

WELCOME!



**Student Affairs and
Academic Support**
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

The University of South Carolina is an equal opportunity institution.

DELIVERING ON THE PROMISE

Welcome! We're glad you're here!

At the University of South Carolina, the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support is committed to supporting students throughout their college-to-career journey. From Residence Life and Campus Recreation to Student Life and beyond, our teams work every day to create an engaging, supportive and unforgettable campus experience.

Our employees are at the heart of that mission. With nearly 600 full-time and more than 1,500 part-time employees, Student Affairs and Academic Support helps students succeed by connecting them with the experiences, resources and opportunities that foster leadership, service, career readiness, lifelong learning and personal growth.

We are excited to welcome you to the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support. No matter your role, your work contributes to a student-centered community where Gamecocks can learn, lead, belong and succeed. This handbook is designed to help you get started, understand our shared expectations and connect with the resources and people who will support your success.

[Learn more about the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support online.](#)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| Division Leadership | 2 |
| Strategic Priorities | 4 |
| Communicating in an Emergency | 6 |
| Interpersonal Violence Requirements | 8 |
| Staff Resources | 9 |
| Professional Development | 10 |
| Appreciation and Recognition..... | 11 |
| Student Employment Development..... | 11 |
| New Employee Checklist | 12 |

DIVISION LEADERSHIP



Vice President for Student Affairs and Academic Support

J. Rex Tolliver leads the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support, overseeing hundreds of programs, services, and initiatives that support the success of more than 36,000 students in and beyond the classroom.



Assistant Vice President for University Housing

April Barnes oversees University Housing at the University of South Carolina, bringing more than 25 years of experience advancing student success through residential education, strategic operations and collaborative campus leadership.



Executive Director of Human Resources

Alicia Bervine serves as the Human Resources Business Partner for the division, supporting a diverse workforce of more than 500 full-time employees, 300 temporary employees, and 2,000 students, while bringing more than 20 years of experience advancing workforce strategy, talent development and culture transformation in support of a high-trust organization.



Assistant Vice President for University 101 Programs & the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition

Dan Friedman provides leadership for University 101 Programs and the National Resource Center, overseeing nationally recognized initiatives that support student transition, success and engagement through innovative first-year seminars, faculty development and research-informed best practices.



Associate Vice President for Student Health and Well-Being and Chief Health Officer

Stacy Fritz serves as Chief Health Officer and Associate Vice President for Student Health and Well-Being at the University of South Carolina, providing strategic leadership for campus-wide health and wellness initiatives that support the holistic well-being and success of students and employees.



Associate Vice President – Division CFO and COO

Ben Galloway provides leadership for the division's financial strategy and operational functions, overseeing an annual operating budget of more than \$150 million while bringing more than 15 years of experience in financial planning, business operations, compliance and mission-driven organizational leadership.



Associate Vice President for Student Life

Ambra Hiott serves as Associate Vice President for Student Life providing strategic leadership for student engagement, leadership development and campus involvement initiatives, while bringing more than 15 years of experience and a recognized commitment to innovative, student-centered engagement and community building.



Executive Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Academic Support

Chakira Hogan serves as a key liaison between Student Affairs, university leadership, and stakeholders, fostering effective communication and collaboration.

**Chief of Staff**

Lisa Jerald serves as Chief of Staff and Director of Student Advocacy at the University of South Carolina, bringing decades of experience and a longstanding commitment to supporting students through advocacy, guidance and student-centered service.

**Lead Senior Director of Development**

Rebecca Lancaster serves as Lead Senior Director of Development for the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support. She leads philanthropic strategy and donor engagement efforts that support student success, well-being and experiential learning.

**Assistant Vice President for Career Readiness and Post Graduate Student Success**

Justin Lawhead provides leadership for career readiness and student success initiatives at the University of South Carolina, bringing more than 30 years of higher education experience focused on connecting students with the tools, experiences and relationships needed to thrive in their careers and beyond.

