

## 4.1

### Student achievement

The institution evaluates success with respect to student achievement consistent with its mission. Criteria may include enrollment data; retention, graduation, course completion, and job placement rates; state licensing examinations; student portfolios; or other means of demonstrating achievement of goals.

### Judgment

Compliant  Non-Compliant  Not Applicable

### Narrative

The University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB) evaluates success with respect to student achievement consistent with its mission to “respond to regional needs, draw upon regional strengths, and prepare graduates to contribute locally, nationally, and internationally with its mission of teaching, research, and service.” Evaluation is based on a variety of criteria including student enrollment, course success rates, retention rates, graduation rates, degrees awarded by major, state licensing exams, and job placement rates. Much of the data used to evaluate success with respect to student achievement is public and available through:

- The USCB Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER) website,
- The University of South Carolina (USC) system Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Analytics (OIRAA) website,
- The National Center for Education Statistics/Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (NCES/IPEDS),
- The Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) College Portrait,
- The Student Achievement Measure (SAM),
- The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (SCCHE) website, and
- Other public web resources.

These data are reviewed and discussed by program faculty, Deans’ Council, Academic Affairs Council, and Chancellor's Cabinet as appropriate. Also, many of these and other metrics relating to the success of the University are reported annually in the State Accountability Report (2017, 2016, 2015) that is reviewed by the USC system President and Board of Trustees before going to the South Carolina Budget and Control Board. USCB does not offer any academic programs exclusively via distance learning, although some general education courses and select upper division courses are offered via distance education with 70-80 sections offered per semester. Success criteria are the same for all students, regardless of the location or mode of delivery of courses.

### Program Enrollments

Program faculty, department chairs, and administrators monitor student enrollment by academic program to ensure appropriate and continuous growth. While some programs do not show growth each year due to fluctuations in student interests and career aspirations, the programs generally maintain their enrollment levels or at least maintain a sufficient number to justify their existence. The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (SCCHE) [Program Productivity Standards](#) require baccalaureate degree programs to have an average of 12.5 students enrolled over a five year period and award an average of eight degrees per year over the previous five years. USCB uses the SCCHE productivity standards as its threshold for program enrollment because they are appropriate and reasonable for the size and newness of USCB as a baccalaureate degree granting institution. Obviously, each of USCB’s programs substantially exceeds this target.

**Table 1: Five-Year Enrollment by Program**

Program	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Biology	144	172	229	278	285
Business Administration	304	364	374	387	347
Communication Studies	29	70	76	72	71
Computational Science	55	70	93	103	102
Early Childhood Education	104	93	78	55	66
Elementary Education	1	33	55	67	71
English	51	45	45	43	34
Health Promotion	NA	36	56	79	78
History	40	44	42	40	40
Hospitality Management	137	141	153	145	153
Human Services	69	105	110	131	136
Liberal Studies	10	6	15	22	19
Mathematics	NA	NA	1	9	14
Nursing (4 year)	189	204	260	239	313
Nursing (RN to BSN)	18	17	13	7	1
Psychology	128	127	170	155	139
Sociology	28	26	33	27	28
Spanish	11	9	8	8	10
Studio Art	32	47	51	47	49
4-Yr-No Major/Non-degree	371	183	112	89	121
AA/AS*	0	2	6	2	0
<b>Students Enrolled In Programs</b>	<b>1,724</b>	<b>1,794</b>	<b>1,980</b>	<b>2,005</b>	<b>2,077</b>

\* Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees are only awarded to active duty military and their dependents per SCCHE regulations. Enrollment in the AA/AS program is generally declining as enrollment in baccalaureate degree programs increases.

## Course Success

Course completion rates are monitored through grade distributions, which are produced in an electronic format at the end of the fall and spring semesters. Grade distributions are available to all academic units through the Registrar's Office. [Grade distributions](#) are examined for both distance education and traditional courses, and the standards for success are the same for each. Teaching faculty members monitor student success for their classes, while the department chairs monitor grade distributions within their departments. For example, in 2016, the Department of Mathematics and Computational Science evaluated the grade distributions for all courses and recognized a higher than desired DFW rate in College courses. The faculty surmised that the lower grades were due to the time between students most recent high school Algebra course and their freshman year at USCB—often several years. The faculty developed a [Mathematics Bootcamp](#) to be offered the week before classes started for Fall 2017 and Spring 2018. This opportunity serves as “a refresher mini-course to get you ready for college algebra or precalculus”.

## First-Year Retention Rates

[Persistence rates](#) are compiled by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER) and posted on the IER Website. Because of USCB's still relatively new baccalaureate degree granting status, the one-year retention rate ranges from 50-62%. (One-year retention rates have been 58.1%, 54.7%, and 62.2% respectively for the 2014, 2015, and 2016 cohorts.) Although 33% of students who completed the 2015 Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE), the University is working to increase first-year retention by 1% each year which the administration considers an appropriate and reasonable threshold for the USCB student population at this time.

