9.7

Program Requirements

The institution publishes requirements for its undergraduate, graduate, and post-baccalaureate professional programs, as applicable. The requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs.

Judgment

☑ Compliant   ☐ Non-Compliant   ☐ Not Applicable

Narrative

Columbia Campus

The University of South Carolina defines and publishes requirements annually for its academic degree programs in the university Academic Bulletins. These Bulletins are published and easily located on the university website and are maintained centrally by the Office of the University Registrar. The Bulletins include academic policies and regulations as well as admission and program requirements along with program learning outcomes for every academic degree program. The Undergraduate Bulletin also includes such things as: admission information, placement exam and exam credit information, course and academic credit policies, exam and grading policies, along with academic standards policies. The Graduate Bulletin (select from drop down) also includes such things as: course enrollment load, transfer of credit and credit by exam information, grading policies, independent study and academic standard for progression and graduation.

The University of South Carolina Columbia Undergraduate Bulletin includes general education requirements, identified as "Carolina Core Courses" which are applicable for all undergraduate degree programs. Consistent with the university mission of providing all students with the highest-quality education, including the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for success and responsible citizenship, the university maintains a general education program which embodies the goal of allowing students to become well-rounded, well-educated citizens. The university's general education requirements, a foundation to all degrees offered at the institution, are also designed to supplement the in-depth study in the major fields.

The undergraduate academic bulletin was re-formatted in 2019-2020 to include a standard program of study with 4 components: Carolina Core, College Requirements, Program Requirements, and Major Requirements. The re-format included a review by each department of their program(s) for any requirements needing clarification or revision. The standard format provides universal academic terminology and promotes curricular cohesion across colleges and technology platforms (DegreeWorks, Major Maps, Academic Program Proposal System (APPS) and ensures that students can more easily interpret the program requirements.

According to the Faculty Manual, the faculties of the university, subject to the review of the president and the board, have legislative powers in all matters pertaining to curricula and instruction. Governance over curriculum includes both approval and review processes. The design of academic programs typically begins in a department or unit of a campus, college or school. After consultation with a campus, college, or school Academic Program Liaison and receipt of unit-level approval, program actions must be approved by the campus, college or school academic affairs officials, and a university curriculum committee as needed, prior to review by the appropriate faculty governance body (see policy ACAF 2.00 *Creation and Revision of Academic Programs*). All undergraduate programs are reviewed by the Faculty Senate Committee on Curricula and Courses prior to review by the Faculty Senate. All graduate programs are reviewed by either the Science, Math and Related Professional Programs Committee or the Humanities, Social Sciences and Related Professional Programs Committee of the Graduate Council prior to review by the full Graduate Council.

Though distance education courses and programs follow a similar design and approval process, such programs and courses follow specific approval policies and procedures to ensure the credibility of such educational offerings. Courses designed for distance education delivery follow polices which ensure that contact hours and instructional time commitments are equivalent to that of traditional instruction (see policy ACAF 2.03 *Creation and Revision of Academic Courses*). Programs designed for distance education delivery follow policies which ensure that academic programs maintain the same level of quality in both the portions of the program delivered traditionally and those employing distance technology (ACAF 2.00 *Creation and Revision of Academic Programs*). These policies, along with a list of courses approved for distance education delivery are published on the website of the Office of the Provost, Office of Academic Programs.

All approved programs and courses are described in the university's academic bulletins which are maintained by the Office of the University Registrar and published online annually. Revisions to programs and courses are effective with the publication of the next academic year's academic bulletin. Programs are entered into the Academic Bulletins only after the Office of the Provost receives formal notification of approval from both the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education and SACSCOC.

Additional academic program information is provided to the public on academic department web pages, the Office of Admissions, and through academic advising. These units are responsible for maintaining clear, complete, consistent information about degree requirements. A concerted effort has been made over the last four years to eliminate the repetition of curricular information on websites, in advising guidelines books, and any internal department handouts to avoid any

chance of inconsistencies in curricular information. Instead, a move has been made toward using the academic bulletin as the one official source of curricular information. Colleges and departments are encouraged to link to the academic bulletin and major map repository (created in 2016) when referencing curricular information. A sample major map is included in the Document Directory.