**Director of Student Services and Special Assistant to the Vice President**

Rhonda Laylo serves as the point of contact for various programs and initiatives including the James Clyburn Foundation, Canzater Scholars, Meeting Street Scholars and Evans Scholars, working closely with these programs to ensure a seamless and enriching experience for their students.

**Assistant Vice President for Planning, Assessment, Innovation and Strategy**

Renée Delgado-Riley provides leadership for research and assessment initiatives within the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support at the University of South Carolina, bringing extensive experience in program evaluation, student affairs assessment and evidence-based practices that support student success and institutional effectiveness.

**Associate Vice President for Student Success**

Silvia Patricia Rios Husain serves as Associate Vice President for Student Success at the University of South Carolina, providing strategic leadership for nationally recognized student success initiatives and programs that advance retention, graduation, career readiness and student engagement through innovation, collaboration and data-informed practices.

**Executive Director of Communications and Marketing**

Shonta Sellars oversees the strategic direction and execution of communications and marketing efforts for the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support. She leads the division's branding, public relations, digital media and marketing initiatives, ensuring alignment with the university's mission to support student success and engagement.

**Associate Vice President, Dean of Students and Deputy Title IX Coordinator**

Marc Shook serves as as Associate Vice President, Dean of Students and Deputy Title IX Coordinator at the University of South Carolina, providing strategic leadership for student support, care, conduct, accessibility, housing and well-being initiatives that promote student success, safety and engagement across the university community.

2023 - 2028 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Student Experience and Post-Graduate Success

The Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support strives to provide an intentional, holistic and integrated student experience from acceptance to post-graduate success. Rooted in support and advocacy for all students, the division will provide opportunities for students to cultivate a sense of belonging, create engagement experiences, develop career readiness, foster lifelong learning and success and provide meaningful dialogue and reflection.

The division is committed to providing an environment for all students to seek support and resources to reach academic, personal and professional success. Our practice is grounded in providing an exceptional care through high-quality, unified, student-centered resources.

Goal 1 – Provide comprehensive services and intentional programming to support students throughout their entire USC experience.

Goal 2 – Cultivate a sense of belonging that welcomes dialogue, promotes a strong sense of connection to the Carolina and Columbia community and provides meaningful reflection.

Goal 3 – Create meaningful experiences that engage students and enhance student learning.

Goal 4 – Increase students' career readiness by enhancing knowledge, skills and abilities to prepare for post-graduate success.

Goal 5 – Foster lifelong learning that advances students' academic, personal and professional success.

Research, Scholarship and Community Impact

Through deliberate collaboration and utilization of evidence-based decision making, the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support is committed to the development of innovative initiatives and programs and an elevated collegiate experience that intentionally connects students, staff, and faculty to the community — the city of Columbia, state of South Carolina and beyond.

The division is committed to providing opportunities for staff to conduct research and advance knowledge and skills through leadership and engagement in higher education and student affairs within the university and at the regional and national level. Our practice is grounded in developing scholar-practitioners who connect research to practice.

Goal 1 – Develop and invest in division scholar-practitioners to encourage active engagement in the field.

Goal 2 – Increase community relationships to create meaningful interactions and experiences.

Goal 3 – Develop partnerships to create additional funding and revenue streams to support new initiatives and projects that support the work of the division and ultimately enhance the student experience.

Operational Excellence

The Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support must be agile and adequately equipped to face the ever-changing needs of our students and to meet our mission to build a superior student experience that empowers students to reach their academic, personal and professional goals.

The division is committed to developing and maintaining systems of operation that align with an exceptional end-user experience. Our practice is grounded in a student-centered approach that removes barriers, reduces duplication and increases efficiency.

