I. Policy

Vaccine preventable illnesses continue to occur on American campus communities and pose a significant threat to the public’s health. The goal of Student Health Services and the university is to provide adequate protection against vaccine preventable diseases by requiring newly entering students to be vaccinated and/or screened for certain highly contagious diseases.

This goal can best be achieved through a mandatory prematriculation immunization requirement. The University of South Carolina immunization requirements are consistent with the recommendations of the American College Health Association and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. Exceptions to this policy may be granted in the event of valid medical contraindications or for documented religious reasons. In the event of a measles emergency, these exempted students will be excluded from campus activities, until such time as is specified by Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC).

Compliance of all immunization, post screening tests, treatment regimens, and monitoring are mandatory. Students not fulfilling the immunization requirements, with exceptions for valid medical contraindications or documented religious reasons will not be permitted to register for classes.

II. Procedure

A. Requirements of all Students

1. Meningoccal

   a. All first year students age 24 and under are required to provide proof of immunization of the meningococcal vaccine or must sign a waiver
declining the vaccine. A parent or legal guardian’s signature will be required if the student declines and is under the age of 18.

b. If 2-5 years has elapsed since the student’s most recent vaccine administration with Menomune, the Thomson Student Health Center and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggest the Menactra vaccine.

c. If more than 5 years has elapsed since the student’s most recent vaccine administration with Menomune, the Menactra vaccine is required or the student must supply a signed waiver declining vaccination.

2. Measles, Mumps and Rubeola

a. All students born after 1956 must provide proof of immunization of Rubeola (red measles), Mumps and Rubella (German measles).

b. Acceptable immunization records include: two MMR shots administered after 1967 and after the student’s first birthday or positive serum titer (blood antibody) providing evidence of immunity.

B. Additional Requirements for International Students

1. International students who arrived within the previous five (5) years where tuberculosis is endemic (visit www.cdc.gov) or any additional countries designated by the Executive Director of Student Health Services must be screened for tuberculosis.

2. Tuberculosis screening services will be provided by Student Health Services and will be performed in accordance with recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and other appropriate guidance.

3. Tuberculosis screening may be performed prior to arrival on campus. Screening must be performed and documented using the university’s immunization form. The purified protein derivative (PPD) must be used for initial screening.

4. International and English Program for Internationals (EPI) students and other designated students arriving on campus without a tuberculosis exam will be directed to the Thomson Student Health Center for testing and evaluation.

5. Students who report to campus with documentation of a positive purified protein derivative (PPD) test or who test positive at the Thomson Student Health Center will be evaluated for further testing and possible medical intervention. A chest radiograph is required for positive PPD’s.
6. Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccination does not preclude testing of a member of a high-risk group. Evidence of BCG is not acceptable to meet the tuberculosis screening requirement.

C. Exemptions to Immunization

1. Exemption to immunization may be granted based on individuals' religious beliefs. For purposes of this policy, "religious beliefs" include those that are theistic in nature, as well as non-theistic moral or ethical beliefs as to what is right and wrong which are sincerely held with the strength of traditional religious views. Personal preferences do not constitute religious beliefs.

2. Individuals requesting exemption due to religious beliefs must provide a written request to Employee Health Services within thirty (30) days of being offered the vaccine. The written request should clearly explain why the immunization is contrary to the individual's religious beliefs.

D. Recommended Vaccinations

1. In addition to the before mentioned requirements, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention along with the Thomson Student Health Center recommends certain immunizations to the college population. These vaccines include:

   - Gardasil-highly recommended for all females between the ages of 11-26
   - Hepatitis B
   - Varicella
   - Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis
   - Influenza

2. A purified protein derivative (PPD) test for possible tuberculosis exposure is recommended for domestic students who have traveled to areas where tuberculosis is endemic. Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website for an up to date list at www.cdc.gov.

Questions should be directed to Thomson Student Health Center immunization clinic, 803-777-9511.

III. Related Policies and Procedures

The following policies are superseded by this policy and declared obsolete:

- University Policy STAF 7.06 Measles Immunization Program
- University Policy STAF 7.12 Tuberculosis Screening
IV. Reason for Revision

Combines multiple policies concerning immunizations and outlines all required and recommended vaccines. University Policies STAF 7.06 Measles Immunization Program and STAF 7.12 Tuberculosis Screening are superseded by this policy and declared obsolete.