As stated in Standard 8.2.a, all academic programs engage in systematic assessment and program review and each academic unit at the university uses a variety of measures to determine the extent to which these outcomes are achieved. First, every program participates in continuous assessment of student learning, with reports submitted to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (within the Office of Institutional Research, Assessment and Analytics) every two years. In addition, every program must complete an external program review every seven years; an external accreditation self-study and review or similar comprehensive review by a specialized professional association may substitute for the external review process described in ACAF 2.20 *Academic Program Review*. Results of such systematic assessment direct and guide decision making and improvement across the University (See 8.2.a). See examples in the Document Directory for a professional program accreditation report and an external program review report.

Regional Palmetto College Campuses

The four regional campuses of the University of South Carolina (Lancaster, Salkehatchie, Sumter and Union) fall under the authority of the Columbia campus and reside in a central administrative unit known as Palmetto College, headed by a Chancellor and Associate Provost (Palmetto College Organizational Chart). These campuses are referred to as regional Palmetto College campuses. The campuses exist as part of the University of South Carolina system as denoted in Board of Trustees Bylaws. The administrative unit also houses the academic unit Palmetto College Columbia, which offers courses on the Columbia campus and in the metropolitan Columbia area as well as AA/AS programs and courses at Ft. Jackson. This unit also provides instruction, guidance and support for the delivery of the University's undergraduate online degree completion programs.

As noted in the University of South Carolina System Mission Statement, "The primary mission of the University of South Carolina System is the education of the state's diverse citizens through teaching, research, creative activity, and community engagement." The regional Palmetto College campuses of the University play a vital role in the fulfillment of this mission. Accredited with the University of South Carolina Columbia by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, the regional Palmetto College campuses in Lancaster, Allendale (Salkehatchie), Sumter, and Union principally provide the first two years of undergraduate education, focusing on general education, as well as, at Lancaster, selected associate degree programs mainly for their locales. More specifically, each Regional Palmetto College Campus Mission Statement states that "Through classroom and laboratory instruction delivered in a variety of face-to-face and distance learning formats and modalities, the institution awards the Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degrees..." The campuses also serve as providers of coursework leading to baccalaureate degrees offered by the three comprehensive institutions (Aiken, Beaufort, and Upstate) and Columbia.

These associate degrees are described in the respective bulletins of Lancaster, Salkehatchie, Sumter, and Union. Links directly to each program are provided below in the narrative of each campus. In addition to providing these programs, the regional campuses bring the resources of the entire University to citizens throughout the state.

Lancaster

The Lancaster Mission Statement states that the institution "awards the Associate in Arts and the Associate in Sciences degrees and provides for the completion of selected bachelor's degrees on campus through cooperative agreements and delivery structures with other University of South Carolina System institutions." While the established degree requirements stated in the Academic Programs section (including Learning Outcomes, Carolina Core components, Degree Curriculum and Other Requirements which addresses residency and GPA) of the Lancaster Bulletin allow for appropriate flexibility, the Carolina Core - the University's general education curriculum guide the offerings of Lancaster for the fulfillment of general education requirements for baccalaureate degrees at the University of South Carolina Columbia, with whom the campus is accredited.

The program requirements of the AA/AS degrees offered by the Palmetto College campuses encompass Learning Outcomes aligned with the University's Carolina Core. These are clearly articulated in the Academic Programs section of the campus bulletin which, in order, conveys the Learning Outcomes, Carolina Core, Associate in Arts and Associate in Science curricula.

Information about the degree programs at the University of South Carolina Lancaster is found in the Lancaster Bulletin. The bulletin is updated on an annual basis, with the campus academic dean being responsible for directing the revision effort as well as disseminating to all concerned parties when any revisions have been made. This is accomplished primarily through the recruiting, advisement and orientation processes outlined below.