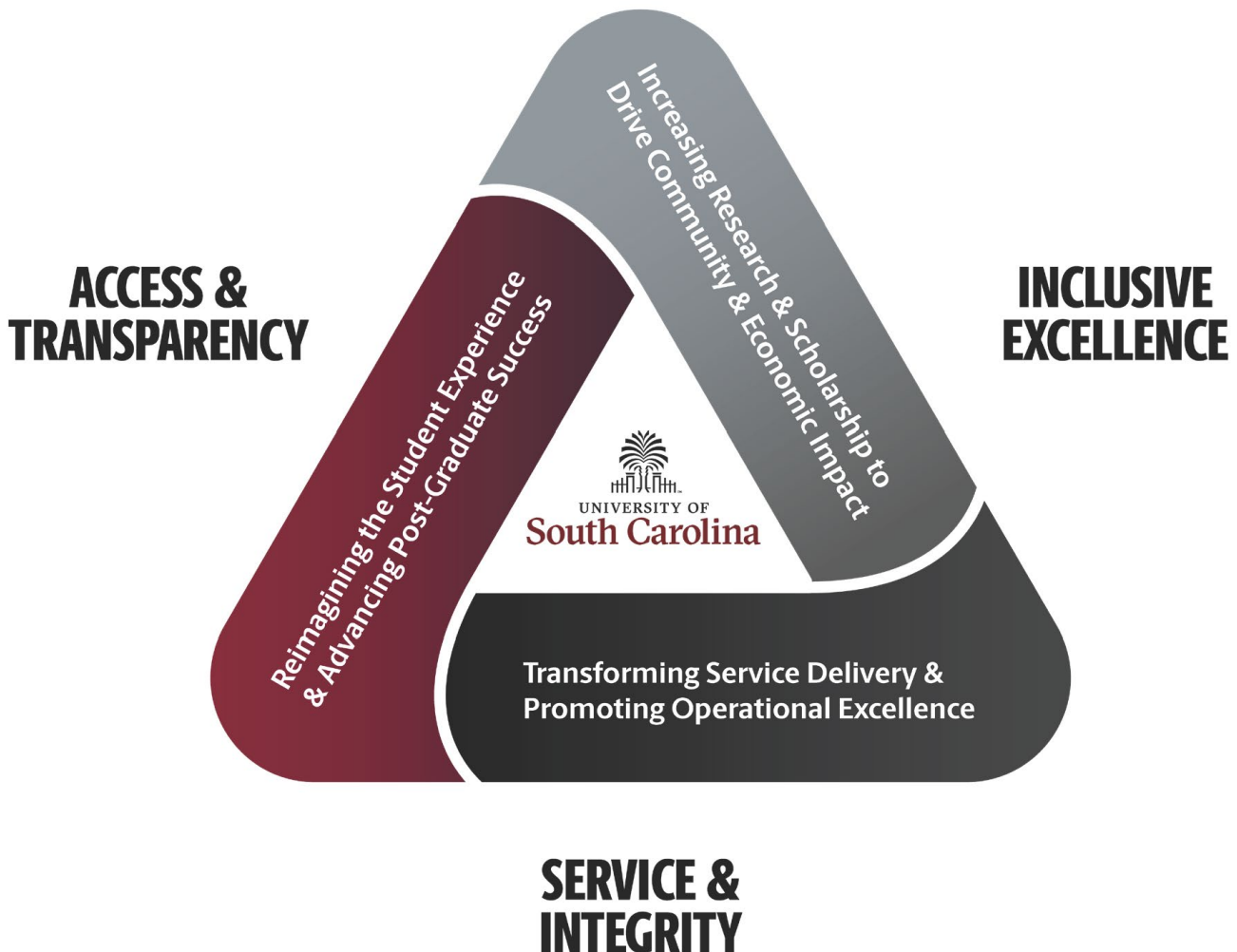
Goal 1 – Identify and remove barriers created by spaces and places that impede a high-quality experience.

Goal 2 – Improve systems and structures to reduce duplication of services and increase efficiency while maintaining a student-centered organization.

Goal 3 – Create a unified, comprehensive and effective communication strategy that aligns our division to serve stakeholders.

Goal 4 – Attract, hire, develop, retain and leverage the immense talent of a diverse workforce to meet the ever-changing needs of students.

Goal 5 – Assess, analyze and evaluate our standard practice to evolve our operations.



