



FR 4.1 | Student Achievement

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

Compliance Finding: IN COMPLIANCE

Narrative:

The University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB) evaluates success with respect to student achievement consistent with its mission to “respond to regional needs, draw upon regional strengths, and prepare graduates to contribute locally, nationally, and internationally with its mission of teaching, research, and service.” Evaluation is based on a variety of criteria including student enrollment, course success rates, retention rates, graduation rates, degrees awarded by major, state licensing exams, and job placement rates. Much of the data used to evaluate success with respect to student achievement is public and available through the USCB Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER) website and [Factbook](#), NCES/IPEDS, Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) College Portrait, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (SCCHE) website, and other public web resources. These data are reviewed and discussed by program faculty, [Academic Council](#), [Administrative Council](#), and the [Enrollment Management Team](#), as appropriate. USCB does not offer any academic programs exclusively via distance learning, although some general education courses and select upper division courses are offered via distance education with approximately 30 sections offered per semester. Success criteria are the same for all students, regardless of the location or mode of delivery of courses.

Program Enrollments

Program faculty, department chairs, and administrators monitor student enrollment by academic program to ensure appropriate and continuous growth. While some programs do not show growth each year due to fluctuations in student interests and career aspirations, the programs

generally maintain their enrollment levels or at least maintain a sufficient number to justify their existence. In South Carolina, the [SCCHE Program Productivity Standards \(p. 2\)](#) require Baccalaureate Degree programs to have an average of 12.5 students enrolled over a five year period (or award an average of five degrees per year over the previous five years). USCB uses the SCCHE productivity standards as its threshold for program enrollment because they are appropriate and reasonable for the size and newness of USCB as a baccalaureate degree granting institution. Obviously, each of USCB's programs substantially exceeds this target.

Table 1: Five-Year Enrollment by Program

Program	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013*
Biology	119	167	176	163	144
Business Administration	332	351	381	382	304
Communication Studies	N/A	N/A	N/A	14	29
Computational Science	N/A	6	30	49	55
Early Childhood Education	136	136	132	111	24*
Elementary Education	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
English	45	55	79	70	51
History	44	46	58	49	40
Hospitality Management	153	165	169	174	137
Human Services	87	95	83	77	69
Liberal Studies	27	29	25	23	10
Nursing (4 year)	177	244	291	169	58*
Nursing (RN to BSN)	18	37	20	32	18
Psychology	100	113	130	150	128
Sociology	N/A	3	12	22	28
Spanish	28	17	23	14	11
Studio Art	N/A	28	31	45	32
4-Yr-No Major	366	250	229	277	583*
AA/AS**	52	12	5	7	0
Students Enrolled In Programs	1,684	1,754	1,874	1,828	1,722

* The USC system implemented the Banner student information system in Fall 2013. Due to the changes in coding, as well as the entire registration process for students, our enrollment decreased in Fall of 2013 and the numbers of majors changed. For example, prior to Banner, students were coded as Nursing or Education majors before they were accepted into the programs. Beginning Fall 2013, these students were coded as No Major pending acceptance into the professional programs their Junior year. This increased the number of No Majors.

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

Course Success

Course completion rates are monitored through grade distributions, which are produced in an electronic format at the end of the fall and spring semesters. [Grade distributions](#) are available to all academic units through the Registrar's Office. Grade distributions are examined for both distance education and traditional courses, and the standards for success are the same for each. Teaching faculty members monitor student success for their classes, while the department chairs monitor grade distributions within their departments. For example, in 2011,

the Department of Mathematics and Computational Science evaluated the D-F-W rates of all courses and recognized a large failure rate (>40%) in mathematics courses. Upon a recommendation by the mathematics faculty, the Academic Council approved a new course, [MATH B101 Experiential Mathematics and Computation](#), as the default mathematics course unless MATH B111 College Algebra or higher was required for the major. Additionally, the Institution responded by hiring more tutors for students having difficulty in mathematics courses.

First-Year Retention Rates

[Persistence rates](#) are compiled by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER) and published on the USCB website. Because of USCB's still relatively new baccalaureate degree granting status, the one-year retention rate ranges from 50-56%. (One-year retention rates have been 53.6%, 50.1%, and 56.0% respectively for the 2010, 2011, and 2012 cohorts.) Although 49% of students who completed the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) in Fall 2011 indicated they did not intend to graduate from USCB, the University is working to increase first-year retention by 1% each year which the administration considers an appropriate and reasonable threshold for the USCB student population at this time.

A Retention Committee was convened because USCB recognizes that retention rates are a vitally important success measure that can be improved through enrollment management, increased admission standards, better academic advising, and effective student academic support services. In Spring 2013, the Retention Committee reviewed a great deal of data and prepared a [report](#) with recommendations. The report was shared with the [Academic Council](#) and the [Administrative Council](#), including the Chancellor. Because of this analysis, USCB hired a Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management in Fall 2013 and [restructured](#) other units for improved alignment and efficiency of operation.

