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I. INTRODUCTION (Purpose and Intent):

It is the policy of the University of South Florida (USF) to comply fully with the requirements of the [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008](#) and all other federal and state laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination and assuring accessibility on the basis of disability. No qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of services, programs, or activities of USF, or be subjected to discrimination or lack of access by USF, as provided by law.

II. STATEMENT OF POLICY:

USF is committed to ensuring equal access to information for all of its constituencies, including high-profile and public events (i.e.: President or Provost addresses, lecture series, graduations) and information provided on USF web sites. USF acknowledges its obligation to assure that its electronic media, On-line course content, and web sites and events satisfy all applicable legal and regulatory requirements for accessibility by persons with disabilities. USF requires that web sites are accessible to all users. As such, the USF Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity (DIEO) shall develop and maintain *USF - Minimum Electronic and Web Accessibility Standards (MEWAS)* for electronic or web based information, which can be found on the DIEO website (<http://www.usf.edu/diversity/>). For general accessibility guidelines, please see the Students with Disabilities Services (to be known as Student Accessibility Services (SAS) effective July 1, 2020) Accessibility Guide at: http://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/student-disabilities-services/documents/accessibility_guide.pdf.

III. PROCESS STEPS/SPECIFIC PROVISIONS:

A. Public Accommodations:

1. Sponsors of programs and events, such as campus cinemas, lectures and speakers, must advise potential attendees who may require reasonable accommodation to participate, that such accommodation must be requested of the program sponsor at least five (5) working days prior to the event. (A sample request form may be found at: http://www.usf.edu/diversity/documents/ada_request_for_public_accommodation_for_m.pdf). All electronic and web based advertising, announcements and content materials

will strive to meet USF-MEWA standards. Lack of an accommodations request does not remove sponsor's responsibility to provide appropriate and applicable accommodations – including captioning, transcription or CART (live transcription).

2. Normally, the accommodation will be provided and funded by the program sponsor; however, requests for assistance and questions may be directed to the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, & Equal Opportunity (813-974-4373). Final decisions on USF Public Accommodations issues will be made by the Vice President for Administrative Services, or designee on behalf of USF.
3. Captioning: For University events, including scheduled performances or ceremonies open to the public or substantial portion of the University community, the University will use best efforts to provide immediate captioning or live transcription. University entities and sponsoring offices responsible for out of classroom events which may be recorded for web broadcast or future sale (i.e. graduation DVDs) must identify a means of making those events accessible regardless of accessibility request. University entities and sponsoring offices responsible for live out of classroom events that are high-profile (President's/Provost's addresses, graduation, USF lectures etc.) may be required to provide live transcription or sign language interpreters. If Captioning or transcription cannot be obtained, the Designated Instructor, as defined in [USF Policy 10-506: Captioning and Access of Media Used in Course Content](#), or the host of the University event should seek alternative means of content delivery that do not include the media requiring captioning. Consult with SDS a minimum of two weeks prior to the event to determine what compliance steps are necessary. Funding for the accommodation of such events lies with the event sponsor. For additional information, please see Policy 10-506 - Captioning and Access of Media Used in Course Content.

B. Electronic Information and Web Accessibility: All electronic and web based advertising, announcements and course content materials will meet *USF Minimum Electronic and Web Accessibility Standards* (MEWAS). This policy recognizes that USF's web sites originate from separate departments and/or operational units within USF, and that each department or operational unit shall be considered the responsible "publisher" of its web site. Regardless of origin, all official University web sites must comply with the MEWAS. It is the responsibility of both the publisher of a University web site and that publisher's Dean, Vice President, Chair and/or Director to ensure that such web sites and

electronic course content comply with the MEWAS. In the event that a disabled individual expresses difficulty in accessing Web or electronic based information under the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act (ADAAA) with respect to a USF web site, then it is the responsibility of the ADA coordinator and the publisher of that web site to address that individual's specific request for reasonable accommodation. All websites should include a phone number for any person needing assistance. In the absence of a specific number, the website should refer users to the DIEO office at (813) 974-4373. Individual's making a specific request for reasonable accommodations should receive a courtesy response within two business days. Time to provision of reasonable accommodation(s) may vary.

C. Employees:

1. Application:

- a. USF is an Equal Opportunity/Equal Access University.
- b. Applicants are entitled to request reasonable accommodation in the application process. A request is to be made at least five (5) working days prior to the time the accommodation is needed.
- c. USF will not make pre-employment inquiry as to disability except: (1) as to an applicant's ability to perform essential job functions with or without reasonable accommodation and (2) to invite an applicant to give five (5) working days' notice of any reasonable accommodation needed during the recruitment/hiring process.
- d. Pre-employment physical exams may be required for those positions for which there is a bona fide job-related physical requirement. However, if such exams will be required of persons with a disability, then those exams must also be required of all individuals seeking the positions after conditional job offers are made.

2. Employment:

- a. USF prohibits discrimination against its employees on the basis of disability, as provided by law, and is committed to providing accessibility and reasonable accommodation to its employees with regard to any aspect of

employment including fringe benefits, training, conferences, meetings and recreational/social activities sponsored by USF.

