

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
SPIRIT PROGRAM
ERIKA P. GOODWIN, HEAD COACH/SPIRIT COORDINATOR
CHRIS HARTSHORN, ASSISTANT CHEERLEADING COACH

OVERVIEW:

The University of South Carolina Spirit Program is a part of the Athletic Department and its members are visual representatives of the department and the University of South Carolina. As a student of the Spirit Program, the primary focus of our program will be on academics prior to athletics to find a balance between becoming a strong student as well as providing time and services back to the university. Being a part of the University of South Carolina's Spirit Program will provide the athlete with many rewarding life-lessons that will enhance their experience as a college student at the University of South Carolina. These lessons include enhancing leadership abilities, communication, confidence, time management, and responsibility.

There is a great responsibility of members of the University of South Carolina's Spirit Program in that the cheerleaders and mascots are ambassadors to the University and represent the school, city, state and nation. Members will uphold the values of the Spirit Program and the University of South Carolina at all times. Once members are chosen, they will be required to read and agree to the University Of South Carolina Spirit Program Statement Of Agreement. This can be found on Page 5-6 of this document.

The primary focus of the University of South Carolina's Spirit Program is to support all of our athletic teams and events. This focus is accomplished by being visible spirit representation at sporting events and community functions in order to raise fan support and enthusiasm. The Spirit Program continues to promote goodness in the community by showing support at various charitable events and promoting education throughout South Carolina's schools.

STRUCTURE:

The University of South Carolina's cheerleading program has two squads, Co-ed and All-girl. Both squads cheer for home football. The co-ed team also cheers for men's basketball, assists with home volleyball matches, and primarily travels to away football games. The All-Girl team also cheers for women's basketball, volleyball, and assists with away football games and men's basketball when needed. Both teams have the option to compete with 20 members on each team chosen by the coaches.

The All-girl team is comprised of no more than 28 scholarship members. The Co-ed team is comprised of no more than 13 scholarship couples. The remaining positions are filled as non-scholarship. All are chosen on a point scale score sheet by coaches and outside judges.

The University of South Carolina's mascot program is comprised of 3 students. The mascot (Cocky) is a visible spirit representation at all football, men's and women's basketball, volleyball, baseball, and softball games and at any requested swimming/diving, equestrian matches, or any other sporting event. In addition to the athletic support, Cocky is also visible throughout the community at requested events upon availability and acceptance. Any open positions are filled during a separate spring tryout.

The University of South Carolina's Spirit Program is budgeted in the Athletic Department. A Head Cheerleading Coach and Assistant Cheerleading Coach(es) lead the Spirit Program. The Head Cheerleading Coach also acts as the Spirit Coordinator, which includes mascot responsibilities. The Head Cheerleading Coach reports to the Director of Marketing for Athletics and ultimately an Assistant Athletic Director for budgeting purposes and all other concerns.

Although the activities that the cheerleaders and mascots engage in are highly athletic and the members are viewed as athletes in their own right, the Spirit Program is not a governed NCAA sport, and is not under the same rules and regulations in many ways as governed sports. There are set rules and regulations for the Cheerleading Program, however, under AACCA (American Association of Cheerleading Coaches & Administrators) Safety Guidelines, which are mandated by the NCAA and SEC. The University of South Carolina strictly follows the AACCA guidelines. The Cheerleading Program is provided a certified trainer that is present at every practice and most events. A Cheerleading Coach is always present with the cheerleaders when practicing and performing skills in order to ensure AACCA Safety Guidelines are upheld. AACCA Safety Guidelines can be found on the AACCA website at www.aacca.org.

