**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
FOR NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS,
PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS, PROGRAM NOTIFICATIONS, PROGRAM
TERMINATIONS, AND NEW CENTERS
FOR SC PUBLIC COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# I. INTRODUCTION

New academic program approval is one of the important functions a higher education coordinating agency performs. The essential nature of this function was recognized in the 1967 legislation which created the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (the Commission). The enabling legislation requires that public institutions of higher education receive approval from the Commission or the General Assembly before any new academic program is implemented (§59-103-35 of the *South Carolina Code of Laws 1976 as amended*). This approval process was reemphasized in Act 359 of 1996 which specifically mandated the Commission examine the curriculum offerings of each public college and university in the state as well as the respective relationships to services and offerings of other institutions. Act 359 also reaffirmed that no new program may be undertaken by any public institution of higher education without approval of the Commission (§59-103-35 of the *South Carolina Code of Laws 1976 as amended*).

The Commission establishes and maintains the policies and procedures for program approval[1]. The purpose of the Commission's program proposal review is to assure effective and efficient use of resources so institutions offer students quality, accessible, and affordable programs. The principal role of the Commission in program approval is to provide a statewide perspective (and, in some cases, a regional or national perspective). In reviewing proposals for new programs or modifications to existing programs, the Commission considers the following:
1. objectives of the proposed program;
2. need for the program;
3. program compatibility with the mission, role, and scope of the institution;
4. estimated cost of the program;
5. personnel, facilities, library holdings, and other resources necessary to conduct a program of high quality or a timeline to acquire these resources;
6. research and workforce development needs of the state; and
7. quality and scope of the program.

The Commission understands the nature of its responsibility for program approval and its obligation to assist public institutions in developing and maintaining programs of high quality while avoiding or reducing unnecessary program duplication. Institutions should consult the Commission early in the process of planning a new program to aid in the submission of quality proposals. To make the process for program approval agile and efficient, the Commission will consider requests for deviations to the process or schedule for the evaluation of academic programs on a case-by-case basis.

Moreover, with the advent of distance learning technology and global competition among higher education institutions, institutional collaboration and acceptance of non-traditional methods for student instruction are essential. For these reasons, the Commission strongly encourages collaboration among and between in-state, public institutions to develop and offer academic programs in order to ensure a more efficient use of state resources and afford greater accessibility for students. The Commission also encourages articulation between two- and four-year programs to provide seamless transitions for students. In addition, should a program be terminated, the Commission must assure there are adequate pathways for students to complete their education.

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[1] This policy and all Commission on Higher Education policies referenced in this document are available on the Commission's website (www.che.sc.gov).

The Commission recommends that institutions include, wherever appropriate, research experience, internships, cooperative education, service learning, and other work experiences in undergraduate programs. The Commission also expects all programs to adhere to the standards set by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and program-specific accrediting bodies, if applicable. Furthermore, the Commission expects all public institutions to adhere to the *Institutional Integrity Standard* of SACSCOC. As such, the Commission and institutions will deal honestly and openly with one another; institutions must comply with Commission policies, procedures, and decisions; institutions must make complete, accurate and honest disclosures to the Commission and provide any information requested; and both the Commission and institutions will make reasonable and responsible decisions consistent with the spirt of integrity[2].

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[2] Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. *Integrity and Accuracy in Institutional Representation*. June 2017.

## II. POLICIES

### A. Policy for New Programs

1. New degree programs are:
   a. offerings in any academic degree program that conclude with the conferral of a degree at any level in any field or major not previously offered;
   b. courses constituting 50 percent or more of a program of study not previously approved by the Commission offered on-campus or off-site by any instructional modality within a three-year period for associate's, baccalaureate, specialist, or master's programs, or within a five-year period for doctoral programs;
   c. any program offered at one degree level proposed to be offered at another level (e.g., the institution offers a B.A. and wants to offer an M.A.);
   d. new educator preparation programs, including add-ons or endorsements;
   e. the addition of concentrations in educator preparation programs that lead to a certification which the institution is not currently authorized by the State Board of Education to offer; or
   f. any existing program which changes to such an extent that a change in CIP Code is required or for which a change to the CIP Code is requested.

2. All new degree programs, regardless of mode of delivery, location, institution, or existence of the same or similar programs in the state, require Commission approval as defined by the policies and procedures in this manual. Authorized programs are identified in the Commission's *Inventory of Approved Programs*.

3. The proposing institution's provost/chief academic officer, president and governing board must approve proposals for new programs. All institutional faculty and administration approvals must be obtained **prior to submission** to Commission staff. Board approval prior to submission is preferred, however, Board approval must be obtained prior to the proposal's consideration by the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing (CAAL). The dates of approval must be identified in the proposal.

4. No program may be publicized as an approved program in the catalog of any institution or in any other manner prior to approval by the Commission. Proposed programs may be marketed as "pending approval" for recruitment purposes only after a favorable vote on the program proposal by CAAL. A violation of this requirement may result in delayed program consideration.

5. Compliance with the Commission's productivity standards for existing programs will be considered in determining an institution's request to establish a new program. The Commission might not approve an institution's new program if its existing programs fail to meet the Commission's productivity standards. New program proposal requests will be approved by the Commission **only** if the proposal contains reasonable assurances that enrollment projections will meet the minimum standards for degree productivity.
   **Note:** The Commission's *Policies and Procedures for Academic Degree Program Productivity* are available online on the Commission's website and are included as an appendix at the end of this document.

6. Institutions shall provide an assessment of the program's implementation (e.g., enrollment, costs, and recruitment) in the third year of implementation so that CAAL may evaluate the

accuracy of the program market demand and cost effectiveness. CAAL may make recommendations for the program or fully review the entire program if it deems necessary.

7. If implementation of a proposed program entails new capital construction, substantial modifications to existing facilities, or leasing of new or expanded facilities, an appropriate request for Commission approval of such construction or modification may be submitted through the Finance and Facilities approval procedures concurrently with the proposal for the new program so the Commission's Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing and Committee on Finance and Facilities may review the proposals simultaneously.

8. All proposals to establish new doctoral programs must be accompanied by a review from a qualified out-of-state evaluator approved by the Commission which analyzes the merits of the proposed program; its potential effect on existing programs at the institution; its relationship to similar programs in the state, region, or nation; the institution's readiness and ability to support the proposed program; and workforce and market demand in SC since these programs typically have lower enrollment and higher costs than programs offered at other degree levels. Deference will be given to South Carolina and regional statistics. Prior to submitting the proposal, the institution must provide to the Commission the following information for at least three prospective evaluators: Curriculum Vitae, description of how the educational qualifications and background of each evaluator are related to the proposed program, and the rationale for identifying the evaluators.

9. An institution seeking approval to offer a program at a level above that which is included in its Commission-approved mission statement is required to submit a request for a change in mission and status (i.e., new level of degree offered) prior to or at the same time as the submission of the related program proposal. The Commission may approve or deny a mission statement change.

10. In rare instances and at its discretion, the Commission may de-elevate a new program proposal to a program modification.

11. After a new program has been approved by the Commission, should the implementation date of that program change to either earlier or later implementation, the institution must submit written notification of this change to the Director of Academic Affairs. For Commission reporting purposes to federal and other agencies, if the new implementation date is later than originally proposed, the institution must submit a rationale for the change. However, if the new implementation date is earlier than originally proposed, the notification must provide the rationale for the change and quality assurance that any new faculty, courses, facilities, equipment or other resources will be available by the earlier start date.

12. New program implementation may be deferred by the institution for up to three years following approval of the program. After that time, a new program proposal must be resubmitted and reauthorized if the institution wishes to implement the program.

13. For new joint programs, a Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement (MOU or MOA) that clearly delineates program responsibilities and fiscal arrangements among all participants, signed by the appropriate senior-level institutional officers, must be submitted and approved with the final program proposal. Institutions may submit a single proposal for joint programs, however, the proposal must present separate information for faculty, facilities, and financial support for each institution. Joint programs that require the submission of a new program

proposal will also require the submission of new program proposal(s) should the program ever separate.

**Note:** Institutions seeking curriculum or program partnerships shall provide the Commission with a copy of the appropriate document (MOU, MOA, or Articulation Agreement) that provides details regarding 1.) the intended curriculum or program(s) addressed; 2.) responsibilities of each institution; 3.) intended sites and locations; 4.) date of implementation and expiration, if applicable; 5.) centrality to institutional mission; and 6.) the signature of the chief academic officer and appropriate other senior-level institutional officers. The document shall be submitted to the Commission at least three months prior to the expected date of implementation.

14. A new program proposal is required for a dual program if one of the programs of the proposed dual degree is a new program. Justification must be provided for any shared coursework; the Commission recommends that no more than 25% of the major coursework be shared for the programs (i.e., fulfill major, not general education or elective requirements). For dual programs offered by more than one institution, a Memorandum of Understanding of Agreement (MOU or MOA) that clearly delineates program responsibilities and fiscal arrangements among all participants, signed by the appropriate senior-level institutional officers, must be submitted and approved with the final program proposal. Institutions may submit a single proposal for dual programs, however, the proposal must present separate information for faculty, facilities, and financial support for each institution. Dual programs that require the submission of a new program proposal will also require the submission of new program proposal(s) should the program ever separate.

    **Note:** See note above about MOUs, MOAs, or Articulation Agreements.

15. After a new program has been approved by the Commission, should that program fail to be approved by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), the institution must notify the Commission of its plan to either appeal the SACSCOC decision or withdraw the program within three months of the date the institution was notified of SACSCOC's decision to not approve the program. The institution's Chief Academic Officer must send written notification to the Commission's Director of Academic Affairs, which should include 1.) copies of SACSCOC's letter of denial and 2.) all other documents the institution submits to SACSCOC in response.

16. Institutions are advised to keep a copy of the final, Commission-approved proposal for comparative purposes to be used when completing the program's first program productivity review.

17. If an institution has a program placed on probation by the Commission due to insufficient productivity, it must provide a plan for meeting the standards within the probationary period. If this plan is not submitted by the institution by the date requested, the Commission might not accept any new program proposals until the plan is received and may review the entire program placed on probation, if necessary.

18. If a program is subject to approval by a state board or agency other than the Commission (e.g., State Board of Education, Board of Nursing, discipline-specific accreditor, etc.), the program will be approved with a provision regarding such approval. The program must receive approval or provide evidence of satisfactory progress toward approval within 12 months. If the institution does not receive approval or demonstrate satisfactory progress at that time, a new program

proposal must be resubmitted and reauthorized if the institution wishes to implement the program.