COMMUNICATING IN AN EMERGENCY

The university's response to an emergency will depend on the type and severity of the situation, as well as the circumstances surrounding it. In an emergency, employees should follow official university communications and instructions from emergency personnel, supervisors or designated building coordinators. Communications may be shared through Carolina Alert, email, text message, the university website, social media or other official channels.

Employees play an important role in supporting the university's response and helping protect the health, safety and well-being of the campus community. New employees should ensure their contact information is current and review university emergency procedures so they know how to respond during severe weather, building evacuations, campus closures or other emergency situations.

Identifying an emergency, gathering information about the circumstances and reporting it to the appropriate supervisor are vital to supporting the university's response and ensuring the health, safety and well-being of the campus community.

ALL STAFF

Take immediate action to ensure safety.

Take immediate, appropriate action in accordance with department, unit or university procedures and emergency management plans to ensure the safety of the campus community.

Refer to official information.

Rely on www.sc.edu/carolinaalert for the best updated information. Prepare front-line staff (e.g., receptionists, operators, University Ambassadors, etc.) for questions they may receive; ensure that these staff members receive information and updates as they become available.

Assist the division in distributing approved communications.

Do NOT release unapproved communications in any form.

Refer media inquiries to The Division of Communications and Marketing, at 803-777-7440.

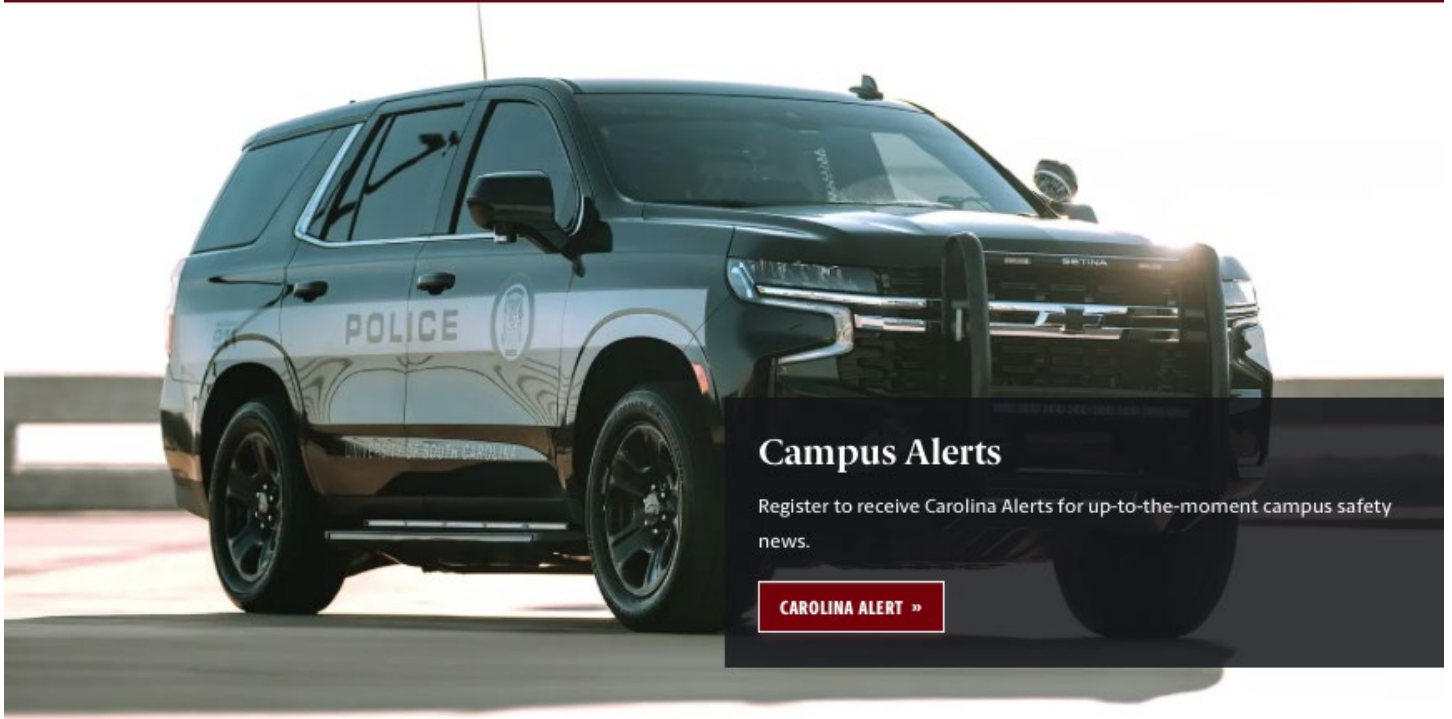
The Division of Communications will accept, respond to and track all media inquiries, ensuring that the appropriate university spokespeople offer correct, consistent and timely information to reporters. [View the Public Relations Guide.](#)

