administrative Offices, located on the fourth floor of the USC Bookstore (BKS), (213) 740-4317. Permission is granted on the bookstore signature portion of the event registration form.
  - iii. Donation collection for a recognized organization.
  - iv. Charity collection/non-profit collection – A letter is required from the agency/organization receiving the funds raised stating that they are aware of this fundraiser and will be accepting the money. This letter must be on the agency’s official letterhead and submitted with this request. See the policy on Non-Profit Collections below.

- v. Other types – Trojan Event Services and Campus Activities will review and approve other types of fundraising events to determine the signatures required.
- c. Appropriate signatures from the University Bookstore and/or USC Hospitality are required prior to requesting the final signature from Campus Activities.

### *Non-Profit Collections*

RSOs collecting money/donations for specific non-profit organizations must meet with the Campus Activities at least two weeks prior to the event and supply Trojan Event Services with a written letter from the non-profit organization stating their agreement to accept donations prior to the scheduled collection of any goods or funds and documentation of their tax-exempt status.

### *Event Tickets/Payment for Services*

Event tickets or payment for services (performances, activities, etc.) are permissible if proceeds from sales will help the RSOs cover expenses for that specific event or activity. RSOs can accept donations from university departments or outside entities through utilization of a gift account through University Advancement.

### *Raffles or Lotteries*

In the State of California, raffles and lotteries are illegal if a person is required to purchase a ticket or make a donation in order to be eligible to win the contest.

### *Free Drawings*

Free drawings are legal when rules conforming to the California State Law are followed exactly. These rules are:

- The drawing must be in connection with an event or an RSO.
- The ticket must have the following information displayed on it:
  - *Date, time, and location of drawing.*
  - *Name of sponsors and beneficiary of fund-raising.*
  - *Donation or purchase of ticket is not required to be eligible to win.*
  - *Winner need not be present at drawing (not required but advised).*
- Free tickets (a minimum of one per person) must be available.
- Each solicitor must know that free tickets can be obtained and how to obtain them.
- The word “drawing” or “free drawing” is required; the word “raffle” on the ticket or in advertisements should not be used.

### *Silent Auction*

The same rules apply for coordinating a silent auction as would apply for a free drawing. All silent auctions must work with University Advancement.

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- The bid sheet must have the following information printed on it:
  - *Date, time, and location of drawing.*
  - *Name of sponsors and beneficiary of fundraising.*
  - *Donation or purchase of ticket is not required to be eligible to win.*
  - *Winner need not be present at drawing (not required but advised).*
- *The RSO must keep a record of what gifts were donated and the source of donation.*

### *RSO Co-Sponsorship*

As many RSOs co-sponsor events with outside agencies, it is important to be aware of what constitutes a co-sponsorship.

An RSO hosting an event with an outside organization must be aware that:

- The student organization must be the primary contact for Trojan Event Services.
- The main contact from the student organization must be a current, full-time student and member of the RSO.
- The money must be paid by the RSO and not the outside agency for any fees owed to the university.
- The RSO must be the primary name listed on all advertisements and promotional materials.
- The main contact from the RSO must be present at all meetings, walkthroughs, and day-of event as the primary producer of the event.
- RSOs may not bring a business to campus as a vendor. Businesses can only come to campus if a pre-existing event is occurring (i.e., the business's participation in the event cannot be the primary purpose of the event).
- Corporate Sponsorships can only be in-kind donations and must add value to the RSO or event and may not include monetary donations.
- The primary target audience for the event must be USC students and alumni.
- RSOs co-sponsoring events with university departments will only be considered the primary producing entity if all of the above conditions apply. RSO policies only apply to events for which the above conditions are met.
- For events in any campus space, the RSO must complete the [Student Organization Co-Sponsorship Form](#) located on the Trojan Event Services website (for all events in Trojan Event services spaces) or Campus Activities website (for all events regardless of location).

### *Vendors*

USC Student Life and Trojan Event Services are responsible for vendor sales on campus. No other department or organization, with the exception of the USC Bookstores, Hospitality, and the Athletic Department, is permitted to bring outside vendors to campus. Outside vendors are prohibited from selling on campus without prior permission from one of these departments:

- USC Bookstores, (213) 740-9254.
- USC Private Events & Conferences, (213) 740-5956 .
- USC Athletic Department, (213) 740-5200.
- Trojan Event Services, (213) 764-4943 .

### *USC Emblem Products*

USC emblem products intended for sale during fundraisers must be manufactured by a vendor that is licensed by USC. A licensed vendor has a contract with USC that specifies quality standards and services and recognizes that USC insignia are protected trademarks.

A list of licensed product manufacturers may be obtained from the Trademarks and Licensing Services website at <https://trademarks.usc.edu>, (213) 740-5222.

### *Sponsorship Activation*

An activation is any event that brings a non-university affiliated company or business onto campus solely to market its products or services. Often, sponsoring companies will approach RSOs about booking their event on campus, or promoting their brand, in exchange for money or products. The university does not permit RSOs to engage in sponsorship activations. Campus Activities is permitted to approve requests for Sponsorship Activations on behalf of Student Life . USC Student Government (USG & GSG) is the only student-led entity at USC that is permitted to utilize sponsorship activations, in collaboration with Campus Activities, and is limited to booking two sponsorship activations per semester. Additional activations may be permitted with approval from Campus Activities. All activations must be approved by Campus Activities (campusactivities@usc.edu). Sponsors may not bring any merchandise or materials to campus that are in direct conflict with an existing USC on-campus vendor. Any materials need to be vetted prior to the event, utilizing the Sponsorship Form located on the Campus Activities website.

If the university suspects that a student organization is in violation of these policies its event may be charged off-campus rates for the venue, and/or be canceled and the student organization will forfeit any deposits.

(RSOs should refer to *Appendix V: Event Planning and Facility Reservation/Use* on p. 71 for information on events, sound amplification, etc.)

## **Appendix I: University Governance and Disciplinary Authority**

As a private corporation, USC is governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board is a self-perpetuating body. The trustees delegate certain powers to the administration of the university and serve as the ultimate decision-making body.

The President is the chief executive officer of USC. The President carries out policies established by the trustees and, in doing so, has the power to delegate this authority to the officers of the university.

The Academic Senate, Undergraduate Student Government, Graduate Student Government, and the Staff Assembly serve as consultative bodies for the President and the administration, preparing studies and reports and making recommendations directly to the president on matters pertinent to the functioning of the university.

Students, faculty, staff, and administrators serve on university committees, which provide advice and counsel to the President and administration on a broad variety of matters related to the operation of the university.

Nominations for membership on university committees are made usually during the spring semester. Appointments are made by the President of the university. Information and applications for committee membership are available in the Undergraduate Student Government office, Ronald Tutor Campus Center 224, (213) 740-5620, or the Graduate Student Government office, Ronald Tutor Campus Center 224, (213) 740-5649.

Departmental and divisional committees and councils exist in many academic units. Information is available through each particular office. In addition, many of the non-academic offices on campus, such as the Engemann Student Health Center, have organized student advisory boards to voice opinions and participate in program development. The appropriate office or department should be contacted for this information.

### **Power of the Board**

WHEREAS, the University of Southern California, like other independent and private universities, is financed primarily by charitable contributions and grants as well as by tuition, fees and contracts; and

WHEREAS, as a private institution, the university admits students selectively and students who elect this university recognize that their admission and continuance is in the nature of a privilege and not a right; and

WHEREAS, the powers of this corporation are exercised, its property controlled and its affairs conducted by this Board of Trustees, pursuant to the laws of the State of California, the Articles of Incorporation of the University and the By-laws of the University;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees, acting through its officers, has both the right and responsibility to and hereby does affirm its final authority over the on-going institution, and nothing in the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities or any other policy pertaining to any subject promulgated by this Board shall be construed as in any way abridging the basic powers, rights and responsibilities of this Board.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees, June 7, 1978

### **The Disciplinary Authority of USC**

The powers of the university are exercised, its property controlled, and its affairs conducted by the Board of Trustees. Responsibility for the administration of these affairs is delegated by the board to various officers of the university, as stipulated in the corporate bylaws; the enforcement of all rules and regulations is the specific duty of the university president. The President, in turn, delegates the authority to the Vice President for Student Life to establish and hold student conduct review proceedings that will ensure the proper administration of the university's rules and regulations. The Vice President for Student Life has delegated this responsibility to the Office of Community Expectations (OCE) and the Office of Academic Integrity (OAI), which may, in consultation with the Office of Professionalism and Ethics (OPE), delegate all or a portion of their responsibilities to another investigative office on campus, or any external entity or individual. The delegation of responsibilities is different for matters involving reports of discrimination and harassment, including sexual misconduct, and related retaliation, which matters are delegated to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX and are governed by the Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation and associated resolution processes.

## **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.

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.

### *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 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,” (p. 38) 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.
- **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 Life**

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 USC's Report and Response site at [report.usc.edu](http://report.usc.edu). (*See Appendix IV: Free Expression* on p. 68.)

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 Appendix IX: Advertising, Promotion/Publicity, and Literature Distribution* on p.86.)

#### *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.
- 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 external organization shall not of itself disqualify a student organization from university recognition.
  - v. Student organizations are required to have a staff or faculty advisor and each organization shall be free to choose its own. Institutional recognition shall not be withheld or withdrawn solely because of the inability of a student organization to obtain an advisor. 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. For student organizations engaging in clinical work, University Clinical Services may provide direction and requirements for an advisor.
  - 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 section starting on p. 49.*)

(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.
- Encouraging individuals who are experiencing problems associated with alcohol and/or other drugs or chemical dependency to seek assessment and treatment.
- Engaging in ongoing self-assessment of university sanctions for the illegal manufacture, distribution, use, or possession of drugs, and the unlawful possession or use of alcohol.