To reach this goal, the University created a new unit in the Office of Student Development focused on Academic Support and Early Intervention in Fall 2015. The Coordinator for this unit has implemented an Early Intervention program, Supplemental Instruction in high DFW classes, interventions tailored to students admitted on probation and students on academic probation, and the CIVITAS platform as a student success tool.

## Graduation Rates

[Graduation rates](#) of first-time full-time freshmen are reported annually to the SCCHE, the NCES through IPEDS, and other agencies, and are based on first-time, full-time college students entering USCB and graduating from USCB within 150% of degree completion time. Baccalaureate degree seeking students are tracked over six years, and Associate degree seeking students are tracked over three years. Considered out of context, USCB's graduation rates are low, ranging from 20% to 27%. However, this statistic is based on students who entered during USCB's transition from a regional campus of the USC system to a comprehensive baccalaureate degree-granting institution. Since then, the availability of sufficient student housing, activities and support services has increased significantly, as has the number of degree programs. The six-year graduation rates are 24% (2010 cohort), 23% (2009 cohort), 26% (2008 cohort) and 27% (2007 cohort). These rates are monitored by the academic departments and Academic Affairs Council. USCB senior administration believes that a 2% increase in graduation rate per year is an appropriate and reasonable threshold, given the University's newness as a Level II institution. Currently, the University is not meeting that goal. While the initiatives to increase first-year retention will also have impact on graduation rates, graduation rates are a trailing indicator that will take six years to show the benefit of interventions.

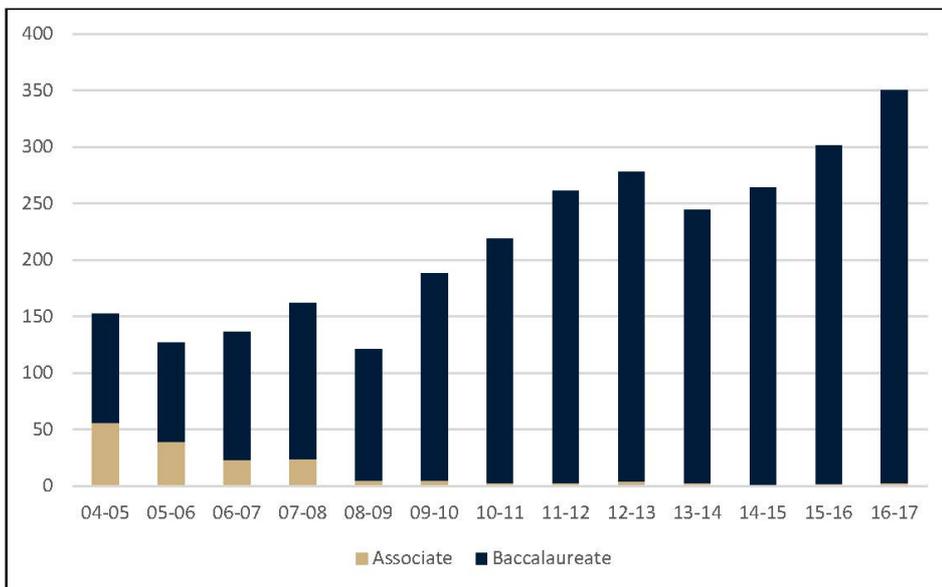
USCB's graduation rates are also calculated in and made available through the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) College Portrait and the Student Achievement Measure (SAM). These graduation rates are calculated differently, taking into account the understanding that a student who starts at one institution and graduates from or is enrolled at the same or any other institution is a successful student. Based on these student success and progress calculations and an [analysis](#) comparing USCB with its peer institutions, USCB is performing at or above expectation (70% 6-year success and progress rate).

## Degrees Awarded

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER) tracks [degrees awarded by major](#), and this information is also available on the USCB IER and USC OIRAA websites. Since 2004, over 2,700 baccalaureate degrees have been awarded. The most popular majors for graduates have been Business (659 graduates), Hospitality Management (352 graduates), Human Services (296 graduates) and Psychology (275 graduates). All of these programs are strongly responsive to regional needs, as directed by the USCB Mission.

The USCB senior administration expects to see at least a 2% increase each year in total degrees awarded and considers this an appropriate and reasonable threshold given the size of the institution. As noted in the chart below, in 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17, USCB awarded 264, 301, and 350 degrees, respectively, thereby exceeding the target.

## Figure 1: USCB Degrees Awarded by Year



### State Licensing Exams

Early Childhood Education and Nursing are the only degree programs with required state licensing exams. Every year, USCB submits an Institutional Effectiveness Report to the SCCHE, including the Professional Examinations Table in which PRAXIS Series II and the NCLEX test scores are reported. The PRAXIS II test results are for all examinees while the NCLEX test results are for first-time examinees only, covering the period of April 1 - March 31 as required by the SCCHE.