**B. Policy for Program Modifications**

1. Program modifications are:
   a. the extension or transfer of an existing, approved program to an instructional site that is different from the location or site already authorized, including out-of-state or out-of-country sites, where instruction is delivered in traditional format or in a combination of traditional and distance education formats, where 50 percent or more of the curriculum is offered at the site(s) within a period of three years for associate's (except for those offered by technical colleges), baccalaureate, specialist, master's and doctoral-professional practice programs, or within a five-year period for doctoral-research/scholarship programs
   **Note:** health professions programs with a required clinical component (e.g., nursing and medical programs) require Commission review and approval as a program modification, regardless of delivery mode or percent of the total required program credit hours offered at that site;
   b. the addition, deletion, or consolidation of concentrations, tracks, options, specializations, emphases, or cognates (hereafter referred to as concentrations) offered within an existing major, except in the following cases:
      i. if the concentration is the first to be added to the program, it may be added by a notification of change provided that the concentration is 18 hours or less for undergraduate programs and 12 hours or less for graduate programs when considering the addition, deletion, or modification of required courses (the second and all subsequent concentrations to be added to a program must be treated as a program modification);
      ii. new concentrations to educator preparation programs that lead to a certification which the institution is not currently authorized by the State Board of Education to offer (these must be treated as a new program); and
      iii. new concentrations for programs offered by technical colleges are to be treated as a Notification of Change.
   c. substantive changes in curriculum of 19 hours or more to an existing undergraduate program or 13 hours or more to an existing master's, specialist, or doctoral program when considering the addition, deletion, or modification of required courses;
   d. substantive changes in program goal, purpose, curriculum, organizational structure, or target audience or any other change made to the program that initiates a substantive change request either to SACSCOC or the program's accrediting body provided that such changes do not require a change in the CIP Code;
   e. a change in the degree designation of a program when this change involves a significant shift in the program's purpose (e.g., B.A. to B.F.A.; M.S. to M.B.A.; or B.A. to B.S.);
   f. the addition of a new degree type of the same program at the same degree level (e.g., the institution offers a B.A. and wants to add a B.F.A.)

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<li>the reconfiguration of a number of existing related degrees into a single degree (e.g., B.A. in French; B.A. in German; and B.A. in Spanish collapsed into a B.A. in Modern Languages);</li>
<li>the creation of a dual program using two existing (already approved) programs, in which case a justification must be provided for any shared coursework and the Commission recommends that no more than 25% of the major coursework be shared for the programs (i.e., fulfill major, not general education or elective requirements); or</li>
<li>the creation of a joint program by merging existing related programs at two or more institutions. Please note that reconfigured or merged programs that require the submission of a program modification proposal will also require the submission of a program modification proposal should the program ever separate.</li>
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2. Proposals for program modifications (Appendix C) follow a format and criteria similar to new program proposals (Appendix B). The President and Executive Director of the Commission has approval authority for program modifications based on the recommendation of Academic Affairs staff and the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP). Final approval of appealed decisions rests with the Commission. Approval decisions regarding program modifications will be made within two months of the recommendation of ACAP.

3. The Commission, at its discretion, may elevate a program modification proposal to a new program proposal or de-elevate a program modification proposal to a notification of change. The Commission may also elevate a program modification proposal for consideration by CAAL and the full Commission.

4. No program may be publicized as an approved program in the catalog of any institution or in any other manner prior to approval by the Commission. Modified programs may be publicized as "pending approval" for recruitment purposes only after a favorable vote on the program proposal by ACAP. However, if the program modification is elevated for CAAL consideration, the program may be publicized as "pending approval" for recruitment purposes only after a favorable vote on the program proposal by CAAL. A violation of this requirement may result in delayed program consideration.

5. Program modification implementation may be deferred by the institution for up to three years following approval of the program modification proposal. After that time, a new program modification proposal must be resubmitted and reauthorized if the institution wishes to implement the modification.

6. If an institution has a program placed on probation by the Commission due to insufficient productivity, it must provide a plan for meeting the standards within the probationary period. If this plan is not submitted by the institution by the date requested, the Commission might not accept any new program proposals or program modification proposals until the plan is received and may review the entire program placed on probation, if necessary.

**C. Policy for Program Proposals Submitted by Colleges in the South Carolina Technical College System**

New program proposals submitted by colleges in the South Carolina Technical College System (SCTCS) must first be evaluated by the SCTCS staff.

1. Programs that are new to the SCTCS and are designed for transfer to a four-year institution must adhere to the Commission's program approval process.

2. Programs that are new to the SCTCS and proposed as nontransferable (i.e., not college parallel) programs will be evaluated by SCTCS staff first, then the Commission and the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP) prior to consideration by the SC State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education to determine if the proposed program is nontransferable.
   a. If the Commission and ACAP concur with SCTCS staff that the program is nontransferable, the program will be considered by the SC State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education, and if approved, SCTCS staff will send a request for inclusion in the Commission's *Inventory of Approved Programs*.
   b. If the Commission or ACAP determines there is potential for transfer to a four-year degree program, the technical college must adhere to the Commission's standard program approval process. (See Procedures for more information about this process.)

3. For programs that are currently offered by one or more institutions within the SCTCS but are new to the proposing institution, the SCTCS staff will evaluate the program to determine if the proposed program is substantially the same as the existing program (i.e., it adheres to the model developed by the SCTCS and is consistent across campuses in program delivery factors, including curriculum, program objectives, faculty qualifications, and assessment, among others), and if so, the SCTCS staff will so certify the substantially similar program to the Commission and send a request for inclusion in the Commission's *Inventory of Approved Programs*. (See Procedures for more information about this process.)

4. Diploma and certificate programs offered by the state's technical colleges which require fewer than two years to complete **do not** require Commission approval.

5. Technical colleges do not need Commission approval for delivery of approved programs at additional sites within their statutory-approved service area. The Commission shall be notified when a program is extended to additional sites within the college's service area. Commission program modification approval is required for programs offered outside the service area.

**D. Policy for Proposals Submitted for Educator Preparation Programs**

1. Education units in public institutions that offer State Board of Education-approved educator preparation programs must be fully accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and maintain that accreditation. Programs that prepare teachers and other school professionals will be approved with the provision that CAEP accreditation be sought and/or maintained for the unit and that the program receive national recognition from the appropriate Specialized Professional Association (SPA) or accrediting body.

2. Should an institution's education unit lose CAEP accreditation or be accredited with conditions, the institution may not apply to the Commission for any new educator preparation programs until CAEP has granted or restored full accreditation to the unit.

3. Educator preparation programs must reflect prevailing national and state standards with respect to content and pedagogy. Such educator preparation programs are expected to meet the

standards of Specialized Professional Associations (SPAs) or accrediting bodies within two years of initial approval and maintain them. Should the institution fail to receive or maintain accreditation with the SPA, students currently enrolled in the program must immediately be notified.

4.  All master's programs in education for advanced training of teachers are expected to incorporate the core propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

5.  For master's programs in teacher education, the M.A.T. is to be offered for those seeking an initial certification and a M.Ed. is to be offered for those already certified or who are not seeking an initial teacher certification. As such, coursework should be targeted to either those seeking an initial certification (M.A.T.) or those already certified or not seeking certification (M.Ed.), not both.

6.  Institutions adding a concentration to an educator preparation program which leads to a new certification that the institution is not currently authorized by the State Board of Education to offer must submit a proposal for a new program.

7.  Educator preparation programs must provide evidence that candidates in all certification programs know, understand, and can apply South Carolina State Board of Education K-12 standards in the area in which they seek to be certified, including College- and Career-Ready Standards and Academic Standards and Indicators. The Commission may collaborate with educator preparation programs to ensure alignment with state standards.

8.  Proposals for new educator preparation programs must be approved by the Commission **prior** to consideration through the State Board of Education process. New or modified program proposals from public institutions will not be considered by the State Board of Education until program approval is granted by the Commission. The Commission will notify SC Department of Education (SCDE) staff when the Commission receives and approves a proposal for a new educator preparation program.

9.  Proposals for educator preparation programs that prepare teachers and other school professionals must submit the additional information required by SCDE when the program proposal is submitted to the Commission. The SCDE may begin its review of this information at that time; however, the program must be approved by the Commission prior to consideration through the State Board of Education process.

10. Within 12 months of Commission approval, new or modified proposals must receive approval by the State Board of Education or provide evidence of satisfactory progress toward approval. If the institution does not receive approval or demonstrate satisfactory progress at that time, a new program proposal must be resubmitted and reauthorized if the institution wishes to implement the program.

11. An institution changing the name of a program through SCDE, CAEP, a SPA, or any other accrediting body, must follow the Commission's policies for program modification, notification of change, or notification of termination, as appropriate.

12. Institutions with educator preparation programs at the graduate level may submit a notification of change instead of a program modification for programs offered off-site if the institution has a time-limited contract with a local education agency (LEA) to offer the program. In such cases, a

copy of the contract or Memorandum of Understanding with the LEA must be submitted with the notification.

13. When an institution is notified by SCDE of program certification authority being terminated by the State Board of Education, the institution should submit a notification of termination immediately for that program as such programs cannot admit new students and existing students have two years to complete the program.


**E. Policy for Off-site Delivery of Existing Approved Programs**

1. Institutions may offer less than 50 percent of the total required program credit hours for any **approved** degree program at **a previously approved site** without Commission approval, except in the case of health professions programs with a required clinical component (e.g., nursing and medical programs) which require Commission review and approval as a program modification, regardless of delivery mode or percent of the total required program credit hours offered at that site.  However, Commission program modification approval is required if an institution proposes to offer **an approved degree program at a previously approved site** by traditional or blended instruction where 50 percent or more of the curriculum is offered at the site(s) within a period of three years for associate's (except for those offered by technical colleges), baccalaureate, specialist, master's and doctoral-professional practice programs, or within a five-year period for doctoral-research/scholarship programs.

2. Institutions adding **an approved program to a new delivery site** in-state not previously approved by the Commission either for that institution or for that particular program (i.e., other institutions do not offer the program at that site) must submit a program modification proposal, regardless of delivery mode or percent of the total required program credit hours offered at that site.

3. Institutions adding 100% online delivery to an approved program must submit a notification of change form to the Commission **three months prior** to implementing the change. For purposes of program duplication review, notifications for 100% online delivery may be subject to ACAP review.

4. Institutions extending a certificate program to a new site must submit a notification of change form to the Commission **three months prior** to implementing the change.

5. Technical colleges do not need Commission approval for delivery of approved programs at additional sites within their statutory-approved service area. However, the Commissions shall be notified when a program is extended to additional sites within the college's service area. Commission program modification approval is required for programs offered outside the service area.

6. For any existing program or part of a program offered out-of-state or out-of-country entirely through distance education, the institution shall inform the Commission of the program offering using the *Notification of Change to an Academic Program or Organizational Unit* form (Appendix D) no later than three months prior to implementing the program or program components at the site(s) in question and must report the total number of students and the total number of in-state students enrolled in the program.  Institutions offering programs out-of-state are expected

to adhere to the policies and guidelines of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements or receive state approval as required.

