

# SPECIAL ADDENDUM TO THE STUDENT HANDBOOK RELATED TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

This special addendum of the Student Handbook is notifying you that the College of Charleston has established the following rules and may, as this academic year (2020-21) continues, establish further rules in an effort to reduce the risk of the spread of the 2019 novel coronavirus ("COVID-19").

## **COVID-19 additions to the Student Code of Conduct. New prohibitions:**

- **Refusal to comply with CDC and SC-DHEC<sup>1</sup> guidelines related to COVID-19**
- **Refusal to comply with directives related to health and safety issued by federal, state, local and campus authorities**

These additions are EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY and linked to the following standards in the Student Code of Conduct:

B.2.g. Disruption or obstruction of teaching, studying, research, administration, conduct proceedings, living/learning environment, or other college activities, including its public service functions on or off campus or other authorized non-college activities.

B.2.h. Failure to comply: A failure to act in accordance with the directions of College officials acting in performance of their duties.

C.5. Reckless behavior: Endangering the safety of persons (self or others) or property, or any action that might lead to loss of life or serious physical harm to others.

C.6. Alleged or actual violation of federal, state, or local laws on College premises, at College-sponsored or College-supervised activities, or elsewhere, including off-campus locations, if such conduct adversely affects the College community and its mission.

## **Range of possible sanctions (in order of progression) for students:**

- First Violation: Notice of report and public health information sent to offender
- Second Violation: Online tutorial on the necessity of related risk mitigation measures
- Third Violation: Formal charge with all affiliated conduct procedures

**In classroom setting:** All faculty members have authority to deny entry to any student who does not have and/or refuses to put on a face covering.

## **Off Campus - New Prohibition**

The College reserves the right to take action based on any student conduct, regardless of location, that may adversely affect the educational mission of the College or that may adversely, distinctly or directly affect the College community. Students are expected to adhere to local directives about gathering sizes (inside and outside); social distancing, face coverings, noise and other ordinances.

We must make special note of parties and social gatherings given our experiences in late spring and during the summer. We received notices from the City of Charleston and neighbors of relatively large gatherings

<sup>1</sup> South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control

of young adults where no one was wearing face coverings or adhering to the guidelines of social distancing. We are living through a pandemic and your behavior off campus could impact the health and welfare of others.

Therefore, we are instituting the following: Off-campus parties or social gatherings, public or private, whether hosted by individuals or student organizations must abide by the most strict policy in place by local jurisdictions and/or the College.

**Do not host or attend parties or social gatherings with more than 10 people, including the hosts. If you do, you will face consequences from the College.**

These additions are linked to the following standards in the Student Code of Conduct:

B.2.h. Failure to comply: A failure to act in accordance with the directions of College officials acting in performance of their duties.

C.5. Reckless behavior: Endangering the safety of persons (self or others) or property, or any action that might lead to loss of life or serious physical harm to others.

C.6. Alleged or actual violation of federal, state, or local laws on College premises, at College-sponsored or College-supervised activities, or elsewhere, including off-campus locations, if such conduct adversely affects the College community and its mission.

Remember, upon your enrollment you have agreed to comply with all directives, rules, and regulations which may be promulgated and established by the College of Charleston, in the interests of health, safety, and the proper conduct of its community.

We anticipate lessening and/or removing these additional rules when the circumstances permit.

## **UPDATED SPECIAL ADDENDUM TO THE STUDENT HANDBOOK RELATED TO COVID-19 ON and OFF CAMPUS STUDENT SOCIAL GATHERINGS**

**Effective August 28, 2020**

The College reserves the right to take action based on any student conduct, regardless of location, that may adversely affect the educational mission of the College or that may adversely, distinctly, or directly affect the College community. Students are expected to adhere to College, state, and local directives, executive orders, laws, and ordinances about social gathering sizes (inside and outside); social distancing, face coverings, noise, and other legal mandates.

We have received complaints from other students and Charleston residents regarding relatively large gatherings of College of Charleston students where no one was wearing face coverings or adhering to the guidelines of social distancing. We are living through a pandemic, with serious and potentially deadly health consequences, and your behavior off campus could impact the health and welfare of others.

While many students are complying with the Special Addendum to the Student Code of Conduct and our Pledge, too many are not. It only takes a handful of students acting carelessly to compromise the dreams of our community to be back on the bricks this fall. We are steadfast in our convictions. Therefore, our responses will be quick and on target for those who have elected not to follow the behavioral standards we have in place.

The Student Handbook designates the Executive Vice President for Student Affairs as the person with final authority over all decisions made under the Honor System (Code of Conduct and Honor Code) and the Dean of Students as the person responsible for the administration of the Codes.

Accordingly, we are modifying our procedures, effective immediately. These steps will be implemented with the **FIRST** report regarding social gatherings in excess of specified limits or failing to follow State or local ordinances, laws, executive orders, and/or legal mandates regarding social gatherings.

The following steps will take place upon receipt of a credible report:

1. The student and/or student organization will be given notice of the report and will be placed on an immediate interim suspension status, pending the outcome of a hearing. This status means that the individual(s)/organization is immediately banned from any on-campus activity including on-campus classes, College-sponsored events, and campus property pending a review of the information. Students may only engage in courses on-line from a remote location. No interim appeals will be permitted during the pendency of review.
2. A mandatory Zoom meeting with the student/organization leadership will be scheduled to review the information received and, if appropriate, arrange the administrative hearing. Students may be accompanied by an advisor of their choosing.
3. The student/organization will have five working days to prepare for the hearing, unless the student waives their right to this and requests the hearing in a shorter amount of time.
4. The hearing will be before a single hearing officer. The hearing officer will announce the outcome within two working days.
5. If the finding is "In Violation," the student/organization is suspended from all classes and banned from all campus activities and campus property for the remainder of the semester. An appeal to the EVP for Student Affairs will be permitted, with the ruling of the EVP to be final in all respects regarding the matter.

We believe such an approach is necessary to promptly address noncompliance and send a message to our students that we are serious and committed to maintaining our COVID-19 compliance policies.

These measures are needed to keep our campus community and our surrounding neighbors safe and healthy.