

CS 3.4.1 - Academic Program Approval

The institution demonstrates that each educational program for which academic credit is awarded is approved by the faculty and the administration.

Compliance Finding: In Compliance

Narrative:

Each educational program at the University of South Carolina Beaufort (USC Beaufort) for which academic credit is awarded is approved by the faculty and the administration through the faculty governance structure. Approval by the faculty ensures that programs contain appropriate courses reflecting current knowledge within a discipline and that the courses are appropriate for the students enrolled. Approval of educational programs by the administration affirms that educational programs are consistent with the USC Beaufort Mission [i] and the USC Beaufort Strategic Plan [ii] and that the institution possesses both the organization and the resources to ensure the quality of its educational programs.

Faculty governance is defined in the Faculty Manual, which states that the faculty "...subject to the review of the appropriate Chancellors, the President, and the Board, have legislative powers in all matters pertaining to standards of admission, registration, requirements for and the granting of earned degrees, curriculum, instruction, research, extracurricular activities, discipline of students, educational policies and standards of the university, and all other matters pertaining to the conduct of faculty affairs, including the discipline of their own members" [iii].

Each educational program for which academic credit is awarded is approved by the faculty and the administration. Following the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (SCCHE) Guidelines, the academic program proposal at USC Beaufort consists of a two-step process: program planning summary and full program proposal. Both planning summaries and full program proposals (as well as substantive content changes in a program of study) are developed as follows:

- Origination and approval by discipline faculty
- Approval of Department Chair
- Review and approval by the Courses and Curricula Committee of the Faculty Senate [iv]
- Review and approval by the Faculty Senate
- Review and approval by the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
- Review and approval by the Chancellor
- Review and approval by the President
- Review and approval by the Board of Trustees [v]
- Review and approval by the SCCHE

After the necessary institutional approvals have been granted, the SCCHE receives the program proposal. As stated in the South Carolina Code of Laws Section 59-103-35 [vi] , "No new program may be undertaken by any public institution of higher education without the approval of the commission." According to the SCCHE Guidelines for New Academic Program Approval [vii], the SCCHE's role in program approval is to "take a statewide viewpoint (and, in some cases, a regional or national viewpoint)" to determine the

- Objectives of the proposed program
- State-wide need for the program
- Programs' compatibility with the mission, role, and scope of the institution
- Program cost

Existence of necessary personnel, facilities, library holdings, and other essentials necessary to conduct a program of high quality; or the existence of a plan for such essentials

Changes which do not meet the SCCHE definition for "substantive" are evaluated and approved by the following procedure:

- Origination and approval by discipline faculty
- Approval of Department Chair
- Review and approval by the Courses and Curricula Committee of the Faculty Senate [viii]
- Review and approval by the Faculty Senate
- Review and approval by the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Both the minutes of the Faculty Senate and minutes of the Courses and Curricula Committee demonstrate faculty and administrative approval of each academic program for which academic credit is awarded. For example, the minutes of the Faculty Senate of April 25, 2002 [ix] reflect that the Senate approved the Courses and Curricula motions (pending SCCHE approval), that USC Beaufort faculty, in concept, approve baccalaureate degree programs in English, Psychology, Business, Early Childhood Education, Biology, BAIS (became Liberal Studies), and Hospitality Management . Another example is the Faculty Senate minutes of October 2005 [x] which reflect the approval of the Nursing degree as presented by the Courses and Curricula Committee. All USC Beaufort programs are approved by the SCCHE [xi].

Supporting Documentation

- i [USC Beaufort Mission](#)
- ii [USC Beaufort Strategic Plan](#)
- iii [USC Beaufort Faculty Manual](#)
- iv [USC Beaufort Faculty Manual](#)
- v [USC Board of Trustees](#)
- vi [South Carolina Code of Laws Section 59-103-35](#)

<u>vii</u>	<u>SCCHE Guidelines for New Academic Program Approval</u>
<u>viii</u>	<u>USC Beaufort Faculty Manual</u>
<u>ix</u>	<u>Faculty Senate Minutes April 2002</u>
<u>x</u>	<u>Faculty Senate Minutes October 2005</u>
<u>xi</u>	<u>SCCHE Degree Approval Letter</u>