7. Commission policies for program approval apply to any **new** program proposed to be offered exclusively out-of-state or out-of-country through distance education.

8. Educator preparation programs at the graduate level may submit a notification of change instead of a program modification if the institution has a time-limited contract with a local education agency (LEA) to offer the program off-site. In such cases, a copy of the contract or Memorandum of Understanding with the LEA must be submitted with the notification.

## F. Policy for Notification of Change to an Academic Program

The institution making a change to an academic program must inform the Commission's Director of Academic Affairs of the change **three months prior to implementing the change** using the *Notification of Change to an Academic Program or Organizational Unit* form (Appendix D) or *Notification of Change – New Certificate* form (Appendix E). However, **the change may not be implemented until the institution receives a written acknowledgement** from the Commission. Therefore, the Commission recommends submitting the *Notification* as early as possible to allow sufficient time for review to determine whether the change may be processed as a *Notification* or needs to be elevated to a modification or new program proposal. The Director of Academic Affairs will notify the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP) and the Committee of Academic Affairs and Licensing (CAAL) of changes acknowledged by the Commission at each meeting.

1. Notifications of change must be submitted for any of the following:
    a. off-site delivery of existing programs that are delivered through electronic formats in their entirety;
    b. out-of-state or out-of-country delivery of **existing** programs, regardless of delivery mode, if that program or part of a program does not request, require, or receive appropriations from the state;
    c. change in program title without changes in CIP Code;
    d. minor changes in objectives or purposes of the program (substantive changes may constitute a new program proposal);
    e. substantive changes in curriculum of 18 hours or less to an existing undergraduate program or 12 hours or less to an existing master's, specialist, or doctoral program when considering the addition, deletion, or modification of required courses;
    f. the deletion or consolidation of concentrations, tracks, options, specializations, emphases, or cognates offered within an existing major that result in a cumulative change of 18 hours or less to an existing undergraduate program or 12 hours or less to an existing master's, specialist, and doctoral programs when considering the courses added to, deleted from, or modified for the program;
    g. the addition of a concentration to programs offered by senior or USC two-year institutions provided that the concentration is the first one to be added since program approval and implementation and that the concentration is 18 hours or less for undergraduate programs or 12 hours or less for graduate program when considering the addition, deletion, or modification of required courses except in the case of adding new concentrations to educator preparation programs leading to initial certification, which are to be treated as a new program (the

second and all subsequent concentrations to be added to a program must be treated as a program modification);
h. the addition of concentrations to programs offered by the technical colleges;
i. new certificate programs offered by senior institutions;
j. new sites for certificate programs offered by senior institutions; or
k. change in name for a center or institute, only if the center or institute was approved by the Commission.

2. The Commission has the right to elevate any notification of change to be considered by ACAP, CAAL, and the full Commission or to require the submission of a program modification or new program proposal.

### G. Policy for the Notification of Termination of an Academic Program, Concentration, Site or Center

The institution terminating an academic program or concentration should inform the Commission's Director of Academic Affairs of the change **three months prior to the termination** using the *Notification of Termination* form (Appendix F) which must be submitted by the institution's Chief Executive or Chief Academic Officer. The Director of Academic Affairs will notify ACAP and CAAL of such notifications processed by the Commission at each meeting.

1. For programs subject to additional approval by a state board or agency other than the Commission (e.g., State Board of Nursing, State Board of Education, discipline-specific accreditors, etc.), when the program no longer satisfies requirements for necessary accreditation or approval, the institution shall consider termination of the program and notify the Commission of such termination by submitting the *Notification of Termination* form (Appendix F). If an institution is notified that the board or agency is revoking approval, licensure, or certification authority of the program, the institution must immediately notify the Commission of such action by submitting the *Notification of Termination* form. A copy of the report or notification for revoking approval must be included with the *Notification of Termination.* The Commission will notify the appropriate board or agency of notification of terminations received for such programs.

2. When a program no longer meets the productivity standards set forth by the Commission, the institution shall consider termination of the program and notify the Commission of such termination by submitting the *Notification of Termination* form (Appendix F). An institution may also terminate a program or organizational unit based on its own evaluation of that program or unit.

3. In the *Notification*, the institution must provide:
   a. a date certain by which the program will be closed to new students and a date certain by which the CHEMIS data file will be closed (typically not longer than 150% of program duration, e.g., six years for a four-year program); and
   b. a detailed description of the teach-out plan to assure the Commission that the plan adequately addresses students' needs.

4. Terminated programs can be reactivated within three years of termination by a program modification proposal.  If the program has been terminated for more than three years, the institution must submit a new program proposal to reactivate the program.

**H. Policy for New Centers, Institutes, and Consortiums**

1. New centers, institutes and consortiums for which the institution intends to request or receive appropriations from the state specifically for that center, institute or consortium require Commission approval. Existing centers, institutes, or consortiums not approved by the Commission must gain Commission approval prior to requesting state funding.  Commission approval is not required if no appropriation from the state is requested or required.

2. SmartState Centers will be considered to be in compliance with this policy if they are approved by the SmartState Review Board or appropriate state government entity.

3. Education Improvement Act (EIA) Centers of Excellence will be considered to be in compliance with this policy if they are approved by the Commission.

4. Proposals for new centers, institutes, and consortiums follow a format and criteria similar to new program proposals (Appendix G) and follow the same procedures as new program proposals.

**I. Policy for the Ensuring the Accuracy of the *Inventory of Academic Programs***

1. On an annual basis, the Commission will request that institutions review the *Inventory of Academic Programs (Inventory)* to ensure it reflects accurate information for programs currently offered. The Commission must receive written notification of any discrepancies by the deadline stated in the request. Should there be discrepancies, the Commission reserves the right to not accept any program proposals from the institution until the discrepancy is resolved.

2. To correct discrepancies in the *Inventory*, the Commission will:
   a. edit the Inventory to address any clerical errors or
   b. request the submission of a Notification of Change form, program modification proposal, or new program proposal, depending on the discrepancy.

**J. Strategic Planning Policy for Academic Programs**

1. In the event of a specific review of academic programs, the Commission will make recommendations regarding the future status of programs and fields of study under review statewide. These recommendations will be based on four main sources of information:
   a. a peer-review document developed by consultants hired by the Commission;
   b. supplemental qualitative and quantitative data relating to the field of study collected from statistically reliable sources;
   c. the institution's strategic plan and the statewide strategic plan for higher education; and
   d. the workforce needs of the state.

**III. PROCEDURES**

**A. Procedure for New Programs**

The institution submits a New Program Proposal which is thoroughly reviewed by the Commission who chooses whether to present the proposed program to the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP). If there are significant concerns, the Commission will recommend that the proposal be revised or withdrawn. The proposal is transmitted to ACAP for consideration. After ACAP's review, the Commission transmits substantive comments, questions, or concerns from both ACAP members and the Commission to the proposing institution and the institution submits a revised proposal. The Commission considers ACAP's discussion in preparing an analysis for consideration by the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing (CAAL). The revised proposal and accompanying analysis and recommendation are then transmitted to CAAL for consideration. If CAAL votes to recommend approval of the program to the Commission, the materials are forwarded to the full Commission for consideration and the proposed program is considered for final approval.

To make the process for program approval agile and efficient while taking its responsibility for program approval seriously, the Director of Academic Affairs will consider requests for deviations to the process or schedule for the evaluation of academic programs on a case-by-case basis.

**Prior to Proposal Submission**
The Commission encourages institutions to consult with them early in the consideration and planning of new programs. This consultation may include telephone conversations, email discussions, and brief meetings. Institutions may also submit a draft of the proposal for review by the Commission well in advance of due dates for proposals.

**Proposal Submission**
Proposals for new programs must be submitted in the appropriate format electronically by the President or Chief Academic Officer of the institution or system or a designee. Please note the following:

1. The Commission will review final proposals to ensure that required components are included and that the proposal adheres to the Commission's policies. Failure to address all required components adequately or adhere to policies may delay the program's submission to ACAP.

2. Proposals for educator preparation programs must submit the additional information required by the South Carolina Department of Education when the program proposal is submitted to the Commission.

3. Proposals for doctoral programs must include a review from a qualified out-of-state evaluator approved by the Commission which analyzes the merits of the proposed program; its potential effect on existing programs at the institution; its relationship to similar programs in the state, region, or nation; the institution's readiness and ability to support the proposed program; and workforce and market demand in SC since these programs typically have lower enrollment and higher costs than programs offered at other degree levels. Deference will be given to South Carolina and regional statistics. Prior to submitting the proposal, the institution must provide to the Commission the following information for at least three prospective evaluators: Curriculum Vitae, description of how the educational qualifications and background of each evaluator are related to the proposed program, and the rationale for identifying the evaluators.

4. Proposals for joint programs must present separate information for faculty, facilities, and financial support for each institution.

**Consideration of the Proposal**

1. The Commission reviews the proposed program, discusses any questions or significant concerns with the institution, and chooses whether to transmit the proposal to ACAP for consideration.

2. The institution must introduce the New Program Proposal to ACAP. If ACAP favorably reviews the new program proposal, the Commission prepares an analysis and recommendation regarding approval of the proposed program. The proposal and analysis will be transmitted to CAAL. **If ACAP does not favorably review the new program,** the proposal may be: revised and presented to ACAP for reconsideration, withdrawn, or forwarded to CAAL with a negative recommendation.

3. If requested to do so by the Commission, the institution submits a revised proposal that addresses questions, substantive comments, and concerns raised by both the Commission and ACAP members.

4. The Commission will prepare a written analysis and recommendation for each proposal for CAAL, which will also be provided to ACAP.

5. The proposal is presented to CAAL for consideration. CAAL will submit findings and recommendations to the Commission.

6. The Commission on Higher Education will consider the proposal. The President and Executive Director of the Commission will notify the President or Chief Executive Officer of the institution or system in writing of the Commission's decision. Proposals for educator preparation programs will be forwarded to the SC Department of Education after Commission approval.

7. An institution that seeks to appeal the Commission's action on any proposal for a new program may do so, provided a written notice stating the reason(s) for the appeal is submitted to the President and Executive Director of the Commission by the President or Chief Executive Officer of the institution or system no later than 30 calendar days after receipt of written notice of the Commission's action. Appeals will be referred to CAAL for consideration and CAAL will undertake any further study or action it deems appropriate. Should CAAL find in favor of the appeal, the proposal will be submitted to the Commission for reconsideration. If CAAL's decision is unfavorable, the institution must wait one full calendar year before submitting a new proposal for the program or a similar program.

