

9.2

Program Length

The institution offers one or more degree programs based on at least 60 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the associate level; at least 120 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the baccalaureate level; or at least 30 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the post-baccalaureate, graduate, or professional level. The institution provides an explanation of equivalencies when using units other than semester credit hours. The institution provides an appropriate justification for all degree programs and combined degree programs that include fewer than the required number of semester credit hours or its equivalent unit.

Judgment

Compliant Non-Compliant Not Applicable

Narrative

The University of South Carolina provides guidance related to the establishment of new programs and specifies the length of each type of degree program and the minimum credit hours required for each level offered in university policy [ACAF 2.00 Creation and Revision of Academic Programs](#). Each degree programs offered at the University of South Carolina Columbia adheres to ACAF 2.00 and meets this standard. The University does not offer any programs that require less than minimum identified for each program. The program offerings at each level and the length of specific degree programs are described in the Undergraduate, Graduate, Law, Medicine and Pharmacy Bulletins.

The university uses the semester hour as the definition a credit hour for all courses at all levels, as specified in university policy [ACAF 2.03 Creation and Revision of Academic Courses](#).

Program Length

The University of South Carolina specifies the length of each type of degree program offered in university policy [ACAF 2.00 Creation and Revision of Academic Programs](#). The length of specific degree programs are also specified in the university's academic bulletins (below). There are no programs that require a number of credits below the minimum requirements.

Associate Degrees

The minimum requirement for an associate degree is 60 credits. All associate degrees awarded by the university require students to earn at least 60 semester hours; program requirements for specific degrees are published in the academic bulletin:

[Lancaster Bulletin | Academic Programs](#)

[Salkehatchie Bulletin | Academic Programs](#)

[Sumter Bulletin | Academic Programs](#)

[Union Bulletin | Academic Programs](#)

Baccalaureate Degrees and Undergraduate Certificates

The minimum requirement for a baccalaureate degree is 120 credits. All baccalaureate degrees awarded by the university require students to earn at least 120 semester hours; undergraduate certificates require a minimum of 15 credit hours. Program requirements for specific degrees are published in the academic bulletin:

[Undergraduate Studies Bulletin | Academic Programs](#)

The Undergraduate Bulletin also provides a link to [major maps](#) outlining the degree requirements with a layout of required courses in a given program of study, including critical courses and suggested course sequence to ensure a clear path to graduation.

The Undergraduate Bulletin addresses academic regulations that allow undergraduate students to take graduate courses. For example, University of South Carolina Columbia undergraduate seniors in their final semester who need less than a normal course load to complete baccalaureate requirements may take course for graduate credit with the approval of the student's advisor, the chair of the department offering the course, the academic dean for that department, and the graduate dean. In addition, certain academic units offer accelerated programs whereby an undergraduate student with a GPA of 3.40 and 90 or more hours toward the baccalaureate degree may apply graduate credits to a baccalaureate program. Admission can be requested by students in consultation with their academic

advisor, their undergraduate dean, and the graduate director of the proposed program and an application must be submitted to the Graduate School. In addition, students seeking a pharmacy career typically start in the two-year pre-pharmacy program, then apply to the University of South Carolina's Pharm.D. program and may opt to complete the [B.S. in Pharmaceutical Sciences](#) at the end of the second professional year.

Master's Degrees, Specialist Degrees, and Graduate Certificates

The minimum requirement for a master's degree is 30 graduate-level credit hours. All master's degrees awarded by the university require students to earn at least 30 semester hours; program requirements for specific degrees are published in the academic bulletin.

The minimum requirement for a specialist degree is 30 graduate-level credits 30 graduate credit hours beyond the master's degree. All specialist degrees awarded by the university require students to earn at least 30 semester hours; program requirements for specific degrees are published in the academic bulletin.

Graduate Certificates require a minimum of 12 graduate credit hours either post-baccalaureate or post-master's. Post-baccalaureate certificates require the bachelor's degree for admission, and post-master's certificates require the master's degree for admission. Program requirements for specific certificates are published in the academic bulletin.