Passing the PRAXIS II specialty area test is required of all Early Childhood Education candidates before they can complete their internship. The Education Department monitors course progression and test scores and expects a 100% pass rate for the PRAXIS assessment. As noted in Table 2 and the [2017 Institutional Effectiveness Report](#) to SCCHE, USCB had an overall PRAXIS pass rates of 90%; for 2016 it was 87%; and for 2015 it was 92%. Students who do not pass the PRAXIS II on the first attempt are offered assistance or encouraged to audit courses in the areas PRAXIS II identifies as weak.

**Table 2: USCB PRAXIS Pass Rates--2014-2017**

Name of Exam	Date(s) Administered	# of Examinees	# of Examinees who Passed	% Examinees Passing
<b>2016-2017</b>				
PRAXIS Series II: Principles of Learning & Teaching (K-6)	4/1/16-3/31/17	2	2	100%
PRAXIS: Principles of Learning and Teaching: Early Childhood	4/1/16-3/31/17	14	13	93%
PRAXIS Series II: Education of Young Children	4/1/16-3/31/17	12	10	83%
PRAXIS Series II: Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects	4/1/16-3/31/17	1	1	100%
<b>TOTALS → PRAXIS Tests</b>	<b>4/1/16-3/31/17</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>2015-2016</b>				
PRAXIS: Principles of Learning and Teaching: Early Childhood	4/1/15-3/31/16	8	8	100%
PRAXIS Series II: Education of Young Children	4/1/15-3/31/16	14	11	79%
PRAXIS: Elementary Education: Instructional Practice and Applications	4/1/15-3/31/16	1	1	100%
<b>TOTALS → PRAXIS Series II Tests</b>	<b>4/1/15-3/31/16</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>87%</b>
<b>2014-2015</b>				
PRAXIS Series II: Education of Young Children (Computer)	4/1/14-3/31/15	6	6	100%
PRAXIS Series II: Education of Young Children	4/1/14-3/31/15	6	6	100%
PRAXIS: Principles of Learning and Teaching: Early Childhood	4/1/14-3/31/15	12	10	83%
<b>TOTALS → PRAXIS Series II Tests</b>	<b>4/1/14-3/31/15</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>92%</b>

The South Carolina Board of Nursing considers pass rates for Nursing Education programs based on first-time examinees taking the NCLEX between January 1 and December 31. Nursing has set a goal of achieving an NCLEX pass rate above the national average, and South Carolina requires an annual NCLEX pass rate no more than 5% below the national pass rate. The national rate for 2016 was 87.8% and the rate for USCB was 87% based on 30 examinees. The national pass rate for 2015 was 87.5% and the rate for USCB was 100% based on 19 examinees. The national pass rate for 2014 was 84.9% and the rate for USCB was 96% based on 25 examinees.

## Job Placement Rates

USCB Career Services administers a survey to graduates six months after graduation. As shown in Table 5, from the 2013 survey, 88% of respondents who graduated in 2013 and were seeking employment (as opposed to not seeking employment because of graduate school or personal reasons) were employed. 68% were employed full-time and 20% were employed part-time. 57% were employed full-time in a field related to their degree. Previous administrations of the survey indicated 53% (2012 graduates) and 44% (2011 graduates) were employed full-time in a field related to their degree. This exceeds the University target of an annual 1% increase in full-time degree-related job placements, although the fluctuations in overall job placement rates do not meet the target of 1% annual increase.

**Table 3: USCB Job Placement Rates**

Please answer the following questions about your current position, or a position you have been offered and accepted that you will be starting soon. What is your current employment status?		
	2015/16 Graduates	2014/15 Graduates
Full time, degree related	56.25%	43.23%
Part time, degree related	12.50%	5.81%
Full time, not degree related	12.50%	27.10%
Part time, not degree related	0	7.74%
Seeking employment	18.75%	7.74%
<b>Job Placement Rate</b> <i>(% employed of those seeking employment)</i>	<b>81.25%</b>	<b>92.96%</b>

By monitoring student enrollment, course success rates, retention rates, degree completion, degrees awarded by major, state licensing exams pass rates, and job placement rates, USCB is evaluating student achievement on an ongoing basis and in accordance with its mission.

## Sources (In Order of Appearance)

-  [USCB 16-17 Accountability Report\\_Final](#)
-  [USCB\\_BCB\\_Accountability\\_Report\\_FY\\_2015-16\(Final\)](#)
-  [USCB FY\\_2014-15\\_Accountability\\_Report](#)
-  [Policies\\_Procedures\\_Academic\\_Degree\\_Program\\_Productivity](#)
-  [Grade Distributions](#)
-  [Math Bootcamp winter2018](#)
-  [Retention and Graduation Trend\\_2017.11.06](#)
-  [Success and Progress Comparison\\_2018.02.07](#)
-  [Degrees Awarded by program since Summer 2004 public](#)
-  [2017 USCB CHE IE Report\\_Final](#)
-  [USCB\\_CHE IE Report-2016](#)
-  [2015 USCB CHE Report](#)