**Procedures for New Program Proposals Submitted by Colleges in the South Carolina Technical College System**

New program proposals submitted by colleges in the South Carolina Technical College System (SCTCS) must first be evaluated by SCTCS staff.

1. Programs that are new to the SCTCS and are designed for transfer to a four-year institution must adhere to the Commission's program approval process described above.

2. For programs that are new to the SCTCS and proposed as nontransferable programs:

a. The program will be evaluated by the Commission and the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP), via electronic review to guarantee a timely response, to determine:

    i. if there is potential for transfer to a four-year degree program (i.e., potential for a pathway to or an articulation agreement with a four-year degree program); and

    ii. if there are any substantive questions.

The Commission may request additional information to determine transferability, including syllabi and faculty credentials.

b. If the Commission and ACAP concur with SCTCS staff that the program is not designed for transfer:

    i. The Commission will notify the SCTCS staff that the program is to be considered by the SC State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education. The Commission will also transmit any substantive questions in writing to SCTCS staff.

    ii. The Commission will include an information item on the agenda of the next scheduled Commission meeting stating a new program has been reviewed by the Commission and ACAP, has been determined to qualify for approval as a nontransferable program, and is pending approval by the SC State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education.

    iii. If the program is approved by the SC State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education, the SCTCS staff will send a request for inclusion in the Commission's *Inventory of Approved Programs*. The Commission will notify SCTCS staff and the proposing institution that the program has been added to the *Inventory*.

If the Commission determines there is potential for transfer to a four-year degree program, the technical college must adhere to the Commission's standard program approval process described above. If requested by the technical college, the Commission will establish an approval process schedule that guarantees a timely response to business and industry needs.

3. For programs that are currently offered by one or more institutions within the SCTCS but are new to the proposing institution:

a. The program will be evaluated by SCTCS staff to determine:

    i. if the proposed program is substantially the same as the existing program and conforms to the SCTCS template for that program;

    ii. if the proposed program meets applicable accreditation requirements;

    iii. if the proposing institution has the capacity to support the program; and

    iv. if there is sufficient demand for the program.

b. If SCTCS staff determine that the previously stated conditions are met, they will so certify to the Commission. The SCTCS staff certification must include a brief program description and request for inclusion in the Commission's *Inventory of Approved Programs*.

c. The Commission will review the SCTCS request to determine if there are substantive questions that remain unanswered.

    i. If there are no substantive questions, the Commission will notify SCTCS staff and the proposing institution that the program has been added to the *Inventory*.

    ii. If there are substantive questions, the Commission will transmit them in writing in a timely manner to SCTCS staff for review and written response. When the

questions are addressed satisfactorily, the Commission will notify the proposing institution and SCTCS staff that the program has been added to the *Inventory*. In the event that substantive questions remain unanswered, the SCTCS staff will have the option to either:

    i.   defer the request for the program to be included in the *Inventory* until the questions are answered; or

    ii.  request that the program proposal be submitted for consideration under the Commission's program approval process.


## B. Procedure for Program Modifications

The institution submits a Program Modification Proposal, which is thoroughly reviewed by the Commission who chooses whether to present the proposed program modification to ACAP. If there are significant concerns, the Commission will recommend that the proposal be revised or withdrawn. If the Commission decides to elevate the modification, the institution will be notified prior to ACAP. The proposal is transmitted to ACAP for consideration. Based on the Commission's review and ACAP's discussion concerning the proposed modification, the Commission makes a determination about the proposed modification within two months of the ACAP meeting. In the event of an unfavorable decision, the institution may appeal to CAAL.

1. Proposals must be submitted electronically by the President or Chief Academic Officer of the institution or system. The Commission will review the proposal to ensure that required elements are included and that the proposal adheres to the Commission's policies. Failure to address all required components adequately or adhere to policies may delay the program's submission to ACAP. Please note that proposals for educator preparation programs may submit the additional information required by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) when the program proposal is submitted to the Commission.

2. The institution will introduce the proposal to ACAP. **If ACAP does not favorably review the proposed modification,** the institution may elect to withdraw the proposal or revise the proposal and present it to ACAP for reconsideration.

3. After ACAP's review, the Commission transmits substantive comments, questions, or concerns from both ACAP members and the Commission to the proposing institution and the institution submits a written response or a revised proposal, whichever is required.

4. Approval authority rests with the President and Executive Director of the Commission for all program modifications. If the modification is approved, the Commission will notify the institution within 60 calendar days of ACAP consideration of the proposal. If the President and Executive Director does not grant approval of the program modification, the institution may appeal the decision. The appeal must be submitted to the President and Executive Director of the Commission by the President or Chief Executive Officer of the institution or system no later than 30 calendar days after receipt of written notice of the Commission's action. Appeals will be referred to CAAL for consideration and CAAL will undertake any further study or action it deems appropriate. Should CAAL find in favor of the appeal, the proposal will be submitted to the Commission for consideration. If CAAL's decision is unfavorable, the institution must wait one full calendar year before submitting a new proposal for the program modification or a similar program. The Commission retains final approval authority in appeals cases.

**C. Procedure for Notifications of Change in an Academic Program**

1. The institution making the change in question must inform the Commission's Director of Academic Affairs of the change **three months prior to implementation** using the *Notification of Change in an Academic Program* form (Appendix D) which must be submitted by the institution's Chief Academic Officer.

2. The Commission will review the form and notify the institution of any substantive questions. The change may not be implemented until the institution receives a written acknowledgement from the Commission.

3. The Director of Academic Affairs will notify ACAP and the Commission of changes acknowledged by the Commission at each scheduled ACAP and CAAL meeting.

**D. Procedure for Notifications of Change – New Certificate Programs**

1. The institution adding a new certificate program must inform the Commission's Director of Academic Affairs **three months prior to implementation** using the *Notification of Change – New Certificate* form (Appendix E) which must be submitted by the institution's Chief Academic Officer.

2. The Commission will review the form and notify the institution of any substantive questions. The certificate may not be implemented until the institution receives approval from the Commission. If approved, the Commission will notify the institution within three months of receiving the *Notification of Change – New Certificate* form. The Director of Academic Affairs will notify ACAP and the Commission of such notifications acknowledged by the Commission at each scheduled ACAP and CAAL meeting. If the Commission does not approve the certificate program, the *Notification of Change – New Certificate* may be revised, withdrawn, or elevated to consideration by ACAP, CAAL, and the Commission.

**E. Procedure for Notifications of Termination of an Academic Program, Concentration, Site, or Center**

1. The institution terminating an academic program, concentration, site, or center should inform the Commission's Director of Academic Affairs **within three months of the termination** using the *Notification of Termination* form (Appendix F) which must be submitted by the institution's Chief Academic Officer.

2. The Director of Academic Affairs will notify ACAP and the Commission of such notifications processed by the Commission at each scheduled ACAP and CAAL meeting.

**F. Procedure for New Centers, Institutes, and Consortiums**

1. New centers, institutes, and consortiums follow the same procedures as new program proposals. However, only new centers, institutes, and consortiums for which the institution

intends to request or receive appropriations from the state specifically for that center, institute, and consortium require Commission approval.


**G. Schedule of Evaluation Process for New Programs and Program Modifications**

Schedules for the evaluation process of new programs and program modifications are displayed on the Commission's website. The Director of Academic Affairs will consider requests for deviations to the schedule on a case-by-case basis.

**Please note that ACAP, CAAL, and Commission meeting dates vary from year to year.** Any updates to schedules and meeting dates will be posted on the Commission's website.

## IV. DEFINITIONS

**Academic discipline** refers to a major area of study identified in the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP), that is, the first four digits of the CIP Code.

**Academic programs** refer to associate, baccalaureate, master's, specialist, and doctoral degree programs, program components (e.g., concentrations, options, and tracks), and certificates.

**Accrediting agency** refers to a national, regional, or special area accrediting body that has been approved by the Commission. A list of approved agencies can be found on the Commission's website. In the instance where a proposed new program is accreditable by an agency that is not on the approved list, the institution must follow the *Guidelines for Approval of Specialized Accreditation Agencies,* also located on the Commission's website.

**Advisory Committee on Academic Programs** (ACAP) advises the Commission on all matters relating to academic affairs generally, and specifically on matters relating to new and existing programs (Appendix A).

**Blended instruction** is a combination of both traditional and distance education in which more than half (50%) of the instruction is delivered by distance education.

**Center/Institute** is a unit used to organize faculty to conduct and disseminate research and scholarship and contribute to the education of students, public service, and economic development in a certain field or area as appropriate. A center or institute cannot confer a degree or other credential. The success of centers and institutes is measured by their ability to generate external funding, conduct research leading to innovation, disseminate the research and scholarship, and provide opportunities for educational experiences and professional development and public service.

**Certificate** in a four-year institution is a stand-alone organized series of courses offered for credit at either the undergraduate or graduate level of study for eligible students that results in a credential awarded by the institution.

**Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code** is a classification system developed by the National Center for Education Statistics used to identify major areas of study and to support accurate tracking, assessment, and reporting of fields of study and program completions activity.

**Collaborative programs** are programs offered by one or more institutional partners who contribute courses, faculty, or other resources and for which a lead institution confers the degree.

**Concentrations, tracks, options, specializations, emphases, and cognates** refer to a series of courses with a distinctive curricular pattern (all of which are referred to as concentrations in this document).

**Consortium** refers to a formal association, with an appropriate Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement, between institution(s) and/or other organization(s) to share the responsibility of conducting and disseminating research and scholarship; contributing to public service; and promoting economic development.

**Degree program**, for purposes of Commission program approval, refers to a series of courses or activities that lead to an associate, baccalaureate, master's, specialist, or doctoral degree.

**Delivery mode** is the primary method by which students participate in a program. Delivery modes include:
1. **Traditional instruction** in which significant site attendance is required; or
2. **distance education** in which coursework is delivered online; by blended instruction, a combination of traditional instruction and instruction delivered by a variety of technologies; or by other methods whereby the coursework is delivered by an instructor who provides instruction at a place or time other than the place or time the instruction is received.

**Delivery site** is a physical location that:
1. is controlled or sponsored by a college or university or its agents (including foundations);
2. is not on that college or university's campus; and
3. is used to offer distance education to students who are physically present.

**Distance education** is coursework delivered by an instructor who provides instruction at a place or time other than the place or time the instruction is received.

**Dual Degree Program** is a combined or simultaneous program that involves a student working for two different degrees, either at the same institution or at different institutions.

**Duplication** occurs when an academic program closely matches another academic program in content, location, or audience.

**Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Student Enrollment** is based on the number of credit hours required for a student to be considered a full-time student, and is usually calculated as 12 credit hours per semester for an undergraduate student and nine credit hours per semester for a graduate student.