SPIRIT SCHOLARSHIPS:

Frist year cheerleaders at the University of South Carolina are awarded \$250 per semester. All veteran in-state cheerleaders will receive \$500 per semester. This is provided in part by the Athletic Department and in part by the Jamey Elizabeth Collins fund provided specifically for the spirit program by Mr. and Mrs. James Collins. Out-of-state cheerleaders that maintain a minimum of a 3.0 cumulative GPA at the end of their first year in the program are eligible for a reduced tuition beginning the second year plus \$250 per semester. All veteran out-of-state cheerleaders not receiving the cumulative GPA will receive the \$500 per semester. The out-of-state reduction will be available every year that the athlete maintains a 3.0 GPA and remains in the program. Out-of-state transfer students with a transferring GPA of 3.5 are also eligible for the reduction and \$250 per semester upon transfer.

The “Head Cocky” will be awarded \$1000 per semester. The “Second Cocky” will be awarded \$600 per semester and the “Third Cocky” will be awarded \$500 per semester. This scholarship is in part from the Athletic Department and in part from the Jamey Elizabeth Collins fund. Out-of-state veteran mascots will with a 3.0 cumulative GPA at the end of their first year in program are eligible for the reduced tuition beginning the second year plus \$250 per semester.

APPEARANCES:

All appearances by the cheerleaders and mascot must be approved and assigned by the Head Cheerleading Coach. Cheerleaders will only appear at public appearances that are designed to promote spirit for the university or healthy community events. Cheerleaders will only appear at business/commercial events when requested directly from the Athletic Department. Cheerleaders will not attend private events. A cheerleader wishing to make other business/commercial appearances as an individual separate from the spirit program must still have appearance approved by the Head Cheerleading Coach.

The same regulations apply to mascot appearances. In addition, however, private appearances may be requested through the Spirit Coordinator. The nature of the appearance, availability of students, and the expenses of the appearance are all factors that affect approval of a private appearance.

HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE SPIRIT PROGRAM:

TRYOUTS:

The following information is mandatory in order to tryout at the University of South Carolina:

- Acceptance letter to USC for the following Fall semester
- Current Insurance Coverage and Completed Insurance Form
- Signed Waiver of Consent
- Completed Official USC Physical Form signed by personal doctor

All forms can be found on Spirit Page of our website at www.gamecocksonline.com.

The majority of spots are filled during a spring tryout. Fall tryouts may be held if needed. All current cheerleaders are required to tryout yearly. Team will be comprised of top scores for each position needed (co-ed flyer, males, all-girl flyer, main bases, sides, and backs.)

All score sheets will be clearly reviewed prior to the start of tryouts with all those choosing to participate. A copy of the current tryout sheets can be found on pages 7-12 of this document.

Several clinics are held throughout the academic year. These clinics are designed to give high school students experience for college level tryouts, and are not a mandatory part of tryouts. Information can be found on our website.

Mascot Tryouts are held on an as-needed basis during the spring semester. Inquiries should be directed to Head Cheerleading Coach/Spirit Coordinator.

MAINTAINING PARTICIPATION ON TEAM:

Expectations:

All members must maintain a minimum of a 2.0 GPA to participate

All members should be a full-time student at USC. (For justifiable reasons (such as graduating seniors, etc.), exceptions may be made by coach as to full-time status.)

All members must attend all required events including, but not limited to, cheer practices, cheerleading camp, games, away trips and appearances in a professional and timely manner.

All members are responsible for uniforms and apparel provided by Athletic Department. Each individual will be liable for any lost or damaged item.

All other expectations are listed in the Statement of Agreement found on page 5 of this document.

Violations of any of the above will result in disciplinary actions from coaching staff. Serious offenses or repeated offenses may result in the suspension or replacement of an athlete.

Injured Members:

All injuries should be reported immediately to the coach and trainer.

If a member of the University of South Carolina's Spirit Program is injured during an official event, the coach and trainers will treat athlete and provide him/her with specific care. The trainer will set up appointment with USC doctors when necessary. Insurance coverage is explained in insurance form on our website.

All members that are not allowed to participate for the current academic year due to injury will remain in program with all benefits associated as long as the athlete continues to uphold all other requirements. These requirements include, but are not limited to, being present at all practices, games, and assisting in approved appearances.