[Graduate Studies Bulletin | Master's Degree Requirements](#)

[Graduate Studies Bulletin | Certificate Of Graduate Study and Specialist Requirements](#)

Doctoral Degrees

The minimum requirement for a doctoral degree is a minimum of 60 graduate-level credit hours (with a maximum of 12 hours of dissertation preparation) beyond the baccalaureate, or a minimum of 30 graduate credit hours (with a maximum of 12 hours of dissertation preparation) beyond the master's degree.

[Graduate Studies Bulletin | Doctoral Degree Requirements](#)

Professional Degrees

Professional degrees typically require three or four years beyond the bachelor's degree or beyond pre-professional coursework. Program requirements for specific degrees are published in the academic bulletin.

[College of Pharmacy Bulletin | Degrees Offered](#)

[School of Law Bulletin | Degree Requirements](#)

[School of Medicine Bulletin Columbia | Curriculum](#)

[School of Medicine Bulletin \(Greenville\) | Curriculum](#)

Dual Degree Programs

Dual Degrees typically require all or most of the requirements for two distinct academic degree programs, and two degrees are awarded. Combination Degrees typically require all or most of the requirements of two distinct academic degree programs administered by two or more of the university's colleges or schools, or by two or more universities, and a single degree is awarded. Other collaborative degree programs are governed by specific agreements typically involving an articulated transfer of credit from one institution to another for the award of a single or multiple degrees. These collaborative programs may also include bridge programs that require non-credit study prior to course work for academic credit.

Some dual degrees allow for a double counting of credit hours, however, the University has a limit of the number of courses that can be transferred in or accepted for credit towards the University of South Carolina Columbia degree program. For example, for graduate programs, no more than 12 semester hours of graduate credit may be transferred into a master's program that requires 30-36 hours; no more than 15 semester hours of graduate credit may be transferred into a master's program that requires 37-45 hours; and no more than 18 semester hours of graduate credit may be transferred into a master's program that requires 46 or more semester hours. Only credits with grades of B or better (equivalent to a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale) may be transferred from another institution into any graduate degree program and the coursework transferred from another institution must be relevant to the program and have course content and a level of instruction equivalent to that offered by the University's own graduate programs. When the University enters into dual degree agreements with other institution, the memorandum of agreement clearly delineates the courses that will be accepted for credit at the University of South Carolina Columbia. The University of South Carolina Columbia does not have any dual programs that contain fewer than the required number of unduplicated combined hours.

Monitoring Program Length

Program length is monitored through the program approval process and degree audits performed prior to graduation. At the undergraduate level, current practices is that the colleges and schools at the University of South Carolina verify that program requirements have been met. The colleges and schools have access to Degreeworks to perform such degree audits. In addition, the Office of the Registrar checks for a minimum institutional GPA of a 2.0 and at least 120 credit hours. The graduate school monitors graduate students' progress toward degree through "program of study" templates for each student.

Sources

-  [ACAF 2.00 Creation and Revision of Academic Programs](#)
-  [ACAF 2.03 Creation and Revision of Academic Courses](#)
-  [BusinessAdmin.PhD_Dual_Degree_Agreement](#)
-  [College of Pharmacy 19-20 Bulletin \(Page 10\)](#)
-  [Graduate Bulletin - Doctoral Degree Requirements](#)
-  [Graduate Bulletin - Grad Certificate and Specialist Requirements](#)
-  [Graduate Bulletin - Master's Degree Requirements](#)
-  [Lancaster Bulletin - Academic Programs](#)
-  [Law Bulletin - Degree Requirements](#)
-  [MPH/MPA_PriorApproval](#)
-  [PharmD_Major_Map](#)
-  [PublicHealth.BS_Major_Map](#)
-  [Salkehatchie Bulletin - Academic Programs](#)
-  [School of Medicine Bulletin - Curriculum](#)
-  [School of Medicine GVille - Curriculum](#)
-  [Sumter Bulletin - Academic Programs](#)
-  [Undergraduate Bulletin - Academic Programs](#)
-  [Union Bulletin - Academic Programs](#)