Recruiting

Students are introduced to degree programs and curriculum by Lancaster recruiters, who provide prospective students with informational flyers, such as this one, Experience University of South Carolina Lancaster. These brochures and university recruiters provide an overview of degree options available and a link back to the university website, and recruiters answer general questions that potential students may have about program requirements. For more detailed questions, recruiters may refer students to a faculty advisor in the students' intended program area, or to advising staff working under the supervision of the Director of Student Engagement and Success. This allows students the

opportunity to assess the courses and time required to complete a degree before they make admissions decisions.

Orientation

New students are immersed in the requirements of their degree program requirements during New Student Orientation, offered throughout the summer prior to entry in the Fall semester and offered in January for students who enter in Spring. New first-year students are assigned to work with Lancaster's pilot cohort of First-Year Student Advising Corps, a specially trained group of faculty and staff advisors who are dedicated to assisting students with the transition to university life. These advisors are carefully trained in advising best practices and in curriculum requirements to provide students a clear roadmap for their degree requirements and progress. As students complete their first year, they are assigned to a faculty advisor in their major area for their second-year course schedules, since faculty have the subject area and curriculum expertise to guide students appropriately as they advance in their degree pathways, including being able to offer counseling about professional success after graduation. Students transferring into the university are in most cases assigned to a faculty advisor in the student's academic major area, although in some cases staff advisors provide support as needed. New students must attend New Student Orientation to be advised and register for courses; at Orientation, they attend a presentation providing a general overview of the advising process and then meet with their assigned advisors.

Curriculum and Advising

Degree curricula are posted on the university public website, and those curricula are referenced regularly by university staff in recruiting, orientation, and advisement. Worksheets provide specific information on the number of degree hours required in general education Carolina Core courses, as well as those required for the major. Students may also be referred to Columbia's Major Maps Repository as a resource for eventual four-year degree progress.

Because the University of South Carolina Lancaster awards associate degrees, curriculum worksheets are carefully constructed to help students meet their associate degree requirements while also working towards bachelor's degree requirements simultaneously, for those students who intend to pursue four-year degree programs as well. The university employs a two-pronged advising approach to provide smooth transitions for students working on multiple degrees, providing first, the formal curriculum degree plans posted online, and second, informal internal worksheets provided to student by advisors for that guide them towards electives and core courses that will assist in timely completion of four-year degrees. In effect, advisors working with students on both their associate and bachelor's degrees. For instance, students who intend to matriculate into a four-year degree program in liberal arts programs may have specific requirements for history classes, such as non-US history, so the curriculum emphasis worksheets guide students away from simply completing any eligible course for Carolina Core Global Citizenship and Multicultural Understanding - Historical Thinking (GHS) credit and towards the specific history courses required for their programs.

In addition, curriculum worksheets are simplified to help students understand more quickly the course offerings available at Lancaster. While each degree plan will list the number of hours required for the Carolina Core Values, Ethics, and Social Responsibility (VSR) requirement, for example, the worksheet will also include a listing of the courses commonly taught at Lancaster, rather than simply direct students to the VSR page, which includes many courses available only on the Columbia campus. In this way, students are provided complete information about academic degrees that is also presented in a student-centered way that allows for easy understanding of the curriculum requirements.

Curriculum Degree Plans

Associate in Arts curriculum worksheet

Associate in Science curriculum worksheet

Associate in Science in Business curriculum worksheet

Associate in Science in Criminal Justice curriculum worksheet

Associate in Nursing Degree curriculum worksheet

Sample Curriculum Emphasis Informal Advising Documents

Associate in Arts (Emphasis in Art Education)

Associate in Science in Business (Emphasis in Accounting, University of South Carolina Columbia B.S. B.A. in Accounting Intended)

 Associate in Science (Emphasis in Exercise Science, University of South Carolina Columbia B.S Exercise Science Intended)

Salkehatchie

The University of South Carolina Salkehatchie Mission Statement states that the institution "awards the Associate in Arts and the Associate in Sciences degrees and provides for the completion of selected bachelor's degrees on campus through cooperative agreements and delivery structures with other University of South Carolina System institutions." While the established degree requirements stated in the Academic Programs section of the Salkehatchie Bulletin allow for appropriate flexibility, the Carolina Core, the University's general education curriculum—and therefore the list of approved Carolina Core courses—guide the offerings of Salkehatchie for the fulfillment of general education requirements for baccalaureate degrees at the University of South Carolina Columbia, with whom it is accredited.