USCB's one-year retention rates are also calculated in and made available through the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) College Portrait. These retention rates are calculated differently, taking into account the understanding that a student who starts at one institution and returns the next year to the same or any other institution is a successful student. Based on the student success and progress rates in the [College Portrait](#), the one-year retention rate for the 2007 cohort was 84.8%.

Graduation Rates

Graduation rates of first-time full-time freshmen are reported annually to the SCCHE, the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), and other agencies, and are based on first-time, full-time college students entering USCB and graduating from USCB within 150% of degree completion time. Baccalaureate degree seeking students are tracked over six years, and Associate degree seeking students are tracked over three years. Considered out of context, USCB's graduation rates are low, ranging from 19% to 27%. However, this statistic is based on students who entered during USCB's transition from a regional campus of the USC system to a comprehensive baccalaureate degree-granting institution. USCB has four first-time, full-time

baccalaureate degree-seeking cohorts who began at the Institution at least six years ago ([2004](#), [2005](#), [2006](#), and [2007](#)). The six year graduation rates are 19%, 21%, 23% and 27%, respectively. These rates are monitored by the academic departments and the Enrollment Management Team, and they are currently tracking beyond the targeted 2% increase per year established by the USCB senior administration. The administration believes that a 2% increase per year is an appropriate and reasonable threshold given the University's newness as a Level II institution.

USCB's graduation rates are also calculated in and made available through the VSA College Portrait as student success and progress rates. Similar to the VSA calculation of first-year retention rates, student success and progress takes into account the understanding that a student who starts at one institution and graduates from or is continuing enrollment in the same or any other institution is a successful student. Based on the student success and progress rates in the [College Portrait](#), the 6 year graduation rate for the 2007 cohort is 48.5% with another 14.4% still enrolled somewhere for a total of 62.9%--more than double the IPEDS graduation rate.

Some programs, like Nursing, track the graduation rates of their students separately. Table 2 reflects the graduation rates over five semesters of the program. These numbers also include advanced placement students and re-entry students as contributing to the cohort since they completed all nursing courses in three and a half calendar years after acceptance into the clinical courses per program policy and graduated within this timeframe. Although data have been used to improve and strengthen the program, the decline in the graduation rate is an identified area for improvement. For example, the increased academic standards for entry and for course completion likely contributed to the decline in student graduation. Additionally, beginning in Fall 2012 the policy of rounding up grades from 74.51% to the passing standard of 75% was eliminated. Beginning in Spring 2013, students were required to achieve a 75% on examinations in order to pass a nursing course.

Table 2: USCB Nursing Graduation Rate

Class	Grad Date	Entry Cohort*	Cohort Grads	Cohort Grad Rate
1	April 2011	34	27	79%
2	April 2012	38**	30	79%
3	May/Aug 2013	47	27	57%
4	May 2014	49	22	45%

*Including advanced placement students

** One student in the initial cohort was murdered in the first semester of the nursing program and was eliminated from the count.

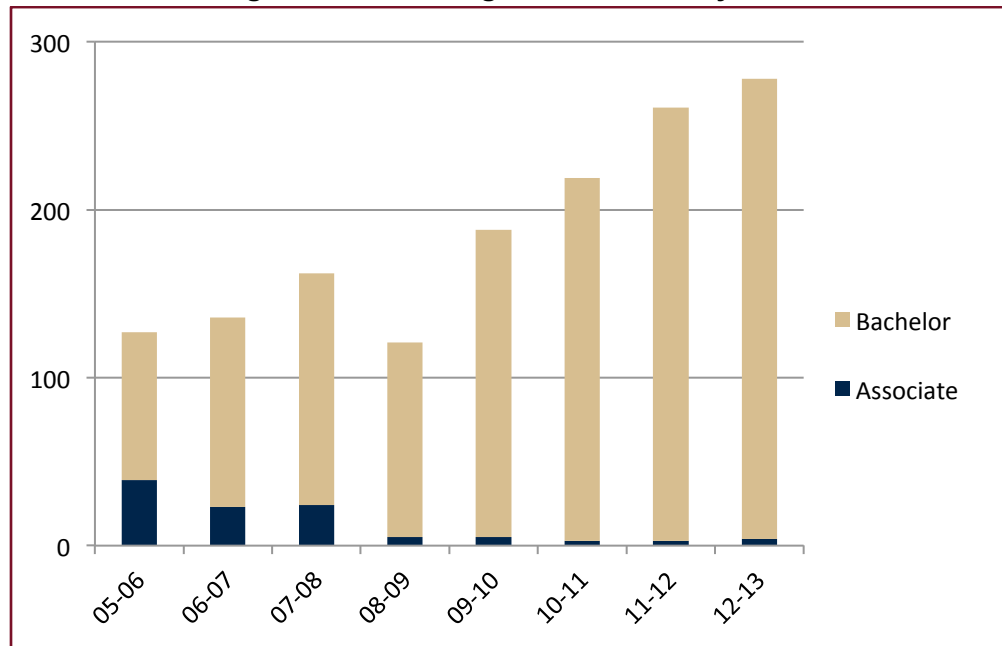
Degrees Awarded

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER) tracks [degrees awarded by major](#), and this information is also available in the USCB Factbook that is distributed campus-wide via the USCB IER website. Since 2004, over 1,500 baccalaureate degrees have been awarded. The most popular majors for graduates have been Business (380 graduates), Early Childhood Education (177 graduates), Human Services (177 graduates) and Hospitality Management (175

graduates). All of these programs are strongly responsive to regional needs, as directed by the USCB Mission.