**Joint Degree Programs** are an agreement whereby students study at two or more institutions and the institutions grant a single academic award bearing the names, seals, and signatures of each of the participating institutions.

**Headcount Enrollment** is the number of students enrolled in classes, regardless of whether they are full-time or part-time students.

**Implementation**, for the purposes of program approval, means that the program is active and enrolling students.

**Majors** are composed of a series of courses, typically 30 or more credit hours, related by discipline and form a subject of academic study chosen as a field of specialization.

**Minors** are composed of a series of courses, typically at least 15 credit hours, related by discipline and focus outside the major. Course coding for the minor cannot be from the same six-digit CIP Code as the major. Commission approval for minors is not required.

**Off-site delivery** or **off-site** means offering coursework at one or more sites that are separate from the institution's main campus, either by online, blended or traditional instruction.

**Online** delivery refers to coursework provided in a different environment from the traditional face-to-face format. In this case, the instructor presides synchronously or asynchronously with students with all participants interacting by using a computer network.  It is also one form of distance education.

**Organizational units** are academic administrative units such as colleges, schools and departments that are engaged in carrying out research, public service, or instruction, or any combination of the above as their primary purpose(s).

**Productivity standards** are defined by the Commission. For more information about these standards, refer to the Commission's *Policies and Procedures for Academic Degree Program Productivity*.

**Program title** is the official title of the proposed program that will be used in the institution's catalog, the Commission's *Inventory of Academic Programs*, and official communications about the program (e.g., communications with IPEDS; the SC Department of Education; accrediting bodies; and Specialized Professional Associations).

**Site** refers to the physical location (e.g., street address) at which an academic program is delivered.

**Site Codes** are numerical codes assigned by the Commission that represent locations where coursework and/or programs are offered by an institution, regardless of delivery mode.

**Traditional instruction** refers to instruction offered by faculty who are physically present at the same site and at the same time as students.

**APPENDIX A: ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

The purpose of the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP) is to advise the Commission, principally through the staff and the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing, on all matters relating to academic affairs generally, and specifically to advise these bodies on matters relating to new and existing programs.

The members of ACAP shall consist of the following persons *ex officio*:

a) The Director of Academic Affairs of the Commission, who shall serve as Chair;
b) The Chief Academic Officer (CAO) of each of the public senior colleges and universities;
c) The CAO of the staff of the SC Technical College System;
d) The CAO from three technical colleges, to be appointed for two-year terms by the Technical College Chief Academic Officers Peer Group, to take effect on July 1st; and
e) The CAO representing the two-year institutions of the USC System.

ACAP will meet regularly at least three times annually for the purpose of reviewing proposals for new and modified programs. Meeting dates will be set at the beginning of each fiscal year. Special meetings may be called by the Chair or at the request of a majority of members. The meeting agenda and supporting materials will be mailed to ACAP members by the Chair at least one week in advance of each meeting. A majority of the membership will constitute a quorum at any meeting.

ACAP may undertake such studies and make such recommendations to the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing (CAAL) as it deems necessary. Matters may also be referred to ACAP for its study and advice by CAAL or by the Commission.

Name of Institution:

Name of Program (include degree designation and all concentrations, options, or tracks):

Program Designation:

☐ Associate's Degree        ☐ Master's Degree

☐ Bachelor's Degree: 4 Year     ☐ Specialist

☐ Bachelor's Degree: 5 Year     ☐ Doctoral Degree: Research/Scholarship (e.g., Ph.D. and DMA)

☐ Doctoral Degree: Professional Practice (e.g., Ed.D., D.N.P., J.D., Pharm.D., and M.D.)

Consider the program for supplemental Palmetto Fellows and LIFE Scholarship awards?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Proposed Date of Implementation:

CIP Code:

Delivery Site(s):

Delivery Mode:

☐ Traditional/face-to-face          ☐ Distance Education
   *select if less than 25% online         ☐ 100% online

                                           ☐ Blended/hybrid (50% or more online)

                                           ☐ Blended/hybrid (25-49% online)    ☐ Other
distance education (explain if selected)

Program Contact Information (name, title, telephone number, and email address):

Institutional Approvals and Dates of Approval (include department through Provost/Chief Academic Officer, President, and Board of Trustees approval):

## Background Information

State the nature and purpose of the proposed program, including target audience, centrality to institutional mission, and relation to the strategic plan.

## Assessment of Need

Provide an assessment of the need for the program for the institution, the state, the region, and beyond, if applicable.

**Transfer and Articulation**
Identify any special articulation agreements for the proposed program. Provide the articulation agreement or Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding.

## Employment Opportunities

| Occupation | State | | National | | Data Type and Source |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Expected Number of Jobs | Employment Projection | Expected Number of Jobs | Employment Projection | |
| | | | | | |
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| | | | | | |

**Supporting Evidence of Anticipated Employment Opportunities**
Provide supporting evidence of anticipated employment opportunities for graduates.

## Description of the Program

| Projected Enrollment | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Year** | Fall Headcount | Spring Headcount | Summer Headcount |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Explain how the enrollment projections were calculated.

Besides the general institutional admission requirements, are there any separate or additional admission requirements for the proposed program? If yes, explain.

☐Yes

☐No

## Curriculum

**New Courses**
List and provide course descriptions for new courses.

Total Credit Hours Required:

| Curriculum by Year | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Course Name** | **Credit Hours** | **Course Name** | **Credit Hours** | **Course Name** | **Credit Hours** |
| Year 1 | | | | | |
| **Fall** | | **Spring** | | **Summer** | |
| | | | | | |
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| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Total Semester Hours | | Total Semester Hours | | Total Semester Hours | |
| Year 2 | | | | | |
| **Fall** | | **Spring** | | **Summer** | |
| | | | | | |
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| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Total Semester Hours | | Total Semester Hours | | Total Semester Hours | |

| Course Name | Credit Hours | Course Name | Credit Hours | Course Name | Credit Hours |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year 3 | | | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | | Summer | |
| | | | | | |
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| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Total Semester Hours | | Total Semester Hours | | Total Semester Hours | |
| Year 4 | | | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | | Summer | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Total Semester Hours | | Total Semester Hours | | Total Semester Hours | |
| Year 5 | | | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | | Summer | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Total Semester Hours | | Total Semester Hours | | Total Semester Hours | |

**Similar Programs in South Carolina offered by Public and Independent Institutions**
Identify the similar programs offered and describe the similarities and differences for each program.

| Program Name and Designation | Total Credit Hours | Institution | Similarities | Differences |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
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**Faculty**

| Rank and Full- or Part-time | Courses Taught for the Program | Academic Degrees and Coursework Relevant to Courses Taught, Including Institution and Major | Other Qualifications and Relevant Professional Experience (e.g., licensures, certifications, years in industry, etc.) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
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Total FTE needed to support the proposed program:
Faculty:
Staff:
Administration:

**Faculty, Staff, and Administrative Personnel**
Discuss the Faculty, Staff, and Administrative Personnel needs of the program.

**Resources**

**Library and Learning Resources**
Explain how current library/learning collections, databases, resources, and services specific to the discipline, including those provided by PASCAL, can support the proposed program. Identify additional library resources needed.

**Student Support Services**
Explain how current academic support services will support the proposed program. Identify new services needed and provide any estimated costs associated with these services.

**Physical Resources/Facilities**
Identify the physical facilities needed to support the program and the institution's plan for meeting the requirements.

**Equipment**
Identify new instructional equipment needed for the proposed program.

**Impact on Existing Programs**
Will the proposed program impact existing degree programs or services at the institution (e.g., course offerings or enrollment)? If yes, explain.

☐Yes

☐No

## Financial Support

| Sources of Financing for the Program by Year | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | 1st | | 2nd | | 3rd | | 4th | | 5th | | Grand Total | |
| Category | New | Total | New | Total | New | Total | New | Total | New | Total | New | Total |
| Tuition Funding | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Program-Specific Fees | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Special State Appropriation | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reallocation of Existing Funds | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Federal, Grant, or Other Funding | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Total** | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Estimated Costs Associated with Implementing the Program by Year | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | 1st | | 2nd | | 3rd | | 4th | | 5th | | Grand Total | |
| Category | New | Total | New | Total | New | Total | New | Total | New | Total | New | Total |
| Program Administration and Faculty/Staff Salaries | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Facilities, Equipment, Supplies, and Materials | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Library Resources | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Other (specify) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Total** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Net Total** (Sources of Financing Minus Estimated Costs) | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Note:** New costs - costs incurred solely as a result of implementing this program. Total costs - new costs; program's share of costs of existing resources used to support the program; and any other costs redirected to the program.

**Budget Justification**
Provide an explanation for all costs and sources of financing identified in the Financial Support table. Include an analysis of cost-effectiveness and return on investment and address any impacts to tuition, other programs, services, facilities, and the institution overall.

## Evaluation and Assessment

| Program Objectives | Student Learning Outcomes Aligned to Program Objectives | Methods of Assessment |
|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

Explain how the proposed program, including all program objectives, will be evaluated, along with plans to track employment. Describe how assessment data will be used.

## Accreditation and Licensure/Certification

Will the institution seek program-specific accreditation (e.g., CAEP, ABET, NASM, etc.)? If yes, describe the institution's plans to seek accreditation, including the expected timeline.

☐ Yes
☐ No

Will the proposed program lead to licensure or certification? If yes, identify the licensure or certification.

☐ Yes
☐ No

Explain how the program will prepare students for this licensure or certification.

If the program is an Educator Preparation Program, does the proposed certification area require national recognition from a Specialized Professional Association (SPA)? If yes, describe the institution's plans to seek national recognition, including the expected timeline.

☐ Yes
☐ No

**APPENDIX C: PROGRAM MODIFICATION PROPOSAL FORM**

Name of Institution:

Briefly state the nature of the proposed modification (e.g., adding a new concentration, extending the program to a new site, curriculum change, etc.):

Current Name of Program (include degree designation and all concentrations, options, and tracks):

Proposed Name of Program (include degree designation and all concentrations, options, and tracks):

Program Designation:

☐ Associate's Degree          ☐ Master's Degree

☐ Bachelor's Degree: 4 Year    ☐ Specialist

☐ Bachelor's Degree: 5 Year    ☐ Doctoral Degree: Research/Scholarship (e.g., Ph.D. and DMA)

☐ Doctoral Degree: Professional Practice (e.g., Ed.D., D.N.P., J.D., Pharm.D., and M.D.)

Does the program currently qualify for supplemental Palmetto Fellows and LIFE Scholarship awards?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If No, should the program be considered for supplemental Palmetto Fellows and LIFE Scholarship awards?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Proposed Date of Implementation:

CIP Code:

Current delivery site(s) and modes:

Proposed delivery site(s) and modes:

Program Contact Information (name, title, telephone number, and email address):

Institutional Approvals and Dates of Approval:

## Background Information

Provide a detailed description of the proposed modification, including target audience, centrality to institutional mission, and relation to strategic plan.