Once cleared by USC doctors and trainers, the athlete is expected to maintain required skills and tryout with necessary skills the following year. If an athlete is not cleared prior to spring tryouts, that athlete may be asked to tryout later or known skills prior to tryouts will be used for tryout purposes. Coaching staff, trainers and students will discuss individual cases.

TRAVEL EXPECTATIONS:

Cheerleaders and mascots will travel to away football games, bowl games, SEC men's and women's basketball tournaments, post-season basketball play, appearances, and National Cheerleading Competition, as well as any other USC affiliated events as needed. Travel arrangements are made by Spirit Coordinator/Head Cheerleading Coach and may be via bus, van, or plane. All vans are official USC vehicles or provided by USC and are driven only by Head Cheerleading Coach or Assistant Cheerleading Coach. Mascots will use personal vehicle and will be reimbursed with the approved USC mileage rate for travel.

No more than 18 cheerleaders and 1 mascot will travel to away games. Fewer, yet still a reasonable amount, may travel in order to adhere to specific university and/or tournament rules or due to expenses of a specific trip.

It is imperative that all chosen traveling athletes follow all instructions provided by coach or will meet disciplinary consequences.

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
SPIRIT PROGRAM
STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT**

As a candidate for the University of South Carolina Spirit Program, I understand that I have chosen to be a prospect and fully understand the guidelines and expectations of the try-out process. I understand that the goal of the coaching staff and outside judges is to comprise a program that best suits the needs and expectations of the program and all decisions are final.

If chosen to be a member of the University of South Carolina Spirit Program, I will uphold the guidelines of the coaching staff and the program for the current academic year.

This will be my first priority behind academics so that this program can reach the highest of excellence. I will understand that I am one integral part of the success of a team and put what is best for the entire team first. I understand that this is a full-year and full-time commitment with full expectations provided on Page 3. If I fail to uphold the expectations of the program, the University or the guidelines and policies listed on back, I understand that I can be replaced at the discretion of the coaching staff.

I understand that I am a visual representative for the University and I am to represent the values, sportsmanship, pride and excellence of the University of South Carolina provided on Page 2. If I fail to uphold the standards of the program, the University or the guidelines and policies listed on back, I understand that I can be replaced at the discretion of the coaching staff.

I understand that being a member of the spirit program is a privilege, not a right. I understand that any benefits and membership in the spirit program are subject to the guidelines listed above. I understand that I have a choice whether to be a candidate for any possible competitions at any time during the year, and that the coaching staff to make decisions based on the needs of the team/program out of volunteer candidates. I understand that outside of the USC-related events, I have the option of accepting or denying any further appearance requests for outside appearances.

By signing this Statement of Agreement, I am responsible for following the decisions of the coaching staff and I have read and completely understand the guidelines of the University of South Carolina Spirit Program.

SIGNATURE OF SQUAD MEMBER

DATE

PRINT NAME

BANNER ID

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS
DATE

DATE

EXPLANATION OF VALUES, PRIDE, EXCELLENCE, AND SPORTSMANSHIP

VALUES:

The University of South Carolina represents wholesome family values. Our athletes must uphold that standard when in uniform or out since all athletes are recognizable outside of university related events. Events involving and/or promoting alcohol and/or drugs, sexual connotations etc. that do not uphold our value system will be a violation of the spirit program's Statement of Agreement.

SPORTSMANSHIP:

The University of South Carolina does not condone unsportsmanlike behavior. This involves any behavior that is offensive against a competitive school's players, staff, and/or fans. All cheering should be to promote the spirit of the University of South Carolina only and directed toward our fans and teams and should follow the SEC guidelines. Any behavior that does not uphold the University of South Carolina's level of sportsmanship will be a violation of the spirit program's Statement of Agreement.

PRIDE AND EXCELLENCE:

The spirit program represents the pride and excellence of the University of South Carolina. The participating athletes are the ambassadors to our university in which many current students, alumni, and future students take pride in its excellence. The spirit program will exemplify that pride and excellence in all actions. Any behavior that does not, is a violation of the spirit program's Statement of Agreement.