Monitor questions and rumors.

Monitoring questions and reporting rumors will guide development of future messages and help the university and its spokespeople directly dispel rumors.

Always be truthful and avoid speculation.

Providing accurate information, even when details are limited, helps maintain the trust and confidence of the campus community during uncertain times.



EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

[Learn procedures](#) for campus emergencies and help protect yourself by knowing what is and isn't safe during a crisis event or dangerous situation.



[Active Shooter](#)



[Power Outage](#)



[Bomb Threat](#)



[Relationship Violence](#)



[Bullying and Harrassment](#)



[Stalking](#)



[Identity Theft](#)



[Suspicious Activity or Package](#)



[Medical Emergencies and Epidemics](#)



[Workplace Violence](#)



[Natural Disasters and Fire](#)

INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR FACULTY AND STAFF

We are here to help.

If someone tells you he or she has been sexually assaulted, it is your responsibility to inform the survivor that you cannot guarantee his/her anonymity or confidentiality, but you will do your best to honor any such request. If the survivor wants a guarantee of confidentiality he/she must seek one of the confidential resources listed below. Confidential reporting resources are not required to report the survivor's identity.

Offer support.

Allow the survivor to share openly without making judgments or evaluations. To ensure that survivors know the full array of support available, review the [contacts and resources](#) with them.

Offer judicial support.

USC can help a survivor file a complaint (different from a police report) against an alleged assailant; conduct an investigation; and arrange protective measures including no-contact orders, residence hall changes and class schedule changes.

If survivor agrees, [complete the online form](#) or contact Student Conduct 803-777-4333; Equal Opportunity Programs 803-777-3854

Call the police.

The USC police department's victim advocate can help survivors obtain restraining orders or orders of protection.

Reporting assault is different from prosecuting it. Contact: USC Police Department 803-777-4215. Contact 911 if it is an emergency.

Offer relocation services.

Survivors who don't feel safe in their current residences can get help finding temporary housing. If survivor agrees, contact:
On campus - University Housing 803-530-9477
Off campus (women only) - Sistercare 803-765-9428

Offer professional help.

USC has specially trained advocates on call 24/7 to provide support, information and referrals to survivors of sexual assault. If survivor agrees, contact: Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention and Prevention 803-777-8248*

Recommended medical help.

Encourage the survivor to seek medical attention, which is important no matter what. If the survivor agrees, visit: Palmetto Richland Emergency Room, 5 Richland Medical Park Dr. Columbia, SC 29203*

Report the incident to the Title IX coordinator.

If the survivor requests anonymity, explain that you will honor his/her request, but you must complete an anonymous report. If the survivor does not request anonymity, give the name of the survivor. [Complete the online form.](#)

Offer emotional support.

USC students can receive confidential counseling on campus. If survivor agrees, contact: Counseling and Human Development Center 803-777-5223*

Share the survivor resource card.

A printable list of resources for victims can be [found online.](#)

* Confidential Resource



STAFF RESOURCES

Our employees are the key to our success. To help ensure you have the support and information you need to continue to make significant contributions to USC and our students' Carolina experience, we've collected a number of resources for you.



