

# **THE CAROLINIAN CREED**

# **LESSONS LEARNED FOR OUR UNIVERSITY CULTURE**

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## The Carolinian Creed

**The community of scholars at the University of South Carolina is dedicated to personal and academic excellence. Choosing to join the community obligates each member to a code of civilized behavior. As a Carolinian...**

*...this introduction submits that membership in the Carolina community is not without its obligations. It is assumed or understood that joining is evidence of a subscription to certain ideals and an agreement to strive for the level of achievement and virtue suggested by the following...*

### **I will practice personal and academic integrity;**

*...a commitment to this ideal is inconsistent with cheating in classes, in games, or in sports. It should eliminate the practice of plagiarism or borrowing another student's homework, lying, deceit, excuse-making, and infidelity or disloyalty in personal relationships...*

### **I will respect the dignity of all persons;**

*...a commitment to this ideal is inconsistent with behaviors which compromise or demean the dignity of individuals or groups, including hazing, most forms of intimidating, taunting, teasing, batting, ridiculing, insulting, harassing, and discriminating...*

### **I will respect the rights and property of others;**

*...a commitment to this ideal is inconsistent with all forms of theft, vandalism, arson, misappropriation, malicious damage to, and desecration or destruction of property. Respect for others' personal rights is inconsistent with any behavior which violates their right to move about freely, express themselves appropriately, and to enjoy privacy...*

### **I will discourage bigotry, while striving to learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions;**

*...a commitment to this ideal pledges affirmative support for equal rights and opportunities for all students regardless of their age, sex, race, religion, disability, international/ethnic heritage, socioeconomic status, political, social or other affiliation or disaffiliation, or affectional preference...*

### **I will demonstrate concern for others, their feelings, and their need for conditions which support their work and development.**

*...a commitment to this ideal is a pledge to be compassionate and considerate, to avoid behaviors which are insensitive, inhospitable, or incitant, or which unjustly or arbitrarily inhibit others' ability to feel safe or welcomed in their pursuit of appropriate academic goals...*

### **Allegiance to these ideals requires each Carolinian to refrain from and discourage behaviors which threaten the freedom and respect every individual deserves.**

*...this last clause reminds community members that they are not only obliged to avoid these behaviors, but that they also have an affirmative obligation to confront and challenge, to respond to, or report the behaviors whenever or wherever they are encountered.*



**South Carolina**

# WHY THE CAROLINIAN CREED

- Campus conduct regulations in 1955 compared to 1988.
- A social honor code? A code of ethics? a summary of values?  
Or a loyalty of oath?
- Campus and societal conditions in 1988 that stimulated the creed.

# PRELIMINARY RESEARCH FINDINGS THAT AID THE PROCESS

The Campus Culture Audit – “The Invisible Tapestry: Culture in American College and Universities”

- a) Most aberrant behavioral incidents occurred in unstructured, unsupervised settings involving closely bonded groups where risk of discovery and personal accountability was low.
- b) Students were motivated by distinct values that prized approval from peers more than from authority figures (no surprise here).
- c) One of the most important findings: The university’s values and ethics for student relationships and individual student behavior were not articulated.

# **THE 18-MONTH ARDUOUS PROCESS OF AGREEING ON THE VALUES STATED IN THE CAROLINIAN CREED**

# KEY ELEMENTS

- Creed or code?
- Voluntary or required?
- Formal approval or not?
- Compliance or aspirational?
- Key endorsements.

# THE INTRODUCTION AND ADOPTION OF THE CREED THROUGHOUT THE CAROLINA COMMUNITY

- What cemented it in the culture of our campus?
- Why was it accepted and why has it been relevant for 30 years?

# LESSONS LEARNED

- The Carolinian Creed today.
- Values discussion – then and now.



# Carolinian Creed

Leadership. Compassion. Integrity. Respect. Acceptance.

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