

November 16, 2020

Dear Trojan Community,

This year has been challenging on many fronts, but I continue to be inspired by what I see around me – Trojans supporting each other, focusing on our students, caring for our patients, and partnering with our neighbors. We're navigating so many different health, environmental, societal, racial, and economic questions right now, and it's more clear than ever that our values – as guiding principles – will sustain us.

This past year I invited our entire community to participate in the [Culture Journey](#) and to ask “Who are we as a university?” More than 24,000 of you took the USC Values Poll or participated in culture sessions. Your insights on what it means to be a Trojan proved invaluable.

Today I am pleased to share **six unifying values** that emerged from these conversations, and will guide us moving forward. As Trojans we will:

*Act with **integrity** in the pursuit of **excellence**. Embrace **diversity, equity, and inclusion** and promote **well-being**. Engage in **open communication** and be **accountable** for living our values.*

- **Integrity:** We do the right thing
- **Excellence:** We bring our best selves
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** We all belong
- **Well-being:** We honor the whole person
- **Open Communication:** We share openly and honestly
- **Accountability:** We take responsibility

When we embrace these values together, we build a culture that instills trust, reinforces ethical decision-making, and provides a strong foundation for our future. USC's senior leadership is wholly committed to these values, and announcing them is only the beginning. We are now looking to integrate them into our university-wide systems and processes.

Here are some concrete examples of what is already underway, with more actions to come:

- Investing in **developing the professional skillsets** of our leaders, faculty, staff, and students tied to **ethical and values-based behaviors, mentorship, and feedback**
- Reflecting USC values in the way we **assess performance** and in systems governing **recognition, rewards, and incentives**
- Providing clear pathways for **discussing and acting on concerns without fear of retaliation**
- Alignment of values and DEI concepts into **well-being programs and initiatives**
- Embedding our values into employee **recruiting, hiring, onboarding, and professional development**

You will soon be invited to join in university-wide culture events, workshops, and other activities centered around our values. And in spring 2021 we will launch a reimagined Code of Ethics. If you would like to receive updates on our Culture Change journey, please email partnerforculturechange@usc.edu.

Thank you for everything you do to help make USC the best university it can be for all of us.

Fight On!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol L. Folt".

Carol L. Folt
President

NOVEMBER 2020

In This Document You'll Find

1. Values Connect to USC's Mission
2. Values Matter
3. Our Unifying Values
4. What We're Doing Next

You Shared Your Voice You Started the Change

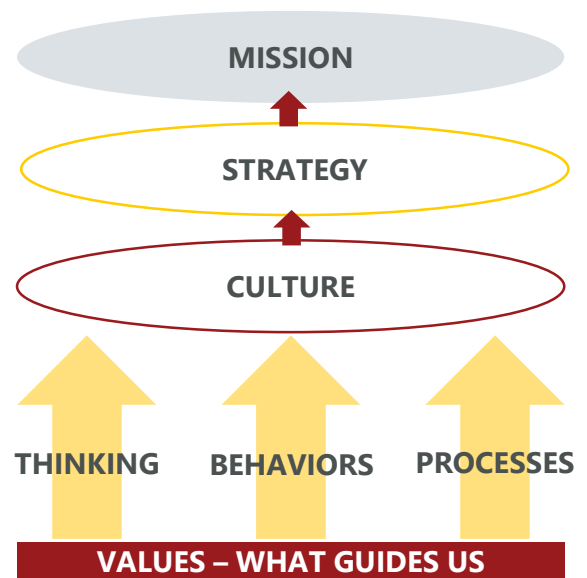
Over the past year, 24,000+ Students, Faculty, Staff and Leadership shared their voices on our values, behaviors, and needed improvements. The result? We are excited to announce USC's six **Unifying Values!**

→ Values Connect to USC's Mission

Values are the foundation of our culture. They guide our thinking and give us the clear direction and guideposts around our actions. They help us prioritize those systems and process areas that need enhancement.

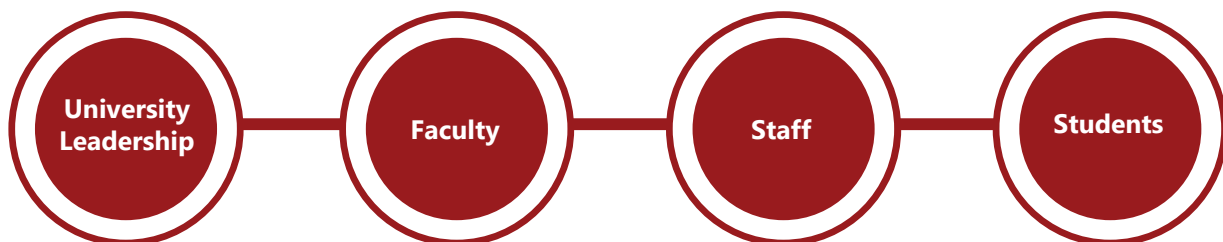
Most important, they are at the core of **our Mission:**

- Serve our students, patients, and communities.
- Development of students and society through enrichment of the human mind and spirit.
- Excellence in academics, teaching, research, artistic creation, athletics, professional practice, outstanding medical care, and public service.