(Taken from USC Drug-Free, <https://policy.usc.edu/drug-free/>)

### *Violation of Alcohol and Drug Policy*

Student involvement in underage consumption of alcohol or the manufacture, use, possession, distribution, or sale of illicit drugs is a matter of concern to the university and will subject a student so involved to disciplinary action by the university. Dependent on the nature of the violation, university sanctions may include educational intervention, mandated community reparations, suspension, or expulsion aside from or in addition to prosecution under applicable state and federal laws. Failure to comply with state and federal laws concerning alcohol or drug use, possession, transportation, or consumption may result in criminal sanctions, including imprisonment, fines and penalties, and suspension or revocation of driving privileges. University action may be taken whether or not independent action is taken by civil authorities.

### *Risks Associated with Alcohol and Other Drug Use*

There are many well-documented risks associated with the use of alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs, affecting not only the individual user, but also their family, friends, and roommates. Alcohol abuse is frequently a factor in cases of assault on campus. Other problems associated with alcohol and other drug abuse include poor academic or job performance; relationship difficulties, including sexual dysfunction; a tendency toward verbal and physical violence; financial stress; injuries or accidents; and violations of the law such as driving under the influence and willfully destroying property.

*Assistance*

Members of the university community are encouraged to seek assistance and/or support for themselves or others through any of the resources detailed in the University's Drug-Free policy, available at <https://policy.usc.edu/drug-free/>.

USC's [Annual Security Report](#) provides policy statement and crime statistics as required under the Clery Act.

## Appendix IV: Free Expression

The university as an institution of higher education benefits from the free exchange of ideas and robust debate on the issues that confront our society. Our right of freedom of speech and expression is a fundamental foundation of our educational mission, and we respect the right of our students to exercise their right of free speech and expression. No right, however, is unlimited, and with the exercise of any right come important responsibilities. We explain below the rights, responsibilities, and limits on the exercise of free speech and expression in our academic environment.

### *Free Speech Rights*

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects the right of free speech from government interference, and California's Leonard Law prohibits the university from making or enforcing a rule that subjects an enrolled student to disciplinary sanctions solely on the basis of speech protected by the First Amendment. The university fully supports the exercise of free speech consistent with the First Amendment and the Leonard Law, including the right to protest and demonstrate. The university's position is set forth in the following statement on Student Rights and Responsibilities:

*Students and student organizations shall be free to examine and discuss all questions of interest to them and to express opinion 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 expression they speak only for themselves.*

The First Amendment protects the exercise of free speech in ways that sometimes makes us uncomfortable, and courts have protected speech that is insulting, outrageous and offensive. The First Amendment protects what is commonly called "hate speech." The university cannot discriminate based on the content of student's speech simply because some other members of the community may find it offensive.

While we hope and encourage USC students to embody the university's [Unifying Values](#), including our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and well-being, many statements that may conflict with those cannot serve as grounds for discipline under this student handbook. The university in no way condones hate speech and expects that every student will engage in dialogue that is respectful of others. We learn when we listen. The best answer to hate speech is an environment that allows each individual or group to contest the ideas that they oppose and to win over others to their point of view.

If any student is adversely affected by speech that is legally protected, the university has resources available to help. The Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) maintains a [list](#) of both private and confidential resources that are available to students who are negatively affected by the speech of expression of others.

### *Speech That May Not Be Protected*

As noted above, not all speech is protected, and First Amendment rights are not unlimited. The following speech may not be protected:

1. Speech that is intended and likely to provoke imminent unlawful action (“incitement”).
2. Statements where the speaker means to communicate a serious expression of an intent to commit an act of unlawful violence to a particular individual or group of individuals (“true threats”).
3. Face-to-face communication of abusive and insulting language that, by its very utterance, inflicts injury, or tends to incite an immediate breach of the peace (“fighting words”).
4. Material that appeals to the prurient interest, that depicts sexual conduct in a patently offensive way, and that, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value (“obscenity”).
5. False communications that harm an individual’s reputation, cause the general public to despise or disrespect them, or injure them in their business or employment (“defamation”).
6. Harassment that violates the [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#).
7. Speech that infringes on the First Amendment rights of others (“heckler’s veto”). The university specifically notes that there is no First Amendment right to shout-down a speaker. The use of force or disruption to silence speech is not protected speech – it is a form of censorship which the university does not tolerate. It is critical in a community of higher learning to support each individual’s right to express their viewpoint. USC will not permit students to prevent others with whom they disagree from expressing their views in accordance with the First Amendment.

Students that engage in unprotected speech may be subject to disciplinary action.

### *The University’s Right to Regulate Speech*

In addition to regulating speech that is not protected, the university has the right to regulate the time, place, and manner of speech in reasonable manners to ensure that it does not disrupt the university’s ability to function and to protect its property rights. All persons on university property must abide by all applicable laws and the university’s policies on facilities use and demonstrations. The university may remove any student or person whose conduct substantially interferes with or disrupts the university’s operations or academic, research, or patient care environments.

As noted above, the university will also not allow physical interference with others’ peaceful exercise of free speech, which is often referred to as the “heckler’s veto” or “coercive disruption.” Coercive disruption includes physically blocking access to a speaking event, physical intimidation of a speaker, and noisemaking that prevents a speaker from being heard. If this kind of conduct occurs during any university-sanctioned activity or function, the university will act to restore the conditions under which free speech can flourish and any student who engages in coercive disruption may be removed and subject to disciplinary action.

*Free Speech Responsibilities*

Our words are powerful things. Words can inform, inspire, and uplift. Words can wound and inflict pain. We are better as a community when we choose words and behavior that enlighten rather than ridicule and that heal rather than wound. We aspire to be an educational community where bridges are built rather than barriers erected. All students should read and aspire to our [Unifying Values](#) to build an educational community in which we can flourish.



## Appendix V: Event Planning and Facility Reservation/Use

### *Scheduling*

Requests to reserve space on the University Park Campus (UPC) are generally processed through Trojan Event Services, (213) 764-4943. Reservation request forms are available online at <https://trojanevents.usc.edu/>. For Health Sciences Campus (HSC) events, or if a UPC venue is not overseen by Trojan Event Services, organizers will be referred to the appropriate school or building manager .

Reservations are made on a first-come, first-served basis according to organization type. The university cannot and does not guarantee that facilities suitable for all group needs will be provided. Requests should be made early enough – generally at least 3-6 weeks in advance – to allow adequate time for processing the request, planning the event, payment of fees and advertising. Trojan Event Services has the requested date deadlines on their website. No advertisement can take place before written confirmation is received.

Once Trojan Event Services or the applicable facilities manager has confirmed that space is available, event organizers are required to submit a University Event Permit Application (UEPA). UEPA's will be reviewed and approved by USC departments having a vested interest in the event, which may include, but is not limited to, USC Student Life, USC Bookstores, USC Private Events & Conferences, USC Transportation, Facilities Planning and Management, Risk Management and Insurance, Office of Youth Protection and Programming, Cultural Relations & University Events, the Department of Public Safety, Fire Safety, and USC Athletics.

In the event that a request to reserve space has not been timely submitted, the university may nevertheless consider a UEPA under the following exceptional circumstances only: (1) there was no reasonable way to anticipate the need for the event in time to reserve the space with the advance time ordinarily required (e.g., a vigil or demonstration about a matter that occurred only a few days earlier); (2) the time, place, and manner of the event would not interfere with any other scheduled events or university functions; and (3) the UEPA has been submitted sufficiently in advance of the event (typically *at least* 48 hours) to allow the university to address any health, safety, or logistical issues or concerns.

Social events without alcohol provided by the host student organization are permitted Sunday through Thursday until midnight and Friday through Saturday until 2 a.m. Events where alcohol is provided are restricted to Thursday – Saturday (refer to the section on **Student Organization Events with Alcohol** on p. 76 for details).

No social events may take place during university study days or final exams.

USC Student Life and other authorized offices reserve the right to relocate or discontinue any event for reasons including but not limited to states of emergency, official university functions, disruptions from amplified sound, an event exceeding room capacity, and/or facility repair.

Individuals or groups are responsible for any damage they cause. Repair or replacement costs will be charged to the group reserving the facility at the time damage is incurred.

Event organizers are responsible for the enforcement of USC's [Smoke Free Policy](#) at all events hosted by or on USC owned and/or occupied spaces including buildings and outdoor venues.

Event organizers must provide a plan of action to address potential violations during their scheduled events. This may include, but is not limited to, hiring of university-contracted security and providing training on how to approach, inform, and educate event attendees of the policy. Individuals violating the policy who refuse to comply may require DPS intervention, may be asked to leave the event, and may face disciplinary action through the Office of Community Expectations (OCE).

Event organizers must make reasonable efforts to respond to reported or witnessed violations. Failure to act upon receiving a report or witnessing a violation may result in the inability to host future events.

#### *Accessibility*

Events should be planned in a manner that ensures that the event is accessible to individuals with disabilities. It is expected that any event publicity materials contain an accessibility statement. More information about planning accessible events can be found at <https://accessibility.usc.edu/accessibility-at-usc/event-accessibility/>.

#### *Advertising, Promotion, and Literature Distribution*

All aspects of social events must be advertised in accordance with the Advertising, Promotion/Publicity, and Literature Distribution Policy (*See Appendix IX: Advertising, Promotion/Publicity, and Literature Distribution* on p. 86.)