- b.** Requests for reasonable accommodation shall be submitted to the Employee Relations Department of the Division of Human Resources (“Employee Relations”) as follows:
 - (1)** Using the designated accommodation request form <http://usfweb2.usf.edu/human-resources/pdfs/employee-relations/forms/ada-request-for-reasonable-accommodation.doc> specify the requested accommodation(s) and submit the information to Employee Relations.
 - (2)** Attach documentation of the diagnosis of a disability from the employee's qualified medical provider. Such documentation is to include sufficient evidence that the employee has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
- c.** Upon request from the Division of Human Resources, the employee's supervisor will provide Employee Relations with a written statement outlining the potential impact of the requested accommodation(s) upon the department.
- d.** After consulting with the employee, supervisor, and other required parties, as applicable, Employee Relations will, if appropriate:
 - (1)** Offer the employee in writing an effective reasonable accommodation.
 - (2)** Assign an Accommodation Request Number (ARN) for internal processing needs of USF, if necessary.
- e.** USF employees scheduled for domestic or international travel who are requesting an ADAAA reasonable accommodation for such travel must submit their requests a minimum of ten (10) working days in advance of the scheduled travel.
- f.** The initial responsibility for funding the cost of a reasonable accommodation rests with the employee's department. Should a department demonstrate to the next highest administrative level that sufficient funds do not exist, the department head should refer a request for co-funding to the next highest administrative level.

Final decisions on how to fund reasonable accommodations will be made by the Vice President for Administrative Services or designee.

- g. Denied accommodation requests may be appealed in writing by an employee to the Associate Vice President, Human Resources. Such appeals must be filed within ten (10) calendar days of the employee's receipt of the denial of the accommodation request. Individual circumstances related to medical leaves and/or work-related injuries may need to be addressed outside the scope of this Policy and questions should be directed to Employee Relations.

D. Students:

1. **Admissions and Pre-Enrollment:**

- a. Applicants are entitled to request reasonable accommodations in the application process. Applicants may contact the ADA coordinator in the office of [Diversity, Inclusion & Equal Opportunity](#).
- b. All applicants are considered for admission based on the same criteria and are expected to meet the minimum admission requirements in effect at the time of application. The University of South Florida does not give pre-admission consideration to disability issues. Applicants who are denied admission may be eligible to request an appeal of the decision to the Faculty Committee on Student Admissions as designated in the Notification of Denial and may provide additional relevant information regarding disabilities in that appeal. At the time of the appeal, students may request modification or substitution of courses for admissions purposes as provided in [BOG Regulation 6.018](#)
- c. Consideration of a disability for academic requirement modification or substitution in the admission process is not a review or representation that, upon admission, the applicant will be able to meet the technical and academic standards of USF or program with or without reasonable accommodation. Prior to enrollment, USF may make inquiries to enable an appropriate analysis and determination regarding the ability of the accepted applicant to participate and successfully complete the determined academic program.

2. **Enrolled Students and Students with Disabilities Services (to be known as Student Accessibility Services (SAS) effective July 1, 2020):**

- a. Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodation in order to meet the academic requirements of USF or to participate in activities or services must request an accommodation in writing from the office of Students with Disabilities Services

(SDS) (to be known as Student Accessibility Services (SAS) effective July 1, 2020). Such requests must be accompanied by documentation of disability and an explanation of any documentation related to the need for the particular accommodation requested. SDS is responsible for approval of submitted documentation.

- b. The SDS office may request that a student submit any additional documentation of disability or need for accommodation necessary to permit USF to make a decision on the request.
- c. If disability and need for accommodation are adequately shown and the provision of such accommodation would not fundamentally alter the academic program, the SDS office will discuss the provision of these accommodations with other appropriate USF representatives (e.g. the faculty member who teaches the course for which the student requests accommodation) and, if appropriate, will offer the student a reasonable accommodation.
- d. Denied accommodation requests may be appealed in writing by a student to the SDS Director, or designee. Such appeals must be filed within ten (10) calendar days of the student's receipt of the denial of accommodation request.

IV. COMPLAINTS REGARDING DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND/OR RETALIATION:

Complaints of disability discrimination, harassment, or retaliation must be filed with the [Office of Diversity, Inclusion & Equal Opportunity](#), in accordance with [Policy 0-007, Diversity, Inclusion & Equal Opportunity: Discrimination and Harassment](#)

Comments, concerns and/or requests regarding electronic and web access may be initiated by contacting the USF ADA Coordinator's Office (<http://www.usf.edu/diversity/>).

V. CONFIDENTIALITY OF DOCUMENTS:

- A. USF may request any person seeking accommodation to provide documentation of a disability from a qualified medical provider that shows that the specific modification being requested is appropriate and necessary for the diagnosed disability. Such information may be shared with individuals with legitimate interest as necessary to process the request.
- B. Confidential documentation submitted or prepared in connection with requests for accommodation will be maintained apart from personnel, student or other records.

C. The University of South Florida Office of the General Counsel is available to assist with questions concerning ADAAA and the law and should be notified in the event an accommodation requestor retains a lawyer or otherwise makes claims in an external legal or administrative forum.

***Current Responsible Office: USF Services**

***Refer to the appropriate Responsible Office website for a current name of the Vice President or other Responsible Officer.**

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