## Assessment of Need

Provide an assessment of the need for the program modification for the institution, the state, the region, and beyond, if applicable.

**Transfer and Articulation**
Identify any special articulation agreements for the modified proposed program. Provide the articulation agreement or Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding.

## Description of the Program

| Projected Enrollment | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Year** | Fall Headcount | | Spring Headcount | | Summer Headcount | |
| | New | Total | New | Total | New | Total |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

Explain how the enrollment projections were calculated.

## Curriculum

Attach a curriculum sheet identifying the courses required for the program.

**Curriculum Changes**

| Courses Eliminated from Program | Courses Added to Program | Core Courses Modified |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

**New Courses**
List and provide course descriptions for new courses.

**Similar Programs in South Carolina offered by Public and Independent Institutions**

Identify the similar programs offered and describe the similarities and differences for each program.

| Program Name and Designation | Total Credit Hours | Institution | Similarities | Differences |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

**Faculty**

State whether new faculty, staff or administrative personnel are needed to implement the program modification; if so, discuss the plan and timeline for hiring the personnel. Provide a brief explanation of any personnel reassignment as a result of the proposed program modification.

**Resources**

Identify new library, instructional equipment and facilities needed to support the modified program.
**Library Resources:**
**Equipment:**
**Facilities:**

**Impact on Existing Programs**
Will the proposed program impact existing degree programs or services at the institution (e.g., course offerings or enrollment)? If yes, explain

☐Yes

☐No

**Financial Support**

| Estimated Sources of Financing for the New Costs | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Category** | **1st** | **2nd** | **3rd** | **4th** | **5th** | **Total** |
| Tuition Funding | | | | | | |
| Program-Specific Fees | | | | | | |
| Special State Appropriation | | | | | | |
| Reallocation of Existing Funds | | | | | | |
| Federal, Grant, or Other Funding | | | | | | |
| **Total** | | | | | | |
| Estimated New Costs by Year | | | | | | |
| **Category** | **1st** | **2nd** | **3rd** | **4th** | **5th** | **Total** |
| Program Administration and Faculty and Staff Salaries | | | | | | |
| Facilities, Equipment, Supplies, and Materials | | | | | | |
| Library Resources | | | | | | |
| Other (specify) | | | | | | |
| **Total** | | | | | | |
| **Net Total** (i.e., Sources of Financing Minus Estimated New Costs) | | | | | | |

**Budget Justification**

Provide a brief explanation for all new costs and sources of financing identified in the Financial Support table.

## Evaluation and Assessment

| Program Objectives | Student Learning Outcomes Aligned to Program Objectives | Methods of Assessment |
|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

Will any the proposed modification impact the way the program is evaluated and assessed? If yes, explain.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Will the proposed modification affect or result in program-specific accreditation? If yes, explain; and, if the modification will result in the program seeking program-specific accreditation, provide the institution's plans to seek accreditation, including the expected timeline.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Will the proposed modification affect or lead to licensure or certification? If yes, identify the licensure or certification.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Explain how the program will prepare students for this licensure or certification.

If the program is an Educator Preparation Program, does the proposed certification area require national recognition from a Specialized Professional Association (SPA)? If yes, describe the institution's plans to seek national recognition, including the expected timeline.

☐ Yes

☐ No

**S.C. Commission on Higher Education**
**Notification of Change to an Academic Program or Organizational Unit**
(One Program per Form)

Name of Institution:

Current Name of Program (include degree designation and all concentrations, options, and tracks):

Proposed Name of Program (include degree designation and all concentrations, options, and tracks):

Briefly state the nature of the proposed change:

Program Designation:

☐ Certificate ☐ Master's Degree

☐ Associate's Degree ☐ Specialist

☐ Bachelor's Degree: 4 Year ☐ Doctoral Degree: Research/Scholarship (e.g., Ph.D. and DMA)

☐ Bachelor's Degree: 5 Year ☐ Doctoral Degree: Professional Practice (e.g., Ed.D., D.N.P., J.D., PharmD., and M.D.)

Does the program currently qualify for supplemental Palmetto Fellows and LIFE Scholarship awards?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Proposed Date of Implementation:

CIP Code (confirmed by CHE):

Site Code(s) (assigned by CHE):

Delivery Mode:

☐ Traditional/face-to-face ☐ Distance Education
*select if less than 25% online ☐ 100% online

☐ Blended/hybrid (50% or more online)

☐ Blended/hybrid (25-49% online)

☐ Other distance education (explain if selected)

Submission Date:

State the nature of change and provide a summary of the rationale for and objectives of the program. Include the number of credit hours the change entails.

List the courses required for new concentrations, options, or tracks (prefix, number, title, and credit hours).

Provide information about major, general education, and elective course requirements, and the number of credit hours required for graduation, if changing.

If the program is adding or moving to blended or online delivery: provide a brief description of resources available to offer the program online (IT support, network capacity, and instructional support/availability for students, faculty qualifications to teach online, etc.) and the support provided to faculty to deliver and students to complete the program online; and state whether program will be covered by the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement or discuss plans to receive approval from other states as required.

**S.C. Commission on Higher Education**
**Notification of Change – New Certificate Program Proposal**
(One Program per Form)

Name of Institution:

Name of Certificate Program:

Certificate Program Designation:

☐ Undergraduate ☐ Post-baccalaureate ☐ Post-master's

Proposed Date of Implementation:

CIP Code:

Delivery Site(s):

Delivery Mode:

☐ Traditional/face-to-face ☐ Distance Education
\*select if less than 25% online ☐ 100% online

☐ Blended/hybrid (50% or more online)

☐ Blended/hybrid (25-49% online)

☐ Other distance education (explain if selected)

Submission Date:

Institutional Approvals and Dates of Approval:

## Purpose

State the nature and purpose of the proposed program, including program objectives, target audience, and centrality to institutional mission.

## Assessment of Need

Provide an assessment of the need for the program for the institution, the state, the region, and beyond, if applicable.

## Curriculum

List the courses required for the certificate (prefix, number, title, and credit hours). If new courses are being developed, provide the course descriptions for these courses and the plan and timeline for developing them.

## Projected Enrollment

| Year | Fall Headcount | Spring Headcount | Summer Headcount |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

## Faculty

State whether new faculty, staff or administrative personnel are needed to implement the program; if so, discuss the plan and timeline for hiring the personnel. Provide a brief explanation of any personnel reassignment as a result of the proposed program modification.

## Resources

Identify any library, instructional equipment and facilities needed to support the modified program. For facilities, identify new facilities or modifications to existing facilities needed to support the program. If the certificate will be delivered at a site not previously approved by the Commission, provide assurances that the facilities are adequate to support the proposed instruction.
**Library Resources:**
**Equipment:**
**Facilities:**

**Financial Support**

| Sources of Financing by Year | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Category** | **1st** | **2nd** | **3rd** | **Total** |
| Tuition Funding | | | | |
| Other Funding | | | | |
| **Total** | | | | |
| Estimated Costs Associated with Implementing the Program by Year | | | | |
| **Category** | **1st** | **2nd** | **3rd** | **Total** |
| Program Administration and Faculty and Staff Salaries | | | | |
| Facilities, Equipment, Supplies, and Materials | | | | |
| Library Resources | | | | |
| Other (specify) | | | | |
| **Total** | | | | |
| **Net Total** (i.e., Sources of Financing Minus Estimated Costs) | | | | |

**Budget Justification**

Provide a brief explanation for all of the costs and sources of financing identified in the Financial Support table.

**S.C. Commission on Higher Education**
**Notification of Termination of an Academic Program, Concentration, Site, or Center**
(One Program per Form)

Name of Institution:

Identify the type of termination (e.g., program, concentration, or site):

Name of Program (include degree designation and all concentrations, options, and tracks):

Program Designation:

☐ Certificate            ☐ Master's Degree

☐ Associate's Degree      ☐ Specialist

☐ Bachelor's Degree: 4 Year    ☐ Doctoral Degree: Research/Scholarship (e.g., Ph.D. and DMA)

☐ Bachelor's Degree: 5 Year    ☐ Doctoral Degree: Professional Practice (e.g., Ed.D., D.N.P., J.D.,

                                    PharmD., and M.D.)

CIP Code:

Site Code(s):

Delivery Mode:

☐ Traditional/face-to-face            ☐ Distance Education
    *select if less than 25% online           ☐ 100% online

                                          ☐ Blended/hybrid (50% or more online)

                                          ☐ Blended/hybrid (25-49% online)

                                          ☐ Other distance education (explain, if selected)

Date program will be closed to new students (mo/year):

Date data file will be closed (mo/year)*:
* Date by which all currently enrolled students will have graduated or transferred to other programs.

Submission Date:

State the reason for termination:

Describe the plan to teach out students currently enrolled:

Name of Institution:

Name of Proposed Center/Institute:

Proposed Date of Implementation:

Site:

Program Contact Information (name, title, telephone number, and email address):

Institutional Approvals and Dates of Approval (include Provost/Chief Academic Officer, President and Board of Trustees approval):

## Background Information

State the nature and purpose of the proposed center/institute and its centrality to institutional mission.

List the goals of the proposed center/institute.

## Assessment of Need

Provide an assessment of the need for the proposed center/institute for the state, the region, and beyond, if applicable.

Will the proposed center/institute impact existing programs or services at the institution? If yes, explain.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Describe any similar centers/institutes in South Carolina.

## Faculty

Provide a brief explanation of any changes in faculty, staff and/or administrative assignment that may be required as a result of the proposed center/institute.

## Resources

Identify any new library, instructional equipment and facilities needed to support the proposed center/institute. For facilities, identify any new facilities or modifications to existing facilities needed to support the proposed center/institute.
**Library Resources:**
**Equipment:**
**Facilities:**

**Financial Support**

| Sources of Financing by Year | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Category** | **1st** | **2nd** | **3rd** | **4th** | **5th** | **Total** |
| Tuition Funding | | | | | | |
| Special State Appropriation | | | | | | |
| Reallocation of Existing Funds | | | | | | |
| Federal and/or Other Funding | | | | | | |
| **Total** | | | | | | |
| **Estimated Costs Associated with Implementing the Center/Institute by Year** | | | | | | |
| **Category** | **1st** | **2nd** | **3rd** | **4th** | **5th** | **Total** |
| Program Administration and Faculty/Staff Salaries | | | | | | |
| Facilities, Equipment, Supplies and Materials | | | | | | |
| Library Resources | | | | | | |
| Other (specify) | | | | | | |
| **Total** | | | | | | |
| **Net Total** (i.e., Sources of Financing Minus Estimated Costs) | | | | | | |

**Budget Justification**
Provide a brief explanation for all costs and sources of financing identified in the Financial Support table.