#### *Amplified Sound*

For student organization events where amplified sound is used, the event must be registered with Campus Activities (or FSLD for social Greek-letter organizations). Amplified sound is defined as any form of equipment (i.e., microphone, speakers, amplifiers, bullhorns, musical instruments) used to increase sound levels or any object that does not require equipment to project its sound. In some cases, large group singing is also considered amplified sound. Amplified sound cannot exceed 90 dBA, when measured 45 feet from the source.

To maintain the academic environment at the university, the use of amplified sound equipment in open areas must be approved by Trojan Event Services. Sound checks and events involving high sound levels may not be scheduled during or near regular classroom instruction if the possibility of interference exists. Any RSO or university department may reserve one of the designated outdoor programming venues for sound amplification.

The use of outdoor areas for amplified events is limited by the nature of the given area and the probability of interference with official university functions. Events requiring electricity must utilize the services of Facilities Planning and Management.

For events, moderate amplification (not more than 90 decibels, "A" weighted, measured 45 feet from the front center of the stage) is allowed at Hahn Plaza (adjacent to Tommy Trojan) from noon to 1 p.m. Monday – Friday. A sound check will be permitted from 11:50 a.m. to noon. All

other requests for amplified sound will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by Trojan Event Services. All outdoor venues and events will be considered for approval by Trojan Event Services.

### *Special Event Insurance for Events on Campus*

The Office of Risk Management & Insurance may require liability insurance for co-sponsors, vendors, performers, and exhibitors who participate in special events on campus, and from individuals or groups that use USC campus (indoor or outdoor) space who reserve through Trojan Event Services. These events may be produced or sponsored by Non-USC affiliated organizations or USC affiliated organizations or a combination thereof.

Special Event Insurance provides short term liability coverage for special event groups (for profit or non-profit) and/or performers using USC campus space.

Special Event insurance is designed by various insurers to address the risk management and insurance needs of such groups for the short-term rental or use of USC campus space such as outdoor spaces, meeting rooms, ballrooms, recreation facilities etc. USC Office of Risk Management and Insurance may recommend to the event organizer to secure coverage on an as-needed basis for special events regardless of who the organizer is.

USC departments that sponsor an on or off-campus special event may contact the USC Office of Risk Management and Insurance directly to determine whether a separate special events insurance is required.

Insurance requirements are determined on a case-by-case basis. See attached event insurance guidelines for insurance requirements.

The Office of Risk Management and Insurance requires liability waivers if an activity in your event is considered medium to high risk. Examples of high-risk activities include a swimming or diving event, flag football, 5K run, or an inflatable obstacle course. For a copy of the USC waiver form, please contact Trojan Event Services.

Please contact the Office of Risk Management and Insurance at [uscrisk@usc.edu](mailto:uscrisk@usc.edu) for additional information.

### *Security*

Fencing, staffing, identification checks, and the need for other security requirements will be determined by the Department of Public Safety and the University Events Committee, using considerations including but not limited to the history of the event, scale of the event, nature of the event, liability and risk, health considerations, construction, and sponsorship.

Outdoor events and social dances must adhere to the guidelines detailed on the [Outdoor Events and Social Dance Policy](#), available at the Trojan Event Services website.

### *Venue Reservation*

RSOs are offered priority use of all Student Life venues. However, other reservations that are made prior to student reservations will not be cancelled. RSOs may also request to use classroom space, but academic scheduling has priority in these venues. Anyone using USC venues must comply with university regulations regarding time, place, and manner (See p. 69). Activities, programs, or events must not interfere with other university functions. If any unscheduled activity interferes with an official university function or any other scheduled activity, it may be discontinued at the direction of USC Student Life.

Reservation request forms for Bovard Auditorium, Ronald Tutor Campus Center, outdoor venues, and advertising spaces are available online at [trojanevents.usc.edu](http://trojanevents.usc.edu).

Event requests for Bovard Auditorium, Ronald Tutor Campus Center, and the outdoor parks and plazas must be submitted to Trojan Event Services. Telephone requests are not accepted. The venue requested becomes officially confirmed only when written approval is issued.

For complete policy details, please see <https://trojanevents.usc.edu>.

### *Misrepresentation (Fronting)*

Individual students, RSOs, and/or employees of the university may not reserve space for personal or commercial purposes. Additionally, student organizations may not act as agents for university departments, off-campus persons, or unrecognized student organizations in order to receive student rates for space and other RSO benefits.

Student organizations may not reserve space for the purpose of allowing off-campus vendors or organizations to advertise or sell items. Groups doing so will be held responsible for misrepresenting themselves and their organizations.

### *Venue Options*

USC Student Life operates the Ronald Tutor Campus Center, Bovard Auditorium, and all outdoor areas in the center of campus. These venues may be scheduled through Trojan Event Services at <https://trojanevents.usc.edu>.

- **Bovard Auditorium:** A multi-use lecture/performing arts venue that seats 1,230 people with stage dimensions of approximately 37 feet by 42 feet. Information about Bovard Auditorium can be found online at <https://trojanevents.usc.edu/bovard/>.
- **Outdoor Programming Venues:** Trojan Event Services provides outdoor programming areas for use by RSOs, campus departments, and invited guests on a reservation basis. A full list of outdoor programming venues and their features may be found <https://trojanevents.usc.edu/venues/outdoor-venues/>.
- **Ronald Tutor Campus Center (TCC):** A multi-use facility that features many reservable meeting and event spaces in addition to several non-reservable lounges and study spaces. For details on available venues and reservation policies, visit

trojanevents.usc.edu. Full details on TCC programming spaces are available at <https://trojanevents.usc.edu/venues/ronald-tutor-campus-center-meeting-rooms>

- **Recreational Sports Venues:** USC Recreational Sports manages scheduling for several indoor and outdoor sports/recreation venues and facilities. These include spaces inside fitness centers, gym spaces, outdoor turf fields, and pool facilities. Availability for these spaces may be limited due to priority of scheduled use for intramurals, club sports, fitness programs, and open recreation.
  
- **Alternate Campus Venues** (not managed by Trojan Event Services):
  - *Archimedes Plaza/Engineering Quad [USC Viterbi School of Engineering, (213) 740-4530].*
  - *Annenberg G21 Auditorium [USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, (213) 740-5297].*
  - *Breezeway and Bridge South Lawn [USC Marshall School of Business, (213) 740-6886].*
  - *Bing Theatre, (213) 740-8686.*
  - *Childs Way sidewalk in front of the Bookstore [Bookstore, (213) 740-0066].*
  - *Lewis Hall [USC Price School of Public Policy, (213) 740-0397].*
  - *Libraries (<https://libraries.usc.edu/spaces-overview>).*
  - *Theatres (contact the appropriate theatre for scheduling procedures).*
  - *Classrooms may be reserved by contacting the USC Classroom Scheduling Office, at (213) 740-4612, or [classroom.scheduling@usc.edu](mailto:classroom.scheduling@usc.edu).*

### *Cancellation of Events*

The University of Southern California reserves the right to cancel any scheduled event (in whole or in part) and/or suspend any future reservation(s) and/or scheduling privileges if fees are not paid by the required due date; if the group does not comply with USC policies and procedures; if the group fails to show within 15 minutes of the specified start time; if complaints are received for disturbing academic classes or other events; or, if USC officials cannot ensure the safety of students, faculty, staff, and/or visitors.

### *Additionally:*

- Groups reserving Bovard Auditorium, Ronald Tutor Campus Center, or any outdoor parks or plazas must cancel by the cancellation date listed for each venue in the Trojan Event Services Terms and Conditions. Failure to cancel an event will result in a violation and may incur charges for set-up and/or staff. Charges may be applied for late cancellations.
- If any unscheduled activity interferes with an official university function or any other scheduled activity, it may be relocated or discontinued at the direction of USC Student Life.
- Groups reserving space are responsible for the behavior of its members and guests. Behavior that causes a material and substantial disruption may result in the cancellation and/or suspension of future reservations.

### *Tabling*

Walk-up tabling allows for RSOs to use a designated location, day, and time on campus to table and does not require a reservation. Walk-up tabling is permitted for RSOs only and is allowed on Trousdale Parkway along the western edge of Alumni Park Monday – Friday between 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Spaces for walk-up tabling are limited to five organizations per day, with one table per RSO on a first-come first serve basis. Tables and chairs are provided by Trojan Event Services and may be picked up at the concierge desk on the first floor of Steven and Kathryn Sample Hall (SKS). Tables cannot be set up on the grassy median or Bovard (west) side of Trousdale Parkway. Tabling includes a table and two chairs only. No canopy or tent. No activations. Tabling is not allowed at the USC Village. Student must be a current member of the RSO. If you are tabling in an unauthorized location, you will be asked to move immediately. Please reference the Trojan Event Services website at <https://trojanevents.usc.edu> for the complete tabling policy, permitted days and times, and maximum number of days allowed per week and month, and specific requirements related to distribution of food or other items.

Any requests for outdoor space outside of the designated walk-up tabling described here requires an event reservation per the scheduling guidelines. This includes placing tables and/or chairs at other locations and times on campus.

### *Violations*

Non-compliance with any university policies or Trojan Event Services guidelines will constitute a violation. Violations may result in a written warning, additional fees determined by the nature of the violation, and/or a loss of all Trojan Event Services privileges.

## **Filming**

School of Cinematic Arts (SCA) students wishing to film in any of the venues listed on the Trojan Event Services website must submit the completed SCA location permit form to Trojan Event Services at least 48 hours in advance of their film shoot. This applies to most outdoor venues. Indoor venue requests must be sent to Trojan Event Services at least three (3) weeks in advance. Please note that some locations/spaces are not managed by Trojan Event Services. For indoor venues, the SCA student filmmakers may be subject to staffing fees. Contact Trojan Event Services for the complete SCA Filming Guidelines.