The program requirements of the AA and AS degrees offered by the Palmetto College campuses encompass Learning Outcomes aligned with the University's Carolina Core. These are clearly articulated in the Academic Programs section of the

campus bulletin which, in order, describes the Learning Outcomes, the Carolina Core, the Associate in Arts degree curriculum, and the Associate in Science degree curriculum.

Information about the degree programs at Salkehatchie is found in the Salkehatchie Bulletin. The bulletin is updated on an annual basis, with the campus academic dean being responsible for directing the revision effort, including disseminating portions of the bulletin to the appropriate parties for input when revisions must be made. Degree program information is also easily accessible on the Salkehatchie website.

Distribution of information about degree programs to students is accomplished primarily through the recruiting, advisement and orientation processes outlined below.

Recruiting
The campus supplies Internet links to Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degree programs to prospective students via email or text during recruiting. Additionally, advisement worksheets for these degree programs may be shared in the recruiting process.

Orientation

The campus supplies Internet links to Associates in Arts and Associate in Science degree programs during orientation via the admissions presentation. Additionally, advisement worksheets for these degree programs may be shared at different points during orientation.

Advisement

In addition to web access to program information, advisors use and share University of South Carolina Salkehatchie Associate in Arts and Associate in Science Worksheets

Curriculum

The curricula for the Associates in Arts and the Associates in Science degrees are outlined in the A.A. and A.S. worksheets: Associate in Arts/Associate in Science common curriculum worksheet

Sumter

The University of South Carolina Sumter Mission Statement states that the institution "awards the Associate in Arts and the Associate in Sciences degrees and provides for the completion of selected bachelor's degrees on campus through cooperative agreements and delivery structures with other University of South Carolina System institutions." While the established degree requirements stated in the Academic Programs section (including Learning Outcomes, Carolina Core components, Degree Curriculum and Other Requirements which addresses residency and GPA) of the Sumter Bulletin allow for appropriate flexibility, the Carolina Core - the University's general education curriculum and Carolina Core Courses guide the offerings of Sumter for the fulfillment of general education requirements for baccalaureate degrees at the University of South Carolina Columbia, with whom it is accredited.

The program requirements of the AA/AS degrees offered by the Palmetto College campuses encompass Learning Outcomes aligned with the University's Carolina Core. These are clearly articulated in the Academic Programs section of the campus bulletin which, in order, conveys the Learning Outcomes, Carolina Core, Associate's in Arts and Associate in Science Curriculums.

Information about the degree programs at Sumter is found in the Sumter Bulletin. The bulletin is updated on an annual basis, with the campus academic dean being responsible for directing the revision effort as well as disseminating to all concerned parties when any revisions have been made. The Academic Program and Bulletin links are public and emphasized as key sources of information during the recruitment and admissions process. In addition, newly admitted freshman and transfers students receive handouts with Associate Degree curriculum information during New Student Advisement and Registration orientations. These curricular sheets serve as a principle basis of communicating curriculum information regarding degree completion for students, not only during orientation advisement, but also during mandatory subsequent term advising sessions with assigned faculty advisors:

- Sumter Associate in Arts Worksheet
- Sumter Associate in Science Worksheet

Union

The University of South Carolina Union Mission Statement states that the institution "awards the Associate in Arts and the Associate in Sciences degrees and provides for the completion of selected bachelor's degrees on campus through cooperative agreements and delivery structures with other University of South Carolina System institutions." While the established degree requirements stated in the Academic Programs section (including Learning Outcomes, Carolina Core components, Degree Curriculum and Other Requirements which addresses residency and GPA) of the Union Bulletin allow for appropriate flexibility, the Carolina Core - the University's general education curriculum and Carolina Core Courses guide the offerings of Union for the fulfillment of general education requirements for baccalaureate degrees at the University of South Carolina Columbia, with whom it is accredited.