THERE WILL BE NO TOLERANCE FOR ANY OF THESE VIOLATIONS!

Signature of Squad Member

Date

Signature of Coach

Date

**USC CHEERLEADING TRYOUTS
CLINIC SCHEDULE**

**THURSDAY-FRIDAY 4-9PM
SATURDAY 10AM-2PM**

**Thursday: Sign In
 Organizational Meeting
 Tumbling
 Learn Fight Song, Chant, Dance
 First Cut**

**Friday: Coaches' Evaluation
 Stunting
 Fight Song, Chant, Dance
 Review Tumbling
 Second Cut**

**Saturday: Judge's Evaluation
 Cheer, Chant, Dance
 Review Stunting
 Final Cut**

NAME _____

TRY-OUT # _____

NAME _____

TRY-OUT # _____

TUMBLING: (MAX 50)

STANDING TUMBLING: (25)

SKILL	POINT VALUE	SCORE
FIVE STANDING TUCKS (5) (NO HANDSPRINGS ALLOWED)	1-5	_____
TRIPLE TOE BACK (5) (THE MAX FOR HANDSPRINGS WILL BE A 3)	4-5 1-3	_____
OPTIONAL (10)	1-10	_____

SKILL POINT VALUE FOR OPTIONAL STANDING:
TOE FULL=9-10 STANDING FULL=7-8 1 TO FULL=5-6 2 TO FULL=3-4 COMBO JUMPS
(SHOWING ANOTHER JUMP OTHER THAN TOE TOUCH) TO TUCK= 2 SINGLE JUMP TO TUCK
=1

COMMENTS _____

TOE TO FULLS/LAYOUTS (5)	1-5	_____
SKILL POINT VALUE FOR ELITE STANDING TUMBLING: TOE 2 TO FULL=4-5 TOE 2 TO LO=1-3		

COMMENTS _____

RUNNING TUMBLING: (15)

SKILL POINT VALUE FOR RUNNING TUMBLING (MUST INCLUDE A HANDSPRING):
COMBO TO FULLS =9-10 FH TO FULLS =7-8 FULL=5-6 COMBO TO
LAYOUT=3-4 LAYOUT= 1-2

COMMENTS _____ 1-10 _____

ROUND OFF FULL (5)	1-5	_____
ROUND OFF FULL =4-5 ROUNDOFF LAYOUT =1-3		

BONUS POINTS

+10 FOR MINIMUM POINTS OF 35 IN TUMBLING _____

TOTAL POINTS _____

NAME _____

TRY-OUT # _____

BASIC CHEER (MAX 35)

FIGHT SONG:

PERFORMANCE **1-10** **SCORE** _____

SKILLS **1-10** **SCORE** _____

COMMENTS _____

CHEER: 1-10 **SCORE** _____

SHARPNESS AGGRESIVENESS PERFORMANCE

COMMENTS _____

APPEARANCE: 1-5 **SCORE** _____

COLLEGIATE IMAGE PERFORMANCE READY

COMMENTS _____

TOTAL POINTS _____

MASCOT TRYOUT FORM

PROSPECT # _____ NAME _____ JUDGE # _____

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
MASCOT TRYOUTS**

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>SCORE</u>
<u>INTERVIEW</u>	10	_____
(Personality, fitness, eye contact, sincerity, poise, availability, answers to questions)		
<u>PREPARED SKIT</u>		
ORIGINALITY/CREATIVITY	10	_____
CROWD APPEAL	10	_____
MOTIONS (spirit, pantomime)	10	_____
WALK/USE OF SUIT	10	_____
USE OF PROPS	10	_____
CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT (Overall implementation of Cocky)	10	_____
<u>IMPROVISATION</u>		
ORIGINALITY/CREATIVITY	10	_____
CROWD APPEAL	10	_____
MOTIONS	10	_____
TOTAL POINTS	100	_____