Non-SCA students or recognized organizations wishing to film must contact the USC Campus Filming Office at (213) 740-6951.

Commercial filming is approved through the USC Campus Filming Office at (213) 740-6951. Fees are determined by the Campus Filming Office.

## **Student Organization Events with Alcohol**

For student organization events where alcohol is present, the event must be registered with Campus Activities (or FSLD for social Greek-letter organizations). Alcohol is not permitted at university dances sponsored by RSOs. Alcohol may not be the main “focus” for any student organization event.

All members of the USC community are expected to abide by all federal, state, and local laws, including those governing alcohol consumption and distribution. Under California law, it is illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to purchase alcohol or to possess alcohol in a public space. It is also illegal for anyone to furnish alcohol to an individual under the age of 21. RSOs are considered in violation of this provision if they do not take reasonable steps to prevent the acquisition or consumption of alcohol by anyone under the age of 21 at their events or in their facilities.

The selling, either directly or indirectly, of alcoholic beverages (including beer and wine) except under the authority of a California Alcoholic Beverage Control Board license is prohibited. This includes selling cups, mixes, ice, tickets for admission, required donations, etc.

Events where alcohol is served by the host organization are only permitted on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. Alcohol service must end at least one hour before the event's scheduled end time.

- Thursday events with alcohol must end by 12:00 a.m.
- Friday and Saturday events with alcohol must end by 2:00 a.m.

Requirements for events with alcohol:

- Alcohol can only be provided and served by an approved USC vendor.
- IDs must be checked by the approved vendor's bartender.
- Distribution of alcohol to persons under the age of 21 is prohibited.
- The serving of alcohol to an intoxicated person or to the point of intoxication is prohibited.
- The student organization must limit each attendee to a two-drink maximum.
- When alcohol is served, it is required that sufficient quantities of nonalcoholic beverages and food must be available.
- Outdoor events with alcohol must include a fenced area for alcohol service and consumption, accessible only to those over 21.
- Serving alcohol at events may require the presence of a Department of Public Safety (DPS) officer.

Alcohol approval process:

- The alcohol approval form must be completed by the host student organization and must be received by Trojan Event Services (for TES-managed venues) or the venue manager (for other venues) at least two weeks prior to the event, with designated approval signatures prior to the event. This form can be found on the Trojan Event Services website.
- For more detailed assistance with protocol on serving alcohol at events, call:
  - Trojan Event Services, (213) 764-4943
  - Campus Activities, Steven and Kathryn Sample Hall (SKS) 410, (213) 740-5693.
  - USC Private Events & Conferences, Bookstore (BKS) 404, (213) 740-6285.

## **Camping**

- With the exception of designated university housing used by residents with a corresponding living agreement and their registered guests, university grounds and facilities may not be used for the purposes of living, sleeping, or camping overnight, which includes but is not limited to the use of cots, tents, or temporary, makeshift, or portable structures intended for living or sleeping.



## **Appendix VI: Bicycles, Motorcycles, Motorized Scooters, and Coasting Devices**

### **Bicycles**

All applicable sections of the [California Motor Vehicle Code](#) pertaining to bicycle use are to be observed on the properties of the University of Southern California. Any person operating a bicycle on USC property implicitly accepts responsibility for adherence to all state and local laws governing bicycle operation, as well as this bicycle policy.

#### *Licensing/Registration*

Bicycle registration is mandatory for all faculty, staff, and students who ride or park a bicycle on the USC campus. By registering your bicycle, you will help DPS identify your bike if lost, stolen, recovered, or impounded. Registration can be completed online at [dps.usc.edu/services/bikes/](https://dps.usc.edu/services/bikes/) and is free. After completing the registration process, you will receive an automated receipt by email which should be kept for your personal record. Print and take a copy of this receipt to the DPS office to pick up your registration decal.

Upon change of ownership or destruction of the licensed bicycle, it is the responsibility of the owner to notify DPS.

Valid California Bicycle Licenses obtained from other agencies will be accepted by DPS. However, it is recommended that owners register their bicycles with DPS to assure that current information is available in the event of a theft or if your bicycle is impounded. There is no charge for this informational registration.

It is unlawful for any person to tamper with, destroy, mutilate, or alter any license, indicia, registration tag, or serial number on a bicycle (CA Vehicle Code 39002(b)).

Any person who knowingly buys, sells, receives, disposes of, conceals, or has in their possession any personal property from which the manufacturer's serial number, identification number, or any other distinguishing number has been removed, defaced, destroyed, or altered is guilty of a crime (CA Penal Code 537e(a)).

#### *Parking Regulations*

Bicycles may be parked in bicycle racks only, and it is recommended that they are secured to these bicycle racks to deter theft. Bicycles parked in any other location, including in any manner that impedes the normal access to ramps designated for wheelchair or disabled access, are subject to impound and fines.

#### *Parking Regulation Enforcement*

A public safety officer or other individual specifically authorized by DPS may issue a citation, relocate, or impound a bicycle for any of the following reasons:

- Is in violation of any regulation stated above.
- Appears to have been abandoned or inoperable.
- Has been reported stolen by its owner.

DPS is authorized to remove the securing mechanism of the bicycle by whatever means are necessary for impounding a bicycle or locking the bicycle in place. The university shall not be liable to the owner of the securing device or the bicycle for the cost of repair or replacement of such securing device.

Any bicycle that has been impounded will be secured at its location or in the impound area of DPS. Persons retrieving an impounded bicycle will be required to show proof of ownership (with complete description: manufacturer, model, color, size, and serial numbers) and their picture identification (student ID or appropriate state driver's license).

Bicycles are not to be left on campus for storage during winter and summer breaks. Bicycles considered abandoned will be tagged and issued a three-day warning. If no action is taken within three days, these bicycles will be considered abandoned and impounded with a fee assigned.

### *Bicycle Operation*

All bicycles must be walked in and around the following areas, Monday through Friday, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.:

- Trousdale Parkway, between Hellman Way and Downey Way.
- Childs Way, between Watt Way and the eastern boundary of Trousdale Parkway.
- All construction areas at all times for the continued safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Gate 5, at times, on McClintock, between Jefferson Boulevard and 34<sup>th</sup> Street.

Bicycles must be walked in and around USC Village at all times.

Bicycles may not be operated at a speed that exceeds the university speed limit for vehicles (15 miles per hour on streets and 5 miles per hour on campus grounds).

Bicycles may be operated on the streets and pedestrian malls on campus; however, bicycles are to be walked on sidewalks in designated areas delineated by signage.

Bicycles must always yield to pedestrians anywhere on the pedestrian malls. Bicycles must be walked in crosswalks.

When operating a bicycle, bicyclists must remain in the marked bike lane, if there is one. Otherwise, they must remain to the far right of the street or paved area.

### *Fine Structure*

Violators receiving a citation are referred to the Office of Community Expectations (OCE) and may receive a monetary fine.

- The impound fee is \$20 for each occurrence. A bicycle will not be released until after the payment is made and ownership is established. If an owner is unable to pay the fine, they must sign a promissory note in order to retrieve their bicycle. If the owner does not return with the fine within three days, the charge will be added to the student's fee bill and a registration hold will be placed if the amount is not paid.

- The impound fee for bicycles blocking building access, wheelchair ramps, or handicapped access is \$35.
- The impound fee for bicycles locked to a wheelchair ramp or handicapped access is \$75.
- Bicycles not claimed in 90 days will be presumed to be abandoned and will be sold or donated to charity.

### *Cautionary Note*

In the state of California, bicyclists on public streets have the same rights and responsibilities as automobile drivers and are subject to the same rules and regulations as any other vehicle on the road. A bicyclist who strikes anyone is liable for all medical expenses of that victim and any damage done to the victim's property.

A bicycle operator who strikes a pedestrian or other bicyclist and does not stop to inquire whether any harm or damage has been done, has committed the crime of "hit and run" (Calif. Motor Vehicle Code, Section 20001). This could result in the arrest and prosecution of the bicycle operator. Such an offense carries a one-year sentence in jail or state prison, or a fine of \$10,000, or both.

If you operate a bicycle, you are also urged to review your homeowner, renters and/or automobile insurance policies, or other personal liability coverage to be sure you, and your family (if you are a dependent), are protected.

## **Motorized Scooters/Motorcycles**

This policy relates to all motorized scooters, mopeds, motor bikes, motorcycles, or other wheeled, motorized devices, herein referred to as motorized scooters/motorcycles.

- Motorized scooters/motorcycles must be ridden in a safe manner with the riders observing the university speed limit of 15 mph and obeying all vehicular traffic regulations while on campus.
- Riding motorized scooters/motorcycles is not allowed at any time on the malls, sidewalks, in USC Village, or the center of the University Park Campus (Trousdale Parkway between 34th Street and Exposition Boulevard, and Childs Way from McClintock to Trousdale Parkway). Riders may not take "short cuts" through unauthorized areas nor ride the vehicle in any way that may endanger pedestrians. Individuals with mobility-based disabilities who require the use of an Other Power-Driven Mobility Device (OPDMD) must seek a modification to the general rule from the Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) prior to using the device.
- Motorized scooters/motorcycles are not permitted in any university building and must be parked in the designated motorized scooter/motorcycle parking areas only and may not be parked in such a manner as to prevent automobiles from parking (i.e., parallel to the curb or between two parked cars). Designated scooter/motorcycle parking area maps are available at the USC Transportation Office.
- Motorized scooters/motorcycles parked or driven on university property must have a valid parking permit. Parking permits may be purchased at the [USC Transportation Office](#). The permit must be affixed in a highly visible area (e.g., the front fender, fork, or windshield).

