

2.1 Institutional mission

The institution has a clearly defined, comprehensive, and published mission specific to the institution and appropriate for higher education. The mission addresses teaching and learning and, where applicable, research and public service.

Compliance Judgment: In Compliance

Rationale

Comprehensive. The [mission statement](#) ^[1] of the University of South Carolina Aiken outlines the institution's purpose and role in higher education relative to teaching and learning, research, and public service. The mission is comprehensive in that it defines the type of institution we are, the scope of our role in higher education, and how our services and programs are delivered. USC Aiken is “a comprehensive institution” with “all programs of study...grounded in a strong liberal arts and sciences curriculum.” The university “encourages excellence in research and creative pursuits” and “contributes to the community by enriching the region’s quality of life through a variety of activities including the visual and performing arts, intercollegiate athletics, continuing and distance education, educational outreach, and leadership.” The mission accurately guides the institution's operations. The statement is consonant with the institution's [values](#) ^[2] and [strategic plan](#) ^[3] that serve to extend and elucidate the scope of the institution's operations.

Clearly defined. The mission is clearly defined in that it identifies who we are, what we do, and whom we serve. We are a university “that offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in the arts, humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and professional disciplines.” We serve “students from South Carolina, the United States, and the world.”

Published and Disseminated. USC Aiken's mission statement is published on the [USC Aiken website](#) ^[4] and in key publications, including the [USC Aiken Academic](#)

[Bulletin](#),^[5] the [Faculty Manual](#),^[6] and the [USC Aiken Student Handbook](#).^[7] The mission statement is consistent across all publications.

Specific to the institution. The mission statement is specific to USC Aiken in that it identifies the university by name and specifies the distinguishing characteristics of the institution and its students. “USC Aiken is distinguished by its commitment to transformative teaching made possible through high impact learning practices, undergraduate research, small classes, and individual attention. The University encourages excellence in research and creative pursuits and prepares students for success by challenging them to think critically and creatively, to communicate effectively, to learn independently, and to acquire breadth and depth of interdisciplinary knowledge.” USC Aiken is a “progressive hub for innovation, collaboration, and creativity.” The university “attracts students...to form a diverse community of individuals engaged in educational experiences and service necessary for the pursuit of meaningful work in an enlightened, inclusive, and economically vibrant society.”

Appropriate for higher education. The mission statement is appropriate for higher education as illustrated by the institutions identification as a university “that offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in the arts, humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and professional disciplines.”

Supporting Documents

1. [USC Aiken Mission Statement](#)
2. [USC Aiken Values](#)
3. [USC Aiken Strategic Plan](#)
4. [USC Aiken Website: Institution’s Mission Statement](#)
5. [USC Aiken Academic Programs Bulletin](#)
6. [USC Aiken Faculty Manual](#)
7. [USC Aiken Student Handbook](#)