## Evaluation and Assessment

Provide an outline of how the proposed center/institute will be evaluated and explain how assessment data will be used.

**Background and Rationale**

In its enabling legislation, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education is charged with "examining the state's institutions of higher education relative to…programs and missions," including a review of program offerings with the objective of "reducing duplication, increasing effectiveness, and achieving economies" (§59-103-20 of the *South Carolina Code of Laws 1976 as amended*). Relative to academic programs at the public colleges and universities, the Commission meets this accountability mandate through the approval of new academic degree programs; by ensuring programs offered by the institutions are consistent with their mission; and by monitoring institutional compliance with statewide degree program productivity standards.

**Policies and Procedures for the Biennial Review of Existing Programs**

The Commission relies on student enrollment and completion data to help measure the effectiveness of existing academic degree programs for a number of reasons. Monitoring student enrollment and completion (degrees awarded) data in academic programs is one factor that may enable the Commission to determine if programs are meeting the needs of students and the state. Other factors may include the program's centrality to the institution's mission, program efficiency, whether the program performs a service function, and the program's ability to meet state workforce needs. The enrollment and completion data, along with other information about the program, can provide information about retention, persistence, and success of students. Therefore, enrollment and completion data could be an early indicator of low productivity, but the program may be considered viable after further scrutiny. In addition, degree program productivity information can be used strategically by institutions and the Commission to help review current programs and guide new program development. Likewise, knowledge, maintenance and use of rigorous productivity standards by the entire higher education community shows a willingness to engage in thoughtful self-evaluation of a core mission area.

**Policies**

For Commission purposes, academic degree program productivity is defined as the capacity of an academic degree program to enroll majors and award degrees (completion) relative to the criteria established by the Commission. The policies in this document pertain to degree programs offered at public four-year colleges and universities and research institutions only. The Commission maintains separate program productivity policies for degree programs at public two-year institutions.

For purposes of this policy, degree programs are defined as active baccalaureate, master's, specialist, doctoral – professional practice, and doctoral – research/scholarship programs[3].

1. The following table displays the standards used for measuring academic degree program productivity. Degree programs must meet both of these standards in order to comply with Commission policy.

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[3] For example, an Ed.S. is a specialist degree program; Ed.D., D.N.P., J.D., Pharm.D., and M.D. are doctoral - professional practice programs; and a Ph.D. or DMA is a doctoral - research/scholarship program.

**Academic Degree Program Productivity Standards**
**(Five-Year Average Benchmarks for Enrollment and Completion)**

| Degree Level | Major Enrollment | Completion (Degrees Awarded) |
|---|---|---|
| Baccalaureate | 12.5 | 8 |
| Master's/ Specialist/ Doctoral – Professional Practice | 6 | 3 |
| Doctoral – Research/Scholarship | 4.5 | 2 |

2. The Commission will review institutional compliance with the program productivity standards on a biennial basis. Each degree program at each senior institution will be reviewed. Staff will use the Commission on Higher Education Management Information System (CHEMIS) and the Commission's *Academic Degree Program Inventory* as data sources.

3. For purposes of calculating compliance with program productivity standards, the following policies will apply: 1) different degree designations within the same major/six-digit Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code (e.g., B.S./B.A., A.B./B.A., M.S./M.A.) will be counted together; and, 2) jointly offered programs will be counted at each institution offering the degree.

4. The Commission will review active degree programs only. Programs for which the Commission has received official notification of termination prior to the commencement of the review will not be reviewed.

5. The Commission will begin review of new academic degree programs in the sixth year of operation for baccalaureate, doctoral - professional practice, and doctoral - research/scholarship programs and in the fourth year of operation for master's and specialist programs to allow time to collect initial program and completion data. The first time a program is subject to the biennial program productivity review, it will receive an in-depth analysis to compare the program to the projections stated in the program proposal approved by the Commission (see the Policies and Procedures for the In-Depth Review of Recently Approved Academic Degree Programs on page 4). Academic degree programs that receive "met" on all sections of this analysis will receive continuing approval status from the Commission and be reviewed according to the criteria presented for the biennial review of existing programs for subsequent program productivity reviews.

6. Enrollment and completion data for existing off-site and distance education programs will be counted together with appropriate on-campus programs.

7. Academic degree programs that meet both the enrollment and completion standards receive continuing approval status from the Commission.

8. Unless exempted by the Commission, academic degree programs that fail to meet the productivity standards detailed above are placed on probationary status for a maximum of three biennial program productivity review cycles (six years), during which time institutions will be expected to enhance degree program enrollment and completion. Programs will be recommended for termination if they fail to meet the productivity standards at the end of the six-year period.

9. For programs placed on probation, institutions must provide a plan for meeting the degree program productivity standards within the probationary period.  If this improvement plan is not submitted by the institution by the date requested, the Commission will not accept any new program proposals or program modification proposals until the plan is received.

10. For programs recommended for termination, institutions must provide a plan for complying with the Commission's recommendation within a mutually agreed upon phase-out period.

11. The Commission may award exemptions to the academic program productivity standards for three program productivity review cycles, unless an institution decides to terminate the program during this time. In most cases, programs approved for exemption will be considered essential to the basic mission of the institution or deemed so unique in their subject matter and value to the higher education community in South Carolina as to make them essential.  Programs that undergo curricular changes requiring Commission degree program modification approval will lose their exempt status and be reviewed in the next program productivity review.

**Procedures**

1. During the academic year in which a review occurs, the Commission will distribute to each institution the academic degree program productivity data specific to its array of active degree programs.  These data will identify the programs complying with the program productivity standards, those programs failing to meet the standards, and those programs already on probationary status that failed to meet the standards after the maximum probationary period (six years).

2. Institutions will then have the opportunity to respond in writing to program productivity data for those programs that fail to meet the standards. For each noncompliant program, within 30 calendar days of receiving the degree program productivity data, institutions must provide information for Commission staff to use to determine whether to place the program on probation, recommend termination of the program, or grant an exemption for the program. This information may address the following:
   a. The role of the program and its centrality to the institution's mission;
   b. The economic viability of the program, including costs and revenue generated by the program;
   c. Program efficiency or efficiency in the department/college supporting the program (e.g., sharing of faculty and other resources);
   d. The program's ability to meet state workforce needs, including but not limited to licensure/certification exam passage rates;
   e. Whether the program performs a service function (i.e., courses offered in the program are general education courses or the courses serve students from other majors; such an argument should be supported by data about credit hour generation);
   f. Whether the program is purposely designed for low enrollment (e.g., studio or performance programs or programs requiring significant field experience);
   g. Information about specialized accreditation status of applicable programs; or
   h. Any additional information about the viability of the program.

Failure to provide this information will result in Commission staff making a recommendation based solely on enrollment and completion data.

3. Using the information provided by the institutions, Commission staff will prepare the program productivity report that will include staff recommendations for continuing approval for compliant programs and the following recommendations for noncompliant programs: probation, termination, or exemption.

4. The Commission's Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing will consider the biennial report on degree program productivity as drafted by the Commission staff. Pending a favorable recommendation, the Committee will then forward the report to the full Commission for consideration.

5. Pending a favorable review by the full Commission, recommendations for continuing approval status, probation status, and exemption will take effect immediately (i.e., from the date of the Commission meeting at which the report was approved).

6. For programs placed on probation, institutions must provide a plan for meeting the degree program productivity standards within the six-year probationary period. This report must be sent within 90 calendar days from the date of Commission action on initial probationary status. At the end of the probationary period, the Commission will recommend continuing approval status for programs meeting the program productivity standards and termination of programs that again fail to meet the standards. The Commission will remove programs from probation no sooner than the next degree program productivity review. In addition, subsequent reports will recognize any improvements made to programs on probation, including those that have made exceptional progress toward meeting the standards.

7. Programs granted an exemption will be exempt for three program productivity biennial review cycles. When the program is again subject to program productivity review, Commission staff will inquire about any changes in the program that would affect its exemption status. If the reasons for initial exemption still apply, the program will again be recommended for exemption.

8. The Commission will forward to the respective chief academic officer of the institution recommendations for the termination of programs that have failed to meet degree program productivity standards after the six-year probationary period. The Commission will request that institutions respond to the agency's executive director within 90 calendar days after a recommendation for termination to detail the institution's plan for complying with the Commission recommendation within a mutually agreed upon phase-out period.

**Policies and Procedures for the in-Depth Analysis of Recently Approved Academic Degree Programs**

The first time a program is subject to the biennial program productivity review, it will receive a more in-depth analysis to compare the program to the projections stated in the program proposal approved by the Commission. Similar to the beliefs of most professional accrediting agencies, the Commission regards program review as the single best means to ensure academic program quality. Program review also can facilitate program improvement, and assist in achieving the best use of institutional and state resources. The in-depth analysis for recently implemented programs allows institutions to demonstrate due diligence and explain to internal and external stakeholders how well newer programs are serving students, the campus community, and the state. The analysis also provides an opportunity to examine the pertinent data associated with such programs so that any necessary changes or adjustments can be made to help guarantee the success and strength of the program in the future. Such an analysis allows institutions to identify and correct any potential issues with recently implemented programs. This analysis helps pinpoint a program's ability to respond to future challenges and opportunities, shed light on strengths and weaknesses, and determine future priorities so as to better serve students' and the state's needs.

**Policies**

These policies pertain to recently approved degree programs offered at all public colleges and universities.

1. The Commission will conduct the in-depth analysis of recently approved academic degree programs the first time they are subject to the Academic Degree Program Productivity Review (i.e., by the end of year six of implementation for baccalaureate, doctoral, and first professional programs and year four for master's and specialist programs[4]).

2. To complete the review, Commission staff will require data about program personnel, student performance, finances, curricular and other programmatic changes, programmatic assessment, and accreditation and licensure information (if applicable). Staff will also use the Commission on Higher Education Management Information System (CHEMIS) as a data source. Any discrepancies in data must be reconciled prior to the report being sent to the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing.

3. Recently approved academic degree programs will be reviewed only once for this in-depth analysis unless the programs are placed on probation as a result of the analysis.

4. Academic degree programs that receive "met" on all sections of the review receive continuing approval status from the Commission and will be reviewed according to the criteria presented for the biennial review of existing programs for subsequent program productivity reviews.

5. Academic degree programs that receive an "unmet" on any section of the analysis are placed on probationary status for a maximum of two biennial program productivity review cycles (four

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[4] Associate degree programs are not reviewed as part of this report, Instead, the in-depth analysis of recently implemented associate degree programs will be included in the Annual Evaluation of Associate Degree Programs.

years). This probationary period is shorter than that of existing programs to ensure that new programs can be adjusted more rapidly to provide the best chance for success of the program.