- The use or possession of hoverboards (self-balancing scooterboards) or electrical/battery-powered scooters is prohibited in university-owned residence halls, apartments, and houses.

## Coasting Devices

Roller skates, scooters, skateboards, and other coasting devices are not vehicles, and are prohibited on roadways dedicated solely to vehicular traffic and in parking structures. Coasting devices are approved for use as transportation on university property but cannot be used in any manner that places pedestrians at risk; use for acrobatic, racing, or other stunts is strictly prohibited. Persons may coast or ride upon any sidewalk or improved surface used for pedestrian purposes, provided they yield the right-of-way to pedestrians on foot.

The use of coasting devices is prohibited within any building on the USC campuses or on any surface features (e.g., wheelchair ramps, benches, or other architectural features) that might reasonably be expected to incur damage because of such use. Persons using roller skates must remove them before entering all university buildings.

These regulations will be enforced by the Department of Public Safety. Students or employees violating these regulations are subject to disciplinary action by the appropriate university office or official. Any other person violating these prohibitions may be cited for criminal trespass as well as criminal citation.

## Definitions

**Roller skate:** A shoe, or attachment for a shoe, with a set of wheels connected for skating. This includes rollerblades.

**Scooter:** A narrow platform mounted on in-line or skate-type wheels with a handle to allow steering by turning the front wheels.

**Skateboard:** A board mounted on skate-type wheels.

**Acrobatics, recreational use:** Any action on roller-equipped devices that is not necessary for the safe forward movement of the rider, and which might be described as a “trick” or “routine,” including but not limited to such maneuvers as having all wheels off the ground at the same time, jumping up or down steps, and so on.

All coasting devices must be walked in crosswalks at all times, and around the following areas, Monday through Friday, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.:

- Trousdale Parkway, between Hellman Way and Downey Way.
- Childs Way, between Watt Way and the eastern boundary of Trousdale Parkway.
- All construction areas at all times for the continued safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Gate 5, at times, on McClintock, between Jefferson Boulevard and 34<sup>th</sup> Street.

All coasting devices must be walked in and around USC Village at all times.

All coasting devices may not be operated at a speed that exceeds the university speed limit for vehicles (15 miles per hour on streets and 5 miles per hour on campus grounds).

*Cautionary Note*

In the City of Los Angeles Municipal Code, “No person shall ride, operate or use a bicycle, unicycle, skateboard, cart, wagon, wheelchair, roller skates, or any other device moved exclusively by human power, on a sidewalk, bikeway or boardwalk in a willful or wanton disregard for the safety of persons or property” (LAMC 56.15.1). A person riding roller skates or skateboards who strikes anyone is liable for all medical expenses of that victim and any damage done to the victim’s property.

If you use roller skates/blades or a skateboard, you are also urged to review your homeowner and automobile insurance policies, or other personal liability coverage to be sure that you, and your family (if you are a dependent), are protected.

## **Appendix VII: Special Admissions Review**

The university may, at its sole discretion, initiate a special admissions review after an offer of admission has been made but before a prospective student's enrollment has begun (typically, enrollment begins on the later of the first scheduled day of classes of a student's program and the first day the student attends a class for which they are registered), when the university becomes aware of any of the following:

- False and/or inaccurate information that is believed to have been submitted by, or on behalf of, a prospective student.
- New information that would have been considered in the review of the prospective student's application had it been known by Admissions at the time.
- Academic or conduct concerns.
- A failure to provide all requested information/documents.

In the case of prospective undergraduate students, the special admissions review will be conducted by the Director of Undergraduate Admission or their designee in consultation with the director of the Office of Community Expectations (OCE) or director of the Office of Academic Integrity (OAI) as appropriate. In the case of prospective graduate students, the special admissions review will be conducted by the school official responsible for overseeing admission to the graduate program to which the student has been offered admission, or their designee in consultation with the director of OCE or director of OAI as appropriate.

A special admissions review may result in action(s) including a delay of enrollment, revocation of admission from the university, or referral to OCE/OAI for disciplinary action outlined under this handbook. All pertinent documents will be reviewed and the prospective student may be asked to provide additional information regarding their application to the university.

A decision will be reached by the review officer and communicated in writing to the prospective student. There is no appeal of a special admissions review.

Formal hearing procedures and protections cited in the student handbook do not apply to the special admissions review process.

## Appendix VIII: Online Students

As part of the state authorization process, USC is required to make state specific information available to online students.

Online students may address grievances through the same university processes offered to on-campus students:

- See the *Notice of Non-Discrimination* on page 100 of this student handbook, for concerns related to equal opportunity, affirmative action, and discrimination.
- See *Selected Academic Policies* on page 38 for concerns related to disputed academic evaluations.
- See [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#) for concerns related to sexual, interpersonal, and protected class misconduct.

The responsible university contact is provided in each of the resources stated above, and can provide online students with details regarding processes and procedures for addressing grievances.

Online student should also be aware that a number of external entities exist for handling complaints related to the university's compliance with applicable law:

- See *External Reporting Options* on page 101 of this student handbook for contact information for the Office for Civil Rights, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs.
- See page 102 of this student handbook for contact information for the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education.
- See <https://online.usc.edu/state-disclosures/> for a list of state departments of education.

## Appendix IX: Advertising, Promotion/Publicity, and Literature Distribution

The content of all printed and digital materials posted or distributed on campus or to the campus community via official university electronic media (e.g., posted on university-administered social media pages or websites or distributed via university listservs) must:

- Contain no advertisements for “term paper mills” or similar products or services which undermine the academic integrity of the university.
- Contain no true threats or incitement, meaning (a) language meant to communicate a serious expression of an intent to commit an act of unlawful violence to a particular individual or group of individuals or (b) directed to inciting or producing imminent lawless action and is likely to incite or produce such action.
- Contain no advertisements or promotions for drugs that are illegal under state or federal law.

USC does not exercise prior restraint on printed or electronic materials to be posted or distributed on campus or to the campus community via official university electronic media that may be libelous. However, if such libelous materials are posted or distributed, they may be referred to the [Office of Community Expectations \(OCE\)](#) for action. A student or recognized organization may be personally responsible for the content of any sign, notice, poster, digital content, or other material referenced herein, which the student or organization sponsors or posts on campus or distributes to the campus community via official university electronic media.

The use of third-party promoters, including student brand ambassadors, is strictly prohibited.

Advertisements or promotions on campus or in university publications and activity programs do not imply official endorsement by the university.

All printed and digital publicity materials posted or distributed on campus or to the campus community via official university electronic media (e.g., posted on university-administered social media pages or websites or distributed via university listservs) must include the following:

- The full name of the sponsoring organization and the individual or organization responsible for the posting (if different).
- The time, date, and place of the event.
- Any entrance fees or costs to participate.
  - The following text: “Events are open to all USC Students. [XXX Department/Organization] operates its programs in accordance with USC’s Notice of Non-Discrimination.” (<https://eeotix.usc.edu/notice-of-non-discrimination/>)

Posting or flyer distribution is prohibited in the following areas or in the following manner:

- All trees and hedges.
- The ground, taped or loose.
- Buildings (including glass windows, doors, railings, balconies, walls, and columns). Individual buildings may have additional regulations regarding posting and removal of postings.
- Elevators.



- Tommy Trojan and all other statues.
- Trash and recycling cans.
- All lamp posts.
- Fences.
- Utility poles.
- Bicycle racks.
- Parking lots and structures.
- On top of other previously posted materials.
- Fountains (including drinking fountains).
- Writing messages on university grounds using chalk or paint.
- Electronic flyers or materials distributed via USC listservs, except in accordance with the guidelines outlined above.
- On cars, bicycles, or other individual property.
- Freestanding advertisements such as signs on stands, sandwich boards, other displays, etc.
- Hanging of banners, flags, or other signage from any areas listed here.
- Postings/flyers that could endanger the physical safety of others, including but not limited to, signs on any forms of stakes or sticks.

The university may place additional restrictions on areas and manner from time to time. The individual or organization responsible for posting will be held accountable for any violations and associated fees.

#### *Literature and Publications Distribution*

University students and RSOs may distribute literature anywhere on campus provided such distribution does not substantially interfere with the scheduled activities in that area or substantially interfere with the essential operations of the university. USC Student Life oversees the in-person distribution of literature (including posters, handbills, and pamphlets) and publications on the campus and the compliance of individuals and organizations with this policy. Reasonable time, place, and manner regulations may be applied while respecting the rights of students under the First Amendment to the Constitution as applied by California law.

Designated bins are for official university publications only. No preprinted manually inserted sheets of information (flyers, advertisements, or any other information message sheets) are allowed inside the pages of any official university publication.

Individual academic and administrative units may have their own guidelines for posting literature/information in buildings they operate. Students are required to adhere to those as well and should consult with the academic/administrative unit regarding their guidelines.

All printed materials in violation of these policies may be removed. Costs incurred for the removal of such materials can be charged to the person, persons, and/or RSO responsible for the violation.

Students are not authorized to remove or destroy another person's or group's postings or flyers and doing so may lead to disciplinary action. In the event a student believes something has been

posted/distributed in violation of this policy or an academic/administrative unit's guidelines, they should contact DPS or the Office of the Vice President for Student Life.

## **Appendix X: Additional Policies**

### **Student Health Insurance Requirement**

USC requires our students to carry comprehensive health insurance. It is mandatory for all domestic students (including online and graduate programs) enrolled in six or more units. It is also mandatory for all Health Science Campus and international students enrolled in any number of units.

