SUMMARY:

Coastal Carolina University strives to provide useful information to its website visitors: prospective and current students and their families, faculty and staff, and the public. The University is committed to protecting the online privacy of personal information gathered from the University Website and University-owned domains (collectively, CCU Website).

POLICY:

I. Web Privacy Expectations

This document has been developed to inform you about what information is collected via the CCU Website, who may receive that information, and what the University may do with that information.

A. Information Collected

1. Coastal Carolina University gathers two general types of information through the CCU Web:

   a. Voluntary

      i. A person may voluntarily provide Coastal Carolina University with personal information provided on the CCU Website through an online form. Online forms are used for purposes such as applying to the University, requesting information, or making purchases or gifts to the University. Information submitted via an online form is not retained on the CCU Website. The University incorporates many security features such as encryption, cookies, and secure logon to pages for students, faculty, staff, or friends of the University to submit or view their personal information.
b. Involuntary

i. University web servers generate temporary logs used for statistical purposes that may contain the following information:

   a) user IP (Internet) address
   b) user browser
   c) web pages requested and referred
   d) date, time and duration of page visits
   e) volume of data storage

ii. This data is used in aggregate to monitor the integrity, efficiency and function of the CCU Website; to track page views or tailor content to better serve the needs of web visitors; and provide demographic generalities about user groups, sorted by student class year or state of origin, for example.

B. Access to Information

1. The University does not actively share personal information submitted voluntarily or gathered involuntarily from the CCU Website. However, because Coastal Carolina University is a public institution, some information collected through the CCU Website may be subject to release through the S.C. Freedom of Information Act. This may include summary server log information, email messages sent to websites, or directory information collected from web-based forms or available on the CCU Website. In addition, the public records law allows commercial users to purchase public record information, such as non-confidential lists of students and employees.

2. The University complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a federal law designed to protect students' privacy, and to provide them access to their education records. Under FERPA, "education records" include all records, in all tangible formats (print, electronic, visual, etc.) that are directly related to currently or formerly enrolled students and are maintained by an academic institution.

3. The University does not release any personal information about an individual except to comply with an applicable law or legal process, or to protect the personal safety of the University community or the general public.

4. Only select University-authorized individuals have access to the personal information provided by the University’s constituent groups on the CCU Website.

5. External individuals or companies under contract with the University may have access to confidential information in order to provide web-based services to the University. Contracted entities may not use or re-disclose University information for unauthorized purposes.

D. External Content
Some pages of the CCU Website may contain links to external websites or personal pages. This privacy statement pertains only to the webpages of Coastal Carolina University. The University is not responsible for the privacy policies and content or claims made in such places.

E. Online Surveys

Coastal Carolina University conducts online surveys for institutional or academic research purposes on the CCU Website. Unless noted on the survey document, confidential and personal information disclosed in online surveys is used only for purposes indicated on the survey. Aggregate data from the surveys may be shared with University and external partners.

F. Public Forums

The University supports some forums, message boards, and blogs. Information disclosed through these vehicles becomes public information and users should use caution when disclosing confidential information in such places. Academic chat sessions and discussion forums, such as those in Moodle, are educational in nature and are protected from disclosure by FERPA.

G. Required Link

Each page of the CCU Website must contain a link at the bottom of the page titled “Site Policy” that links to this policy.

II. Web Disclaimer

A. Coastal Carolina University strives to provide useful information to its website visitors: prospective and current students and their families, faculty and staff, and the public.

1. Content

Though the University strives to provide an accurate and current website, it does not guarantee that all content is complete, current and accurate. Many pages of the CCU Website are created and updated by various departments, thus, the University does not review, edit, approve or endorse all pages or documents accessible from the website.

2. Non-binding

The information provided on the CCU Website does not constitute a legal contract between the University and any person or entity unless otherwise specified.

3. External Pages and Links
There are many pages and links that are not official University webpages. Though personal pages or links to external websites may be accessed via the CCU Website, the University is not responsible for any content or claims made in such pages.

III. Web Security

A. Coastal Carolina University maintains secure data networks protected by firewall and password protection systems. Although every effort is made to secure network communications, Coastal Carolina University cannot ensure the privacy of all online communications.

B. Individuals using the University’s online services should also take steps to protect personal information, such as closing the web browser when finished using the site to avoid leaving history and cache files on the machine that others can abuse. Failure to do so may result in personal information being viewed by someone else using the same computer.

C. All credit card transactions processed through the University Website are strongly encrypted. Confidential information entered for a transaction is not used by the University for any other purpose, unless otherwise indicated on the respective website. In some cases, the University contracts with external entities for specific web services related to financial transactions. In these cases users are redirected to an external site; privacy and security are governed by the policies of those services and are documented by those sites.

D. Only select University-authorized individuals have access to the personal information provided by the University’s constituent groups.

E. University computers and equipment are subject to examination by University-authorized individuals to detect illegal software and to evaluate the security of the network. Personal computers connected to the University's network are also subject to the University’s acceptable use policies.