6. For programs placed on probation, institutions must follow up in writing with a longer and more detailed explanation of the program's perceived weaknesses and provide a plan for meeting the program analysis metrics of the deficient section(s) within the probationary period. If this report is not submitted by the institution by the date requested, Commission staff will not accept any program proposals from that institution until the report is received.

7. At the end of the probationary period, a follow-up analysis will be conducted of the deficient section(s) and if at that point there is insufficient improvement, the program will be recommended for termination.

8. For programs recommended for termination, institutions must provide a plan for complying with the Commission's recommendation within a mutually agreed upon phase-out period.

The following table displays the rubric used for reviewing academic degree program performance.

**Academic Degree Program Review Rubric**

| Section of Review | Unmet | Met |
|---|---|---|
| Personnel | Actual full-time equivalent (FTE) exceeds projections without a qualifying rationale; projected new faculty were not hired; no supervisor identified; program has fewer faculty than originally reported; or qualifications appear suspect (i.e., some program administrators or faculty hold less than the highest terminal degree and have less than 18 hours of graduate coursework in field) | Program accurately projected FTE & has successfully maintained program at anticipated FTE levels; projected new faculty hired; full-time faculty teaching in program with sufficient faculty to deliver program; and program administrator and faculty all hold highest terminal degree in field, or can document a minimum of 18 hours of graduate coursework in the field. A rationale is provided for any increase or decrease in FTE when this number is compared to the original proposal approved by the Commission. |
| Student Enrollment and Performance | Actual enrollment is less than projected with no upward enrollment trend; graduate placement and employment prospects are not tracked or are poor with less than 60% of graduates finding employment or placement in | Actual enrollment matches or exceeds projections; enrollment numbers are increasing; initial graduate placements are tracked and available with 60%+ of graduates each year employed or placed in graduate school; and |

| Section of Review | Unmet | Met |
|---|---|---|
| | graduate school; or placement trends are generally negative. | placement rates remain steady or increase over time |
| Finances: Actual Costs and Sources of Financing | Program costs diverged from those stated in the proposal and insufficient justification is given for this divergence; or the program has a negative fiscal impact on the institution and insufficient support is provided to explain maintaining a program with negative fiscal impact. | Actual costs are equal to projections, or the program has a positive fiscal impact on the institution, or justification is provided for any divergence in program costs, or in rare instances, the program has a negative fiscal impact and the institution provided sufficient justification to explain maintaining the program. |
| Curriculum and/or Other Programmatic Changes | Many and varied changes made in curriculum; unclear explanations for changes; or major changes have diverted the program from its original form | Very few and/or minor changes made to curriculum; no fundamental change from the original proposal; and if any changes are made, they are more than adequately justified |
| Programmatic Assessment | Assessment shows the program is not meeting its objectives; data is not reviewed regularly; or changes made to the program are not supported by the programmatic assessment data. | Assessment shows the program is meeting or exceeding its objectives; data is reviewed annually; and any improvements to the program are made based on the programmatic assessment data (connection is evident). |
| Accreditation | Accrediting body finds flaws in the program; accreditation has been unnecessarily delayed or no movement toward accreditation; or there is insufficient explanation of status or justification for lack of action | Accreditation is on track and on time; evidence of progress available; accrediting body supports program and is positive in its reviews; and status is clearly explained and progress is evident |
| Licensure/Certification Exam Passage Rates | Number of graduates becoming certified is low and unsatisfactory; the percentage of those who pass on the first try is less than the expectations or benchmarks set by the licensure/accrediting body; or program does not seem to prepare students well for certification | Number of graduates receiving certification is appropriate; the percentage of those passing on the first try meets the expectations or benchmarks set by the licensure/accrediting body; and program matches expectations |

**Procedures**

1. To complete the in-depth program analysis, the Commission will distribute a form (see Appendix I) to each institution to assess recently approved academic degree programs subject to review that year.  These data will be used to evaluate the programs by comparing the projections in the program proposal to the actual productivity of the program.

2. Using the information provided by the institutions, Commission staff will evaluate the programs according to the rubric identified in this policy. This evaluation will be included in the biennial program productivity report and will include staff recommendations for continuing approval for academic degree programs that receive "met" on all sections of the review and probationary status for academic degree programs that receive an "unmet" on any section of the review.

3. The Commission's Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing consider the biennial report on degree program productivity as drafted by the Commission staff. Pending a favorable recommendation, the Committee will then forward the report to the full Commission for consideration.

4. Pending a favorable review by the full Commission, recommendations for continuing approval status and probation status will take effect immediately (i.e., from the date of the Commission meeting at which the report was approved).

5. For programs placed on probation, institutions must submit a report explaining the unmet section(s) and the improvement plan for meeting the section(s) within the probationary period. This report must be sent within 90 calendar days from the date of Commission action on initial probationary status. The information will be included in a subsequent report to be reviewed by the Commission's Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing and the full Commission. At the end of the probationary period, staff will request information about the unmet section(s) to conduct a follow-up review; this information about the follow-up review for unmet sections for programs on probation will be included in that year's program productivity report. If at that point there is insufficient improvement, the program will be recommended for termination. If the program has made sufficient improvement, staff will recommend continuing approval for the program.

6. For programs recommended for termination, Commission staff will contact the respective chief academic officer of the institution to request that institutions respond to the agency executive director within 90 calendar days to detail the institution's plan for complying with the Commission recommendation within a mutually agreed upon phase-out period.

# Program Review for Recently Approved Programs

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In accordance with the *South Carolina Commission on Higher Education Policies and Procedures for Academic Degree Program Productivity*, this *Program Review* is an assessment that compares a new, approved program's proposed productivity at the time of its application to its outcomes by the end of year six for baccalaureate, doctoral, and first professional programs and year four for associate's, master's and specialist programs. The assessment requests data about program **personnel, student performance, finances, curricular and other programmatic changes, programmatic assessment,** and **accreditation and licensure information** (if applicable) to better assess and assure quality programmatic delivery to students. Specific instructions accompany each section.

## Name of Institution / Degree Name and Level

Date Program Approved by the Commission:
Proposed Program Implementation Date:
Actual Program Implementation Date:

If the actual implementation date differs from the proposed implementation date, provide an explanation for the change in implementation date.

**Personnel**

1. Provide information about the qualifications of faculty who oversee and/or teach primarily in the program to help the Commission compare projections for administration and faculty needed to support the program to the actual personnel supporting the program. List program supervisor positions first; highlight faculty identified in the original program proposal approved by the Commission; and place an asterisk (*) next to the rank of new faculty hired for the program following Commission approval. Add and delete rows as needed.

| Administration and Faculty Personnel | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Rank** | **Full- or Part-time** | **Courses Taught or To be Taught, Including Term, Course Number & Title, Credit Hours** | **Academic Degrees and Coursework Relevant to Courses Taught, Including Institution and Major** | **Other Qualifications and Comments (i.e., explain role and/or changes in assignment; if new faculty, provide hire date)** |
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2. Identify and explain in detail any differences between the faculty listed in the program proposal approved by the Commission and the faculty currently teaching in the program. For example, if there are more or fewer faculty currently supporting the program than stated in the proposal, provide a rationale for this increase or decrease.

3. State the total projected and actual annual FTE needed to support the proposed program (i.e., the total FTE devoted just to the program for all faculty, staff, and program administrators). (Note: provide FTE, not headcount)

| Category | Projected FTE | Actual FTE |
|---|---|---|
| Administration | | |
| Faculty | | |
| Staff | | |

4. Explain any differences between the projected FTE needed to support the program and the actual FTE.

**Student Enrollment and Performance**

1. Provide the estimated enrollment from the original proposal and the actual enrollment in the program from the first year through year five.

| Enrollment (Headcount) | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year | Fall | | Spring | | Summer | |
| | Projected | Actual | Projected | Actual | Projected | Actual |
| FY | | | | | | |
| FY | | | | | | |
| FY | | | | | | |
| FY | | | | | | |
| FY | | | | | | |

2.  If enrollment projections were not met, explain the reasons why the projections were not met.

3.  Provide available information/data for graduate placement rates, including employment and matriculation to graduate school.

| Year | Total Number of Graduates | Graduates Employed | Graduates Matriculating to Graduate School | Other (Specify what "Other" is, for example, Military Commission) | Total Percent Employed, in Graduate School, or Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FY | | | | | |
| FY | | | | | |
| FY | | | | | |
| FY | | | | | |
| FY | | | | | |

4.  Include any additional information about graduate placement rates, if applicable.

5.  Describe the methods used to track these graduates.

**Finances: Actual Costs and Sources of Finances**

1. Since the program's implementation, explain instances where actual costs diverged from those projected, whether positive or negative.

2. Explain how the program has a negative or positive fiscal impact on the institution overall (i.e., is the program supported by the revenue of other programs, is it self-supporting, or does the revenue generated by the program support other programs at the institution?).

**Curriculum and Other Programmatic Changes**

1. Attach a sheet showing the current curriculum for the program. Describe any changes from the curriculum provided in the proposal approved by the Commission and the rationale for these changes. Include any increases and decreases in credit hours; course additions, deletions, or modifications; the addition, deletion, or modification of any clinicals, field experiences, internships, or capstone courses; etc.

2. Identify any other changes made to the program since its implementation and explain the rationale for these changes (e.g., changes to the admissions requirements, mode of program delivery, instruction sites, etc.).

**Programmatic Assessment**

1. Provide the results of the programmatic assessment for the past three years (attach reports if available). Include results for all evaluation measures identified in the proposal originally approved by the Commission; if evaluation measures have changed, explain the changes while providing the results of the new evaluation measures.

2. Describe how often and by whom the programmatic assessment data is reviewed.

3. State whether changes have been made to the program as a result of this assessment; and, if so, describe the changes.

**Accreditation** (if applicable)

1. Describe the program's accreditation status, including an explanation of delays in seeking or earning programmatic accreditation. Also, attach any reports or recommendations received from the accrediting body regarding the program.

**Licensure/Certification Exam Passage Rates** (if applicable)

1. Provide information about licensure/certification exam passage rates.

**Licensure/Certification Exam Name:** _____

| Year | Total Number of Graduates | Passage Rate |
|---|---|---|
| **FY** | | |
| **FY** | | |
| **FY** | | |
| **FY** | | |
| **FY** | | |

Note: Repeat this table if there are multiple licensure/certification exams applicable to the program.

2. Identify the expectations or benchmarks in passage rates set by the licensure/accrediting body. Also include the source of this information.

3. Include additional information about Licensure/Certification Exam Passage Rates, if applicable.