The program requirements of the AA/AS degrees offered by the Palmetto College campuses encompass Learning Outcomes aligned with the University's Carolina Core. These are clearly articulated in the Academic Programs section of the campus bulletin which, in order, conveys the Learning Outcomes, Carolina Core, Associate's in Arts and Associate in Science Curriculums.

Information about the degree programs at Union is found in the Union Bulletin. The bulletin is updated on an annual basis, with the campus academic dean being responsible for directing the revision effort as well as disseminating to all concerned parties when any revisions have been made. This is accomplished primarily through the recruiting, advisement and orientation processes outlined below.

Recruiting

Prospective students receive information on the degree options at Union via a variety of media, including the Union Viewbook that summarizes those degree options and provides the link to the campus website for further information.

Orientation

The curricula for the Associates in Arts and the Associates in Science degrees are detailed in the Union Bulletin, and in the A.A. and A.S. worksheets that advisors use in working with new students as part of the Orientation process. This includes group orientations scheduled on campus, as well as virtual orientation of new students via the online Orientation checklist that was created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic for all newly admitted students to complete.

Advisement

Academic and Staff Advisors for degree-seeking students at Union receive training and support, including the Union Advising Binder that is updated by the Academic Dean. This Advising Binder includes a wealth of information on the curricula for the Associates in Arts and the Associates in Science degrees, including information on the requirements of each degree and on the Carolina Core components of those curricula in particular. Advisors are encouraged during training and through regular reminders, to ensure that they communicate to their advisees how they are progressing towards those degree requirements. Additionally, students and advisors have access to the advising tool, DegreeWorks, within the online Self-Service Carolina platform, which provides an automated display of the student's progress toward their Associates degree.

Curriculum

The curricula for the Associates in Arts and the Associates in Science degrees are outlined in the A.A. and A.S. worksheets that advisors are provided during training and in their advising binders. These include the following:

- Associate in Arts Worksheet
- Associate in Science Worksheet

Sources

- AA/AS Prog of Study_Salk
- ACAF 2.00 Creation and Revision of Academic Programs
- ACAF 2.03 Creation and Revision of Academic Courses
- ACAF 2.20 Academic Program Review
- Academic Advising Presentation
- Academic Bulletins
- Accred Review Example MHIT CAHIIM2019Report9May2019
- Approved DL courses
- Associate in Arts (Art Education) Degree Plan
- Associate in Arts Degree Plan
- Associate in Science (Business) Degree Worksheet
- Associate in Science (Crim Justice) Degree Worksheet 1
- Associate in Science (Exercise Science) Degree Plan
- Associate in Science (Nursing) Degree Worksheet
- Associate in Science Degree Plan
- Associate in Science in Business (Accounting) Degree Plan
- BSE Assessment Plan
- Board of Trustees Bylaws
- Carolina Core
- Carolina Core AA Degree Plan
- Carolina Core AS Degree Plan
- Carolina Core Courses
- Degree Programs Salkehatchie
- ExerciseSci.BS_MajorMap
- Experience USC Lancaster

- External Review Example AFAMallreports19July2018
- Faculty_Manual_Columbia
- Faculty_Manual_Palmetto_College
- GHS Foundational Courses
- Institutional Effectiveness Website
- Lancaster Academic Programs
- Lancaster Bulletin
- Lancaster Degree Curricula
- Major Map Repository
- Mission Statements All Campuses
- Mission Statements All Campuses (Page 12)
- Mission Statements All Campuses (Page 9)
- Office of Academic Programs
- Office of the Provost
- Office of the Registrar
- Palmetto College Organizational Chart 2020
- Salkehatchie Academic Programs
- Salkehatchie Associate of Arts & Science Degree Program
- Salkehatchie Bulletin
- Salkehatchie Mission Statement
- Standard 8.2.a
- Sumter Academic Programs
- Sumter Associate of Arts Degree Plan
- Sumter Associate of Science Degree Plan
- Sumter Bulletin
- Sumter Mission Statement
- Sumter New Student Advisement and Registration
- USC System Mission Statement
- Undergraduate Bulletin
- Union Academic Programs
- Union Advising Binder
- Union Bulletin
- Union Orientation Check List
- Union Viewbook
- VSR Foundational Courses