The university offers a USC Student Health Insurance Plan into which the students identified above will be automatically enrolled. Students will have the option to waive the USC Student Health Insurance Plan if they are already covered under another comprehensive health insurance policy that satisfies USC requirements. Prior to the start of the semester, students will receive communication from USC Student Health stating the opening and closing dates of the waiver request process.

For more information regarding the USC Student Health Insurance Plan including current rates and the steps to waive out, visit <https://studenthealth.usc.edu> and go to the Insurance page. Additional questions can be answered by contacting an insurance representative at USC Student Health at (213) 740-9355.

### **Immunization and Health Screening Compliance**

All full- and part-time entering students, hybrid students (those in online classes with in-person sessions), summer program participants, and any other person(s) who will be on campus for a minimum total of four weeks (28 days) with other students will be required to present proof of immunity to measles, mumps, and varicella. Persons under 21 must show vaccination for meningococcal disease. International students [from countries defined as high-burden TB by the World Health Organization (WHO)] must demonstrate they are free of active tuberculosis. USC Student Health will provide any needed medical services to assist students in satisfying these requirements. Students enrolled in health professional programs, summer program participants, and those under 18 may be subject to additional requirements.

Additional immunization and health screening requirements may be implemented at the direction of the Chief Campus Health Officer based on current public health conditions following recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other public health authorities.

Deadline for submission of required documentation coincides with the university's schedule and falls on the third Friday after classes start during the fall and spring semesters. Students will not be able to register for their second semester of classes until USC Student Health confirms that they have satisfied this requirement. Failure to comply with the deadline will result in a registration hold and late fee. Summer program participants must submit required documentation at least one month before the start date of their program.

For more information regarding immunization and health screening requirements and

the steps to submit documentation, visit <https://studenthealth.usc.edu>. Additional questions can be answered by contacting USC Student Health at (213) 740-9355.

## Student Media Releases

A person's registration as a student and either (i) attendance at or near the campuses of the university, or (ii) participation in classes, performances, and other activities of the university, constitutes an agreement by the student to the university's use and distribution (both now and in the future) of the student's image or voice in photographs and video and/or audio recordings in any form (including electronic reproductions) of such attendance, performance, or participation. If any student in a class or performance where such photography or recording is to take place does not wish to have their image or voice used, the student should raise the matter in advance with the instructor or artistic director.

## Student-Led International Travel

The following set of policies and guidelines has been developed, with the approval of the provost, to clarify university expectations for student organizations planning international trips. For questions about this policy, contact the Office of Global Initiatives. USC tracks all student travel, except personal, including those led by students, such as:

- Student organizations or groups of students working under the specific direction of a university school or department.
- RSOs or groups that choose to affiliate with the university This includes any RSO or student group that receives university funds, uses the USC name, and/or receives support or guidance from a university school or department, or individual faculty or staff member.
- Travel that takes place separate from a study abroad program. It may include but is not limited to international travel to perform field study, research, attend conferences, or other professional development activities.

All international travel organized by USC students, except personal, must follow the guidelines below, which include general trip requirements/recommendations and descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of advisors and student coordinators:

### **I. Designate coordinators and advisors.**

#### **a. Student Coordinator**

##### *Pre-trip Roles*

- Thoroughly explain mission and purpose of the trip to all prospective/selected participants.
- Make final determination on eligibility for participation (this often entails a selection process with the possible involvement of a faculty/staff advisor).
- Inform participants that they will be required to have USC-sponsored travel health insurance.
- Coordinate the collection/submission of student information to the Office of Global Initiatives no later than six weeks prior to departure.

- Make travel clinic information available to all participants. (1) Schedule group appointment and (2) contact travel nurse to review immunization requirements.
  - Provide general leadership while on the trip. Act as primary decision maker and group representative in all matters affecting the day-to-day experience of the trip.
  - Maintain contact with community partners and facilitate regular conversations between all parties to troubleshoot problems and determine solutions.
  - Assist with emergency response as needed.
  - In cooperation with faculty/staff advisor (if present), respond to student concerns and problems as they arise.
- b. Advisor
- Each USC sponsored overseas student trip is strongly encouraged to include a faculty/staff advisor for the duration of the trip. An advisor may be any of the following:
- An employee whose job requires them to go on the trip.
  - An exempt employee with at least a 50% staff or faculty appointment.
  - A non-exempt staff employee performing duties and taking personal vacation time.

#### *Pre-trip Roles*

- Meet several times with the student coordinator(s) before leaving USC to delineate the advisor role and allow for an open exchange of ideas and expectations between the advisors and student coordinators.
- Act as the liaison between the student group and Office of Global Initiatives.
- Submit a Risk Assessment and Contingency Plan (RACP) to the Office of Global Initiatives
- Complete the Student Travel Abroad Roster and send the list of student participants to USC Office of Global Initiatives, as described at <https://global.usc.edu/student-travel-abroad/policies-guidelines>.
- Assure the collection of vital participant information in the Student Travel Abroad portal: (1) university travel release; (2) medical treatment authorization; and (3) emergency contact information, as described at <https://global.usc.edu/student-travel-abroad/policies-guidelines/>.

#### *Roles During the Trip*

- Respond to coordinator/participant concerns and problems as needed.
  - Possess a full set of student information forms and emergency procedures.
  - Serve as the official university representative in the case of an emergency.
  - Coordinate emergency response and all communications between university and others as needed.
- c. All groups must host at least one pre-trip orientation session that covers the following:

- Travel details, living arrangements, and trip itinerary.
  - Emergency procedures, health insurance, International SOS.
  - Health and safety precautions.
  - Expectations for appropriate behavior and participation.
  - Country-specific information.
- d. Transportation While on Trip  
Every effort must be made to secure transportation in the host country that is provided by licensed and insured vendors. USC's affiliated travel agencies are available to provide assistance with these arrangements at [travel@usc.edu](mailto:travel@usc.edu).
- e. Accommodations While on Trip
- Every effort must be made to identify and assure access to adequate services.
  - Use appropriately vetted hotels and housing providers.
  - Do not use informal home sharing services such as Airbnb.
  - Identify closest emergency medical facilities.
  - Inform all participants of their expected living conditions prior to their departure.
- f. Communications While on Trip
- Determine the extent of adequate communications – either email, cellular, or land line communications available.
  - Create a plan for communications and articulate the plan to all trip leaders prior to departure.

II. **Complete Requirements in the Student Travel Abroad Portal.** University Required Forms will be collected via the Student Travel Abroad portal. Both the on-campus coordinator and on-site coordinator should keep digital copies of these forms once completed. Copies of these forms are available to view at <https://global.usc.edu/student-travel-abroad/policies-guidelines/for-administrators-without-management-login/>.

- a. Know Before You Go Informed Consent Form
- This document serves as a guide for students with different physical or learning abilities, those with medical conditions, and those with psychological issues in order to assist them in making an informed decision on selecting an overseas location that is appropriate for them.
- b. Medical Treatment Authorization
- This form allows USC representatives to authorize medical treatment for a student who is incapacitated and unable to make such decisions on their own.
- c. Travel Release
- This is USC's standard release form to be used by all overseas programs.
- d. AIG Travel Certification
- This form is required for specific countries based on insurance assessed risk.

- III. **Obtain USC-sponsored Travel Health Insurance.** All students traveling abroad must enroll in the USC-sponsored Travel Health Insurance plan, which includes special health and emergency coverage by International SOS. Students will be automatically enrolled upon completion of the required forms in the Student Travel Abroad portal.
- IV. **Review Restrictions on Destinations for International Trips.** At the discretion of the provost and/or the Vice President for Global and Online Initiatives, specific intended destinations for USC-affiliated or USC-sponsored international trips may be restricted due to State Department travel warnings, Centers for Disease Control (CDC) warnings or other indicators that might suggest conditions that are unhealthy or particularly dangerous for travel. Student groups planning international trips are advised to consult State Department and CDC resources early in the planning process to avoid the risk of choosing a destination that is subsequently denied by the university. It should also be recognized that the health and safety factors of a particular location can change drastically without warning, and organizers and participants are strongly urged to take necessary precautions (such as purchasing trip cancellation insurance through a travel agent) in case it becomes necessary to change plans or cancel a trip on short notice.
- V. **Review Student Travel Abroad Handbook and Campus Based Response to Overseas Crises.** Coordinators and faculty/staff advisors must read and keep in their possession a copy of the Campus Based Response to Overseas Crises, available at <https://global.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Study-Abroad-Emergency-Response-Team-Emergency-Guidelines.pdf>. The Faculty and Staff Handbook can be found at: <http://global.usc.edu/facultystaffhandbook>

The first point of contact in an emergency is International SOS, USC's contracted health and safety emergency service provider for programs abroad: 215-942-8226, or [start a chat or phone call through the I-SOS Assistance App](#).

VI. **Review Policies Concerning Standards for Student Behavior.**

### **Conflict of Interest**

The Conflict of Interest in Professional and Business Practices and Commitment Policy requires all university employees, including students employed or otherwise engaged by the university, to devote their primary professional loyalty to the university. A conflict of interest arises under this policy when financial or other personal considerations compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, an individual's professional judgment and ability to perform his or her responsibilities to USC. Examples of covered conflicts include:

- Soliciting or conducting university business with an entity in which a USC employee has a financial interest.
- Maintaining a consulting or other employment relationship with an existing or potential vendor or supplier of the university.
- Hiring or supervising a family member.

- Engaging in any other outside activity that creates a conflict of commitment by interfering with the employee's primary professional responsibility to the university.

