Ethics at USC: Promoting an Ethical Culture

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Office of Compliance
To have an effective compliance and ethics program . . . an organization shall . . . . . . promote an organizational culture that encourages ethical conduct and a commitment to compliance with the law. . .

Federal Sentencing Guidelines
In March, 2004, the Board of Trustees adopted a University-wide Code of Ethics that applies to all faculty, staff, students, and trustees. The Code sets out various guidelines of ethical behavior required of all USC community members.
Highlights include:

• Prompt and open identification of conflicts of interest

• Nurturing an environment of mutual respect and tolerance

• Taking time to distinguish between what is legal and what is ethical, realizing that the two are not always the same

• Striving for honesty and fairness in all our dealings with others

• Avoiding harmful behavior like harassment, mistreatment of colleagues, plagiarism, lying, deliberate misrepresentation, cheating, and misappropriation of university assets and resources
Supporting a Culture of Mutual Accountability

“In the final analysis, it is not so much rules and punishments, but rather shared values, basic civility, and mutual respect that hold the Trojan Family together and make it a hospitable environment in which to work and learn.”

Excerpt from letter from President Steven B. Sample, December 10, 2002
Know the Code

USC Code of Ethics

- New Employee Orientation
- Healthcare faculty/staff
- Compliance Training
- On-boarding distribution
- Compliance and Ethics Week
- Audit & Compliance Committee
Dear Colleagues,

When it comes to extraordinary achievement, our university is a place unlike any other. We distinguish ourselves as pioneers across disciplines with an unwavering commitment to advancing knowledge and enriching societies across the globe. Given our emphasis on excellence in every endeavor, it is no wonder that the breadth of USC’s influence and renown continues to grow.

Of course, a great university demands rigorous adherence to the highest ethical standards, and this, too, USC delivers. Ethics are the cornerstone of our work and relationships; they govern our efforts, inform our interactions, and elevate our accomplishments. And, from its earliest days, our university has upheld the belief that living will mean upholding a shared set of values including integrity, fairness, respect and a tireless dedication to serving the broader community. These common principles take shape in the USC Code of Ethics, which I am pleased to share with you here.

I hope you will join me in getting to “Know the Code.” This code of ethics is a living document, one that inspires us to even greater success. Thank you for your vital contributions to it and for the critical role you play in supporting the Trojan Family today and for generations to come.

C.L. Max Nikias

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Know the Code

Code of Ethics
University of Southern California

Code of Ethics of the University of Southern California

At the University of Southern California, ethical behavior is predicated on two main pillars: a commitment to upholding our obligations to others in a fair and honest manner, and a commitment to respecting the rights and dignity of all persons. As faculty, staff, students, and trustees, we each bear responsibility not only for the ethics of our own behavior, but also for building USC’s stature as an ethical institution.

We recognize that the fundamental relationships upon which our university is built are those between individual students and individual professors; thus, such relationships are especially sacred and deserve special care that they not be prostituted or exploited for base motives or personal gain.

When we make promises as an institution, or as individuals who are authorized to speak on behalf of USC, we keep those promises, including especially the promises expressed and implied in our Role and Mission Statement. We try to do what is right even if no one is watching or compellng us to do the right thing.

We promptly and openly identify and disclose conflicts of interest on the part of faculty, staff, students, and the institution as a whole, and we take appropriate steps to either eliminate such conflicts or insure that they do not compromise the integrity of the individuals involved or that of the university.

We nurture an environment of mutual respect and tolerance. As members of the USC community we treat everyone with respect and dignity, even when the value, belief, behavior, or background of a person or group is at variance with us. This last is one of the bedrocks of ethical behavior at USC and the basis of civil discourse within our academic community. Because we are responsible not only for ourselves but also for others, we speak out against hatred and bigotry wherever and whenever we find them.

We do not harm, misstate, libel, harass, or take unfair advantage of anyone. We do not tolerate plagiarism, lying, deliberate misrepresentation, theft, scientific fraud, cheating, insinuate discrimination, or ill of our fellow human beings — whether such persons be volunteer subjects of scientific research, peers, patrons, superiors, subordinates, employers, professors, trustees, patrons, alumni, donors, or members of the public.

We do not misappropriate the university’s resources, or resources belonging to others which are entrusted to us; nor do we permit any such misappropriation to go unchallenged.

We are careful to distinguish between legal behavior on the one hand and ethical behavior on the other, knowing that, while the two overlap in many areas, they are distinct and separate from each other. While we follow legal requirements, we must never lose sight of ethical considerations.

Because of the special levels that bind us together as members of the Trojan Family, we have a fiduciary duty as well as a self-dealing duty to one another. Our faculty and staff are attentive to the well-being of students and others who are entrusted to our care or who are especially vulnerable, including patients, volunteer subjects of research, and the children in our daycare and community outreach programs.

By respecting the rights and dignity of others, and by striving for fairness and honesty in our dealings with others, we create an ethical university of which we can all be proud, and which will serve as a bright beacon for all peoples of our day and in the centuries to come.
Ethics and Compliance Week

Help and Hotline – new web reporting tool:

www.mycompliancereport.com

Enter “USOC” as the Access Code

“Ethics in Action” hero:

• Opportunity to nominate ethical role model
• Demonstrated commitment to Code of Ethics
• Serves as an example to themselves and others
• Submit to complian@usc.edu by November 16
• Stories will be featured in upcoming compliance publications and newsletters.
Ethics and Compliance Week

NOMINATE YOUR ETHICS IN ACTION HERO!

DO YOU KNOW AN ETHICAL ROLE MODEL WHO:

- Demonstrates a commitment to our Code of Ethics?
- Serves as an example to others through their actions and decisions?
- Sets high standards for themselves and others in the workplace?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, the USC Office of Compliance would like you to let us know about your "Ethics in Action" hero today!

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**FORMAT** Email or Word Attachment in 500 words or less

**CONTENT**

Who is your Ethics in Action hero?

How did they demonstrate a commitment to our Code of Ethics?

How do they inspire others to do the same?

**SUBMIT TO** compliant@usc.edu

**DEadLINE** Monday, November 16, 2015

YOUR STORIES WILL BE FEATURED IN UPCOMING COMPLIANCE PUBLICATIONS AND NEWSLETTERS.
Other University Policies Related to Ethics

- Conflict of Interest in Research Policy
- Conflict of Interest in Professional And Business Practices Policy
- Scientific Misconduct Policy
- Staff Hiring and Employment Policies
- Misappropriation of University Assets Policy

To review, visit http://policy.usc.edu/