[Assessment](#)



[Finance](#)



[Staff Engagement](#)



[Human Resources](#)



[Technology Services](#)



[Communications and Marketing](#)

SERVICE REQUESTS

To submit a ticket you will need to log in using your network account and password. Once logged-in, from this page you may [create a new ticket](#) by completing the request ticket or view previous tickets.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support aims to enrich the professional growth and development of its staff at every career level. We're also devoted to showing appreciation and recognition to our dedicated staff. To honor these commitments, the division offers a wide range of staff engagement initiatives.

[Calendar](#)

Stay up to date on the divisions [professional development offerings](#) and recognition initiatives.

[Mentoring](#)

Student Affairs and Academic Support offers mentoring opportunities to full-time employees of the division through the program "Division Duos." Participants in the program develop professional relationships and learn more about the division and the university.

[Annual Conference](#)

The Student Affairs and Academic Support's Aspire & Advance conference is open to all division staff members, as well as other USC-Columbia staff, USC System campus staff, and staff from other Midlands-area higher education institutions.

[Onboarding Champions](#)

The Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support aims to provide meaningful connections to new employees in the division by having them meet with Onboarding Champions. Onboarding Champions are established employees who ensure new employees are connected to various departments to learn about the division holistically.

[Division Fellowship](#)

The Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support's fellowship program provides an opportunity for employees to gain experience outside of their current department and job duties to enhance their skills, expand their expertise, and build connections.

Supervisory Essentials Certificate Program

The LEAD (Supervisory Essentials) program, is required for all supervisors of University staff hired into a supervisory position after January 1, 2010, as per HR Policy [1.51](#) and must be completed within 18 months of being hired into a supervisory position.

LEAD is only for supervisors of staff. Non-supervisors are not permitted in the program.

However, the Office of Organizational and Professional Development (OPD) offers an array of learning opportunities and OD services to support your growth, help you build highly effective, inclusive teams, and elevate your leadership skills, advancing a culture of life-long learning. We are proud to showcase all the amazing educators and trainers preparing USC employees to serve our students.

APPRECIATION AND RECOGNITION

[GEMS \(Gamecocks Who Excel at Magnificent Service\)](#)

The GEMS recognition program makes it easy to celebrate employee achievements and say thank you to staff. The GEMS program recognizes specific actions and behaviors that support our division's values: collaborate, inclusion, innovation, integrity and service.

[Division Awards](#)

The Division Awards celebrate employees who consistently contribute to the mission of the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support while providing high quality services to students, parents and the Carolina Community.

Research, Scholarship and Community Impact

The Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support advances the mission of the university through student-centered efforts in three priority areas: student experience and post-graduate success; research, scholarship and community impact; and operational excellence.

STUDENT EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

In the Division of Student Affairs, student employment positions are no longer viewed solely as operational support — they are a primary vehicle for career readiness and student development. More than simply completing tasks, these roles are designed as intentional learning experiences that prepare students for success beyond the classroom.

Our goal is to make student employment a high-impact practice on campus through:

- Alignment with NACE career readiness competencies
- Intentional reflection and personal learning
- Increased student retention
- Greater academic achievement

Mandatory Training for supervisors of students can be found on the division [Professional Development Calendar](#).

A variety of resources for supervisors of student staff are available in the [Resources](#) section of the Division Human Resources webpage.

NEW EMPLOYEE CHECKLIST

- Mark your calendar for [upcoming division meetings and events](#).
- Schedule a meeting with an [Onboarding Champion](#).
- Explore learning opportunities available across various departments through our training calendar by setting up your account in our learning registration system.
- Being a Gamecock has its advantages; learn about [discounts and savings](#) for university employees.
- Read the Spur of the Moment News Letter, delivered directly to your inbox twice monthly.
- Stay updated with the latest news on social media via [Instagram](#), [X](#), or [LinkedIn](#).
- Listen to the [Spur of the Moment Podcast](#).