Conflicts of interest covered by the Conflict of Interest in Professional and Business Practices and Commitment Policy must be disclosed in diSClose, USC's online disclosure system.

### **Mandatory Online Training Courses**

All students, both undergraduate and graduate, are required to complete a series of online training courses upon enrollment and periodically thereafter. Failure to complete any required course may result in a hold that could prevent students from registering for the subsequent semester, or other administrative action. More information about completing these trainings is available at each student's myUSC.

### **Missing Student Notification**

See <https://policy.usc.edu/missing-student-information/>.



## Campus Support and Resources

**[USC Student Health Counseling and Mental Health Services](#)** provides individual therapy, group therapy, crisis support, workshops, psychiatric services and specialties for gender-and power-based harm.

*Engemann Student Health Center (ESH), Eric Cohen Student Health Center, and TeleHealth  
(213) 740-WELL (9355) or [studenthealth@usc.edu](mailto:studenthealth@usc.edu)*

**[Campus Support & Intervention \(CSI\)](#)** is a team of professionals who assist students in achieving their academic, professional, and/or personal goals, as well as navigating complex issues. They are available for consultation, in person, by Zoom, or over the phone.

*Tutor Campus Center (TCC) 421  
(213) 740-0411 or [uscsupport@usc.edu](mailto:uscsupport@usc.edu)*

***Trojans Care 4 Trojans*** empowers USC students, faculty, and staff to take action when they are concerned about a fellow Trojan challenged with personal difficulties. This private and anonymous request form provides an opportunity for Trojans to help a member of our Trojan Family.

*Tutor Campus Center (TCC) 421  
(213) 740-0411 or [uscsupport@usc.edu](mailto:uscsupport@usc.edu)*

***AlcoholEdu® for Outcomes*** is a two-part online and science-based course designed to teach the effects of alcohol on the body, mind and overall experience as a student at USC. The 45-minute course assists students to make safer and healthier decisions to avoid any additional alcohol and drug policy violations.

***Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students (BASICS)*** is designed to assist students in examining their drinking and other drug-use behavior in a judgment-free environment. This is not an abstinence-only program. Instead, the goals are selected by the student and are aimed at reducing risky behaviors and potential harmful consequences. Services provided through the BASICS program are non-judgmental, non-confrontational, and private.

The program involves an initial meeting with a BASICS provider, the completion of an online assessment, and a second meeting with the same provider. Appointments can be scheduled online, and a variety of times and days are offered. Please visit [thehavenatcollege.com/usc-basicscasics/](http://thehavenatcollege.com/usc-basicscasics/) for more information.

***Cannabis Screening and Intervention for College Students (CASICS)*** is designed to assist students in examining their cannabis and/or other drug-use behavior in a judgment-free environment. This is not an abstinence-only program. Instead, the goals are selected by the student and are aimed at reducing risky behaviors and potential harmful consequences. Services provided through the CASICS program are non-judgmental, non-confrontational, and private.

The program involves an initial meeting with a CASICS provider, the completion of an online assessment, and a second meeting with the same provider. Appointments can be scheduled online, and a variety of times and days are offered. Please visit the [thehavenatcollege.com/usc-basicscasics/](http://thehavenatcollege.com/usc-basicscasics/) for more information.

**Campus Activities**' mission is to build community and foster leadership development through co-curricular opportunities that enhance the Trojan experience.

Steven and Kathryn Sample Hall (SKS) 410  
(213) 740-5693 or [stuacts@usc.edu](mailto:stuacts@usc.edu)

**Volunteer Center**, a part of Campus Activities, is dedicated to promoting service within USC, the greater Los Angeles area, and the global community as a whole. The Volunteer Center's programs are student-run and student-led.

Steven and Kathryn Sample Hall (SKS) 410  
(213) 740-5693 or [stuacts@usc.edu](mailto:stuacts@usc.edu)

**USC Student Equity and Inclusion Programs** (SEIP) is a cluster of student development centers and initiatives within USC Student Life that offer student support services and programs that focus on intersectionality, sense of belonging, and well-being. SEIP consists of Asian Pacific American Student Services (APASS), Center for Black Cultural and Student Affairs (CBCSA), First Generation Plus Success Center (FG+SC), La CASA, LGBTQ+ Student Center (LGBTQ+SC), Student Basic Needs, and the Veterans Resource Center (VRC). SEIP facilitates dialogue, community-building, and leads campus-wide equity and inclusion initiatives that impact the student experience.

Please visit the [SEIP website](#) for the location of all the centers.

**Kortschak Center for Learning and Creativity** (KCLC) is a resource center that offers individual academic guidance, workshops, academic support groups, and the availability of quiet study spaces, to help students make successful transitions to college.

Student Union (STU) 311  
(213) 740-7884 or [kortschakcenter@usc.edu](mailto:kortschakcenter@usc.edu)

**Office of Student Accessibility Services** (OSAS) is the unit responsible for providing accommodations/services for students with disabilities in compliance with state and federal law.

Grace Ford Salvatori (GFS) 120  
(213) 740-0776 or [OSASFrontDesk@usc.edu](mailto:OSASFrontDesk@usc.edu)

The **USC Writing Center** offers free services to students in the form of individual consultations, small-group workshops, and a large roster of handouts and instructional videos. Consultants work with writers at every skill level and every stage of the process, from interpreting an assignment to producing a final draft.

Taper Hall (THH) 216  
(213) 740-3691 or [writing@usc.edu](mailto:writing@usc.edu)

**USC Recreational Sports** provides the university community the opportunity to pursue a balanced, healthy lifestyle through participation in recreational activities at various locations including the Lyon Center at UPC, USC Village Fitness Center, and the HSC Fitness Center.

The **USC Ombuds Office** is a safe and confidential place to share USC-related issues with a University Ombuds. Their staff will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

The University Park Campus Ombuds Office: University Religious Center (URC) 203A

(213) 821-9556 or [upcombuds@usc.edu](mailto:upcombuds@usc.edu)

*The Health Sciences Campus Ombuds Office: Seaver Hall (SRH) B-Level*  
(323) 442-0382 or [hscombuds@usc.edu](mailto:hscombuds@usc.edu)

**USC Report & Response** is a central source for students, faculty, staff, guests, and anonymous community members to report concerns and receive support.  
[213-740-2500](tel:213-740-2500) or [report.usc.edu](http://report.usc.edu)

## Glossary of Terms

### ***Academic Integrity Ambassador (AIA)***

An Academic Integrity Ambassador is a designated faculty/staff representative (typically in a USC school or college) who provides guidance to faculty within the school/college about USC's academic integrity standards and the procedures the university uses to respond to alleged academic integrity violations.

### ***Advisor***

As referenced in this handbook, an advisor refers to three distinct roles: 1) an individual of record who offers guidance to a recognized student organization (RSO); 2) an academic advisor; or, 3) any individual who accompanies a student/organization to any meeting with staff in the Office of Community Expectations (OCE), with staff in the Office of Academic Integrity (OAI), or to a review panel. See "Student Procedural Rights and Protections" on page 20 for additional information about the role of an advisor in the context of the disciplinary process.

### ***Avoidance of Contact Directive***

An avoidance of contact directive is a university requirement that a student not have any contact, directly or indirectly, with another party or parties. Failure to follow this university requirement is a violation of university policy. Offices that may issue such directives include but are not limited to OPE, EEO-TIX, CSI, OCE, and the Office of Threat Assessment and Management.

### ***Determination***

A determination is a decision of "responsible" or "not responsible" for an alleged violation of university policy.

### ***Disciplinary History***

A student's disciplinary history includes all determinations of "responsible" for any academic or non-academic violation of university policy, whether resolved through an administrative review, a review panel, a faculty-student resolution, a Residential Education review, or a process through EEO-TIX. A student's disciplinary history also includes the application of the Health and Safety Intervention Policy when a subsequent violation of the Alcohol Policy occurs.

An organization's disciplinary history includes all determinations of "responsible" for any university policy violation for the current and past three academic years, whether resolved through an administrative review or a review panel. Additionally, any misconduct resolved through the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Leadership Development (FSLD) or Campus Activities is subject to consideration as part of an organization's disciplinary history.

### ***Event (Student)***

A student event, social or otherwise, is an activity that is organized, sponsored, co-sponsored, or funded by a recognized student organization. This includes activities on USC's campuses and buildings and may include activities held at an off-campus facility, whether owned by USC or a third party. An activity becomes an event when one or more of the following criteria is/are met: the activity utilizes organization funds; the USC name or organization name is used in the advertising or marketing of the activity; the activity serves as a promotional or recruitment mechanism for the organization; the publicity for the activity utilizes organization resources

(including organizational webpages, social media accounts, etc.); the location for the activity is held in a space that must be reserved; and/or the activity is reasonably identified with an organization. For additional information and guidance on whether an activity constitutes an event, consult with Campus Activities.

### ***Interim Measures***

Interim measures are administrative actions taken by the university after a report of prohibited conduct but prior to a final determination. Such measures do not indicate the university has decided the truthfulness of the allegation(s) but are put in place to protect the health, safety, and/or welfare of the university community or any member of it.

### ***Office of Academic Integrity (OAI)***

The Office of Academic Integrity is a unit of the Office of the Provost that is responsible for promoting academic integrity on campus, receiving and processing reports of alleged academic dishonesty, and assessing the university's climate for academic integrity.

### ***Office of Community Expectations (OCE)***

The Office of Community Expectations is a unit within Student Life responsible for promoting awareness and understanding of university behavioral expectations and fostering student growth and accountability by receiving and resolving allegations of non-academic violations of university policy.

