

Revise Behavioral/Criminal Infractions Policy for Carolina Online: For consideration by Faculty Senate, April 7, 2021

Proposal: Revision of the Behavioral/Criminal Infractions Policy for Carolina Online

Requested Effective Date: Summer 2021

Background:

A priority of the Strategic Plan, *For Carolina: A Path to Excellence*, is to enhance access, success and affordability for every eligible South Carolina student – traditional and nontraditional – by establishing an integrated online program management. Carolina Online was developed in response to Strategic Priority 5 in an effort to develop end to end bachelor’s degree programs to be delivered online.

Carolina Online is intended to be for multiple non-traditional audiences that range from those who are working professionals to those that are serving military and veterans. In each case the non-traditional student brings something different to the classroom by way of lived experiences that will impact how they experience and contribute to class. For this reason, a separate admissions process with corresponding metrics for admission is proposed.

Recruitment for traditional students is different than the online market. The latter prioritizes an efficient and approachable processes with a quick turnaround for the admission decision. For UofSC to be competitive in the market and best serve the students, the following are required:

- Transfer admission GPA: a standard of 2.25, irrespective of the program
- High School GPA: a minimum of 2.25, including for military applicants.
- Credits: permit a student in a non-degree seeking status to change to degree seeking status and carry those credits earned in the former status to the latter.

Carolina Online students will not impact our CHE reporting requirements.

Carolina Online will have a separate admissions process and most students will not be asked to disclose Behavioral/Criminal Infractions due to the modality of their course delivery being online versus in-residence. There are select programs (e.g., Education) in which a student may be asked to disclose behavioral/criminal infractions.

Proposed Policy Revisions to the Behavioral/Criminal Infractions Policy

Current Policy	Proposed Revisions
The University of South Carolina-Columbia expects students who join its community of scholars to uphold the tenets of the Carolinian Creed and to conduct themselves according to these standards. Therefore, all applicants for undergraduate admission must disclose any school behavioral, academic or criminal infraction charges occurring prior to their enrollment at the university. Questions pertaining to infractions will be asked on the application for admission. Applicants will be instructed to provide any updated information occurring after submission of the initial application for admission. The signature [or electronic signature] section of the application attests to the accuracy and completeness of all questions on the	In-Residence Programs The University of South Carolina-Columbia expects students who join its community of scholars to uphold the tenets of the Carolinian Creed and to conduct themselves according to these standards. Therefore, all applicants for undergraduate admission must disclose any school behavioral, academic or criminal infraction charges occurring prior to their enrollment at the university. Questions pertaining to infractions will be asked on the application for admission. Applicants will be instructed to provide any updated information occurring after submission of the initial application for admission. The signature [or electronic signature] section of the application attests to the

application. Failure to provide complete and correct information is grounds for immediate revocation of admission and cancellation of registration or enrollment at the University of South Carolina.

The questions dealing with infractions will direct the applicant to provide a written description of the infraction, appropriate date(s), and ultimate resolution or current disposition. Applicants disclosing an infraction will be flagged in the admissions system to prevent any definitive admission decision until the infraction is reviewed and the student cleared for final action by the director of admissions.

Behavioral infractions are defined as disciplinary violations at an educational institution (including a college or university) resulting in sanctions including suspension or expulsion since the 9th grade. A designated member of the admissions staff will review the application to first determine academic admissibility. If the student is admissible, the staff member will review the infraction and follow up as necessary, including contacting the applicant's previous educational institutions. The facts of the case will be documented and sent to the director of admissions who will make the final determination of admission.

Criminal infractions include misdemeanors, felonies or other crimes more serious than minor traffic violations (e.g., speeding, driving without a license, etc.). A designated member of the admissions staff will review the application to first determine academic admissibility. If admissible, the staff member will review the criminal infraction to determine the appropriate course of action. If upon investigation the staff member deems the offense to be minor the case may be documented and referred to the director of admissions for a final determination of admission.

If the infraction is more serious, in most instances the case will be sent to a special ad hoc committee¹ for review and determination of eligibility for admission and enrollment. The committee will have access to all application materials and information regarding the infraction and may at their discretion request additional information from the applicant or appropriate authorities outside the university. The committee will make a formal recommendation of action to the director of admissions. If the committee approves admission they may also note any special conditions of enrollment or eligibility for on campus housing and/or referral to the campus Judicial Affairs

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Committee. The final decision will be made by the director of admissions.

The director of admissions will notify the applicant of the final admission decision. If there are special circumstances or conditions on the applicant's admission these will be communicated to the applicant. If the student is deemed as unfit for university enrollment this will be communicated.

The director of admissions will provide an annual written report to the University Admissions Committee regarding number of cases reviewed and final action in each infraction category.

1. The ad hoc committee may include representation from the following offices: Judicial Affairs, Faculty Senate Committee on Admissions, Housing/Student Affairs, Campus Safety and Counseling Center. The director of admissions or designee will be ex officio and provide staff support to the committee.

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Carolina Online Programs

The University of South Carolina-Columbia expects students who join its online community of scholars to uphold the tenets of the Carolinian Creed and to conduct themselves according to these standards. Carolina Online applicants must disclose any academic infraction occurring prior to their enrollment.

Select Carolina Online programs may ask an applicant to disclose school behavioral or criminal infraction charges occurring prior to their enrollment at the university, if required by their program of study. If required, questions pertaining to infractions will be asked on the application for admission. The questions dealing with infractions will direct the applicant to provide a written description of the infraction, appropriate date(s), and ultimate resolution or current disposition. For applicants disclosing an infraction, a designated member of the Carolina Online admissions staff will review the information submitted and follow up as necessary. If the infraction is serious, the case may be sent to a special ad hoc committee¹ for review and determination of eligibility for admission and enrollment. The committee will make a formal recommendation of action to the Carolina Online director of admissions and may also recommend any special conditions of enrollment and/or referral to the campus Judicial Affairs Committee.

	<p>The Carolina Online Director of Enrollment Management will make the final determination of admission. If there are special circumstances or conditions on the applicant's admission, these will be communicated to the applicant.</p> <p>The Carolina Online Director of Enrollment Management will provide an annual written report to the University Admissions Committee regarding number of cases reviewed and final action in each infraction category.</p> <p>¹. The ad hoc committee for Carolina Online may include representation from the following offices: Judicial Affairs and Faculty Senate Committee on Admissions. Carolina Online will provide staff support to the committee.</p>
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Justification:

These revisions are proposed in an effort to increase accessibility and equity in the admission process for Carolina Online. This policy emphasizes the commitment and investment of UofSC to educating all South Carolina residents as well as those in the southeastern region and nationally. This policy is also aligned with national trends and consistent with our competitors.