→ Values Matter

Values matter. When we live in alignment with our values, everyone experiences the benefits.



When we embody our core values, we...

- ✓ Enhance institutional trust
- ✓ Support open communication and respect
- ✓ Reinforce ethical decision-making
- ✓ Foster positive and diverse cultural perspectives
- ✓ Anchor our behaviors in foundational guidelines that support our mission



Our Unifying Values

Our Unifying Values – A Shared Commitment

Values unify us, guide our behaviors and support the way we engage with our community.

Integrity

We do the right thing

Our words, decisions and actions align with and are guided by our values, honesty and ethical principles.

- We stand up for what is ethical, even if it is not easy
- We stand up for what is right, regardless of status or power
- We recognize and honor ethical behavior

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

We all belong

We challenge our community to engage differences as strengths, embrace the richness of our lived experiences, and leverage diversity, equity and inclusion to drive excellence in support of a welcoming community where all can thrive, and discrimination is not tolerated.

- We recognize DEI is a shared responsibility
- We value different experiences, cultures, identities and perspectives
- We ensure DEI is a foundational principle in everything we do

Open Communication

We share openly and honestly

We actively listen and communicate in a clear, honest, timely and accessible manner and provide opportunities for safe, respectful dialogue and interaction.

- We are honest and authentic in sharing information, whether good or bad
- We respect confidentiality
- We actively listen and solicit dialogue

Excellence

We bring our best selves

We strive to better ourselves as a learning community, our institution and society through assessment, reflection, learning, innovation, research and collaboration.

- We embrace innovation in the pursuit of our vision and mission
- We share and adopt best practices
- We seek continuous feedback and learn from our mistakes

Well-being

We honor the whole person

We create a caring culture that fosters our ability to thrive in mind, body, and spirit as essential to the sustainable pursuit of USC's mission.

- We treat each other with respect, empathy and understanding, without judgement
- We embrace well-being at the individual, community, and institutional levels as a shared commitment
- We prioritize well-being when creating policies and practices.

Accountability

We take responsibility

At all levels of the university, we set clear expectations and take responsibility for our actions, decisions, outcomes and consequences.

- We are accountable to ourselves, those around us and to the community
- We follow through on promised actions
- We learn from and correct mistakes



Values Statement

We act with **integrity** in the pursuit of **excellence**

We embrace **diversity, equity and inclusion** and promote **well-being**

We engage in **open communication** and are **accountable** for living our values



Aligning across Culture Focus Areas

USC's focus on culture is designed to support our mission by aligning on **what we do** and **how we do it**. The Culture Journey prioritizes aligning values, behaviors, systems and processes across these **focus areas**:





Improving our Systems and Processes



Culture change cannot happen by only announcing our unifying values. During our 175+ culture sessions, we collected valuable feedback on recommended actions to improve our systems and processes.

- ✓ **Invest** in developing the professional skillset of our leaders, faculty, staff and students tied to ethical and values-based behaviors, mentorship and feedback
- ✓ **Reflect** USC values in the way we assess performance and in systems governing recognition, rewards and incentives
- ✓ **Provide** clear pathways for raising and addressing concerns without fear of retaliation



What We're Doing Next

With our unifying values finalized and approved by our Trojan family, we are full-steam ahead to hold engaging activities, trainings and events to promote these values, and the behaviors that will cement them into our culture. To stay up to date visit our website [here](#).



**Values
Workshops and
Seminars**



**Culture
Activities and
Speaker Series**



**Culture Network
Forums and
Webinars**



**School and Unit
Culture
Activities**



Get Involved

Together, we are the Trojan community. That is why we are asking every single one of our community members to actively engage in culture work. Here are a few ideas to get you started!

Become a Culture Partner

Join us in our mission of culture transformation by becoming a Culture Partner. Details about this role are available on our website. To become a partner, email partnerforculturechange@usc.edu.

Join Events

We regularly partner with schools and business units to put on engaging trainings and programming. Look at our website for upcoming events!

Explore Resources

Check out our website at <https://change.usc.edu/usc-cultural-values-poll/> for more information on our university values, behaviors, culture activities, and much more.