Coastal Carolina University is committed to the highest standards of ethical behavior. These standards include respecting the rights and dignity of all persons and upholding obligations to others in a fair and honest manner. Each person in the Coastal Carolina University community plays an important role in maintaining these standards by demonstrating integrity in performing one’s duties and fulfilling one’s responsibilities in the workplace.

To this end, this Code of Ethical Conduct serves (1) to set forth ethical principles that guide the activities of all trustees, officers, and employees (including faculty, staff, contractual agents, and student employees); (2) to emphasize the University’s commitment to ethical conduct and compliance with the law; and (3) to help prevent and detect wrongdoing.

**Integrity:** We affirm the importance of integrity in all endeavors. We will be fair, trustworthy, and respectful so as to promote an environment with high standards of accountability. This commitment to integrity extends to both academic and administrative matters, and we strive for continuous improvement in the performance of our duties and obligations.

**Fairness:** We respect the rights and dignity of all persons and recognize that taking advantage of another person through discrimination, harassment, manipulation, abuse of privileged information, misrepresentation of material facts, or any other unfair practice undermines the fundamental principles of the University. Deception, violence, coercion, bullying, and exploitation or other methods of manipulation are unacceptable.

**Respect:** We create a respectful environment through our own actions, and we nurture a climate of fairness and civility toward others while recognizing each individual’s dignity, freedom, and diversity, even in the face of disagreement. When acting on the University’s behalf, we will communicate professionally and with civility, act honestly and in good faith, and speak out against hatred and bias.

**Honesty:** We expect honesty from all members of the university community. We have a responsibility to conduct ourselves in a manner that maintains and strengthens the public’s trust in the integrity of the University. We will tell the truth, be transparent in our dealings, and never use our authority to influence others to perform inappropriate or illegal acts, or to violate laws, regulations, or University policies.

**Confidentiality:** We are often the custodians of personal and institutional information that we have a responsibility to protect. We will not abuse this trust or violate any applicable laws by allowing unauthorized access, disclosure, or discussion of confidential information. We will maintain the confidentiality of privileged information,
except when disclosure is authorized by an appropriate officer of the University or required by law. Confidential information includes all non-public information that might be of use to competitors or other third parties or harmful to the University or its constituencies if disclosed; it also includes information that third parties have entrusted to the University. The obligation to preserve confidential information continues even after employment ends.

**Compliance:** We recognize our responsibility to comply with all applicable international, federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations; grant and contract requirements; professional standards; and University policies and procedures. Although not all individuals are expected to know the details of these laws, it is important to know enough about applicable federal, state, and local laws to determine when to seek advice from supervisors or other appropriate personnel. When in doubt, seek appropriate advice.

**Conflicts of Interest:** A conflict of interest exists when an individual’s direct or indirect personal interests are inconsistent with or interfere with the best interests of the University. All decisions and actions of the Board of Trustees and the administration are to be made for the sole purpose of advancing the best interests of the institution and the public trust. Trustees, officers, and employees of the University serve the public trust and are required to fulfill their responsibilities with care; they should promptly disclose conflicts of interest and take steps to mitigate or eliminate those that compromise our integrity or that of the University, in accordance with applicable law and University policy.

**Stewardship and Proper Use:** We recognize the importance of acting responsibly, in good faith, and with due care and diligence in the use of all University assets and the resources entrusted to us. We will be efficient and economical, encourage sustainability, and ensure that resources are used prudently, ethically, and for their designated purposes. Any suspected incident of fraud or theft should be reported for investigation to the appropriate University official.

Given the variety and complexity of ethical questions that may arise in the course of carrying out the University’s business, this Code can serve only as a general guide. It is not intended to replace, and may be supplemented by, specific University policies that have been adopted in the past and that may be adopted in the future.

Confronted with ethically ambiguous situations, individuals should keep in mind the University’s commitment to the highest ethical standards and seek advice from appropriate sources so as to ensure that this commitment is honored at all times. Individuals who witness behaviors that violate this code of ethical conduct are expected to confront, report, and/or prevent actions that threaten the well-being of the University community and erode the integrity of the institution. In addition to
reporting through supervisors, individuals may bring attention to unethical behaviors through the anonymous reportage website (http://www.coastal.edu/safety/witness/) or phone line (843-349-TIPS [8477]).