### ***Outcomes***

An outcome is a required activity, educational intervention, change in student/organization status, or restriction on specified activity issued to a student/organization as a result of a determination of responsibility for a university policy violation through USC's disciplinary process. An outcome is designed to uphold USC's [Unifying Values](#); hold a student/organization accountable for their actions; to promote a student's/organization's physical, intellectual, social, and emotional well-being; to protect the integrity of the educational environment of the university; and/or, to ensure the safety of every member of its community.

### ***Preponderance of Evidence***

USC's disciplinary process uses the preponderance of evidence standard. A preponderance of evidence standard is met when, based on available information, it is more likely than not that the student/organization engaged in the prohibited conduct. Put another way, the preponderance of evidence standard means such information that, when weighed against that opposed to it, has the more convincing force and the greater probability of truth.

### ***Recognized Student Organization (RSO)***

A recognized student organization is defined as one which has satisfied the administrative procedures for recognition as prescribed in this student handbook (see the "Recognized Student Organizations" section LINK) or which is functioning within the university community in an authorized capacity of a student organization.

### ***Residential Education Review***

A Residential Education Review is a process utilized within the Office for Residential Education

in lieu of the procedures contained in this student handbook for students who live in a university-owned residence. Additional information is available at <https://resed.usc.edu/resources/residential-review-process-policies/>.

### ***Student***

For the purpose of university rules and regulations, a student is defined as one whose enrollment has begun (typically, enrollment begins on the first scheduled day of classes of a student's program) or who has moved into university housing, and who is currently participating in one of the university's degree or non-degree programs; has completed the immediately preceding semester and/or has registered for the next scheduled semester; is officially representing the university during a period between regular academic semesters; or, is not officially registered for a particular semester but has a continuing relationship with the university. Individuals enrolled in camps or other short-term programs or activities are not considered students under this student handbook and instead are subject to the terms of their program agreement.

## **USC's Notice of Non-Discrimination and Related Information**

### **Notice of Non-Discrimination**

The University of Southern California (USC) prohibits discrimination based on protected characteristics, such as race, sex, and disability. A full list of the protected characteristics can be found in the university's [Notice of Non-Discrimination Statement](#).

The university prohibits unlawful harassment of students, employees, and third parties based on any protected characteristic as set forth in the university's [Notice of Non-Discrimination Statement](#).

The university also prohibits retaliation against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by university policy or law, or because the individual makes a good faith report or formal complaint, testifies, assists, participates, or refuses to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under the university [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#).

### **Equal Access for Students with Disabilities**

Otherwise qualified individuals must not be denied admissions, participation in educational programs and activities, or employment due to their disability. University policies and procedures ensure that students with disabilities will be provided full and equitable access to and enjoyment of academic and co-curricular programs or activities, regardless of disability status, in an environment free from discrimination or harassment.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is the campus unit that reviews requests for and determines reasonable student accommodations, including academic adjustments and auxiliary aids and services for any student with a disability.

If a student with a disability needs a reasonable accommodation in order to fully and effectively participate in any stage of the disciplinary process, the student should notify OSAS and the relevant office (e.g., Office of Community Expectations, Office of Academic Integrity, Residential Education, etc.) in writing at the earliest possible opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to complete an OSAS student application and provide documentation that verifies the student's disability in a timely manner. OSAS will work with the student to determine reasonable accommodations and may also work with staff in the relevant office to facilitate implementation of accommodations. If a student believes that they are being discriminated against based on their disability, such as being denied a reasonable accommodation, they should contact the Office for Equity, Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) at the contact information listed below.

Questions regarding the application of the various rules and regulations including but not limited to equal employment opportunity, affirmative action and non-discrimination, and Title IX should be addressed to EEO-TIX.

Linda Hoos  
Vice President for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX)  
Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX  
King Hall  
1025 W. 34<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite #101  
Los Angeles, CA 90089  
(213) 740-5086  
[eeotix@usc.edu](mailto:eeotix@usc.edu)  
<https://eeotix.usc.edu/>

The University has also designated a Deputy Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX Coordinator for Healthcare:

Nicoli Richardson  
Deputy EEO-Title IX Coordinator for Healthcare  
Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX  
King Hall  
1025 W. 34<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite #101  
Los Angeles, CA 90089  
(213) 740-5086  
[eeotix@med.usc.edu](mailto:eeotix@med.usc.edu)  
<https://eeotix.usc.edu>

Affirmative Action and Employment Equity  
Contact EEO-TIX  
(213) 740-5086  
[eeotix@usc.edu](mailto:eeotix@usc.edu)

Christine Street  
Associate Vice Provost for Institutional Accessibility and ADA Compliance  
ADA/504 Coordinator  
(213) 821-4658  
[accessibility@usc.edu](mailto:accessibility@usc.edu)

Disability Accommodation Coordinator  
c/o USC Human Resources  
(213) 821-8100  
[employeeada@usc.edu](mailto:employeeada@usc.edu)

Office of Student Accessibility Services  
(213) 740-0776  
[osasfrontdesk@usc.edu](mailto:osasfrontdesk@usc.edu)

USC Human Resources  
(213) 821-8100  
[uschr@usc.edu](mailto:uschr@usc.edu)

## External Reporting Options

Any individual may file reports and/or complaints about the university's handling of prohibited conduct to the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) with the U.S. Department of Education at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html> or [ocr@ed.gov](mailto:ocr@ed.gov) or 1-800-421-3481. OCR complaints should be filed within 180 days of the last date of alleged discrimination. OCR may extend this deadline in limited circumstances.

Student employees may file reports and/or complaints with the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) at [contact.center@dfeh.ca.gov](mailto:contact.center@dfeh.ca.gov) or <https://www.dfeh.ca.gov> or the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) at (800) 669-4000 (TTY (800) 669-6820) or <https://www.eeoc.gov>. In employment cases, complaints must be filed with the DFEH no later than three years from the date of the alleged unlawful conduct. In most other cases, a complaint must be filed with the DFEH within one year of the date of the alleged unlawful conduct. If the DFEH believes that a complaint is valid and settlement efforts fail, the DFEH may seek an administrative hearing before the California Fair Employment and Housing Commission (FEHC) or file a lawsuit in court. Both the FEHC and the courts have the authority to award monetary and non-monetary relief in meritorious cases.

Any person who believes that the university as a federal contractor has violated nondiscrimination or affirmative action obligations may contact the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) at (800) 397-6251 (TTY: 1-877-889-5267).

Complaints and inquiries regarding discrimination, harassment, and retaliation involving federal laws related to healthcare may be directed to:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Office for Civil Rights  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Room 509F HHH Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20201  
[OCRCComplaint@hhs.gov](mailto:OCRCComplaint@hhs.gov)  
(800) 368-1019  
TDD: (800) 537-7697  
<https://www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/filing-a-complaint/complaint-process/index.html>  
<https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/smartscreen/main.jsf>



## U.S. Department of Education Compliance

The U.S. Department of Education requires each state to have an external agency responsible for handling complaints related to the university's compliance with applicable laws. In California, this external agency is the Bureau for Private Post-Secondary Education. Complaints that suggest the university may not be in compliance with applicable laws may be directed to:

Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education  
P.O. Box 980818  
West Sacramento, CA 95798-0818  
(916) 574-8900

<https://bppe.ca.gov/enforcement/complaint.shtml>

See <https://www2.ed.gov/about/contacts/state/index.html> for a list of all other state departments of higher education.

Additionally, the university is accredited by the WASC Senior College and University Commission. Complaints demonstrating a possible violation of the Commission's Standards of Accreditation and Commission policies and procedures should be directed to:

WASC Senior College and University Commission  
1080 Marina Village Parkway, Suite 500  
Alameda, CA 94501  
(510) 748-9001 x300

<https://www.wscuc.org/resources/comments/>

## Reporting Wrongdoing

USC requires faculty, staff, students, volunteers, and others affiliated with the university to report suspicion of wrongdoing promptly to the proper authorities for investigation. It is not your responsibility to determine if a situation indeed constitutes wrongdoing, but it is your personal responsibility to report those concerns. By refusing to turn a blind eye, we stay true to the requirements of the law, our ethical commitments, and the highest values of USC. A list of offices that accept reports of particular kinds of wrongdoing is available online at <https://policy.usc.edu/reporting-wrongdoing/>.

The Report & Response website is an easy-to-use online location where members can report concerns and get the support they need. In addition to the Report & Response website, you may also report concerns by calling 213-740-2500 or 800-348-7454 (toll-free). This number is staffed by live operators 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## Email as Primary Communication Mechanism

Email is the primary mechanism for sending official communications to students at the University of Southern California. All students are assigned an official university email address. Students, therefore, must check email regularly in order to stay updated on important messages and notifications. Failure to read official university communications sent to students' official email address does not absolve students from knowing and complying with the content of official communications. Students may forward their email from their official university email address to another email address of their choice. The university, however, is not responsible for email forwarded to another email address. USC email access for expelled students will be terminated upon the effective date of their expulsion.

## Student Contact Information

All students are expected to enter and update their local, permanent, and emergency contact information (including phone numbers) in the Online Academic Student Information System (OASIS) upon enrollment and any time this information changes.

## Disclaimer

While this student handbook contains many of the rules and regulations pertinent to students, this handbook is not all-inclusive. Students are expected to familiarize themselves, and adhere to, other university policies as disseminated through other venues.

The information in this student handbook applies to the academic year 2023-2024 and is accurate and current, to the extent possible, as of August 2023.

## Feedback

You are invited to send comments or questions about the Student Handbook to [handbook@usc.edu](mailto:handbook@usc.edu).