The USCB senior administration expects to see at least a 2% increase each year in total degrees awarded and considers this an appropriate and reasonable threshold given the size of the institution. As noted in the chart below, in 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13, USCB awarded 216, 258, and 274 degrees, respectively, thereby exceeding the target.

Figure 1: USCB Degrees Awarded by Year



State Licensing Exams

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

Passing the PRAXIS II specialty area test is required of all Early Childhood Education candidates before they can complete their internship. The Education Department monitors course progression and test scores and expects a 100% pass rate for the PRAXIS Series II: Core Battery Professional Knowledge test. As noted in the [2014 Institutional Effectiveness Report to SCCHE](#), USCB had a 100% pass rate on the PRAXIS II scores, for [2013](#) it was 97.1% and for [2012](#) it was 93%. Students who do not pass the PRAXIS II on the first attempt are offered assistance or encouraged to audit courses in the areas PRAXIS II identifies as weak.

Table 3: USCB PRAXIS II Pass Rate—2011-2014

Name of Exam	Date(s) Administered	# of Examinees	# of Examinees who Passed	% Examinees Passing
2013-2014				
PRAXIS Series II: Core Battery Professional Knowledge	4/1/13-3/31/14	12	12	100%
PRAXIS Series II: Principles of Learning & Teaching: Early Childhood	4/1/13-3/31/14	8	8	100%
TOTALS → PRAXIS Series II Tests	4/1/13-3/31/14	20	20	100%
2012-2013				
PRAXIS Series II: Core Battery Professional Knowledge	4/1/12-3/31/13	16	16	100%
PRAXIS Series II: Principles of Learning & Teaching: Early Childhood	4/1/12-3/31/13	19	18	94.7%
TOTALS → PRAXIS Series II Tests	4/1/12-3/31/13	35	34	97.1%
2011-2012				
PRAXIS Series II: Core Battery Professional Knowledge	4/1/11-3/31/12	21	21	100%
PRAXIS Series II: Principles of Learning & Teaching: Early Childhood and K-6	4/1/11-3/31/12	22	19	86%
TOTALS → PRAXIS Series II Tests	4/1/11-3/31/12	43	40	93%

The South Carolina Board of Nursing considers pass rates for Nursing Education programs based on first-time examinees taking the NCLEX between January 1 and December 31. Nursing has set a goal of achieving an NCLEX pass rate above the national average, and South Carolina requires an annual NCLEX pass rate no more than 5% below the national pass rate. The national rate for 2011 was 87.90% and the rate for USCB was 83.33% based on 24 examinees. The national pass rate for 2012 was 90.34% and the rate for USCB was 78.13% based on 25 examinees. Although in 2011 the program was not identified as deficient, the pass rate for initial examinees was an area identified for improvement. During the 2011-12 academic year, the faculty engaged in multiple activities to analyze the curriculum and promote greater success rates. Unfortunately, scores decreased, resulting in a deficiency notice. However, throughout 2012-13, intensive curriculum evaluation activities continued. These endeavors improved student performance, with the 2013 USCB pass rate jumping to 86.67% (n=30) compared to state and national averages of 83.04% and 86.85% respectively. While the students barely missed the threshold of a pass rate at or above the national rate, they were well above the state requirement of no more than 5% below the national rate.

Table 4: USCB NCLEX Pass Rate—2011-2014

Class	Grad Date	Entry Cohort	Cohort Grads	# Passed NCLEX® - 1st attempt	NCLEX® Initial Pass Rate	# Passed NCLEX® on Retake
1	April 2011	34	27	21*	83%	4**
2	April 2012	38	30	24	77%	6+
3	May/Aug 2013	47	27	26	87%	1 of 1
4	May 2014	49	22	21 tested through 6/30	100% through 6/30++	

* Number excluded: one graduate self-reported that she passed the exam but the state board has not granted licensure (eliminated from count). The other is missing data. This number is the official NCSBN/Board of Nursing Report

**One 2012 graduate never tested and another failed NCLEX-RN® three times but is now licensed.

+ One graduate has not yet tested. Seven failed on their first NCLEX-RN attempt, six of whom have re-tested/passed on the second attempt.

++ Four additional graduates tested after 7/1/14, 3 reported passing, one has not reported results and one Summer graduate has yet to test – scheduled for Sept. Official results will be available the end of October/

Job Placement Rates

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

Table 5: USCB Job Placement Rates

Please answer the following questions about your current position, or a position you have been offered and accepted that you will be starting soon. What is your current employment status?			
	2013 Graduates	2012 Graduates	2011 Graduates
Full time, degree related	57%	53%	44%
Part time, degree related	13%	12%	3%
Full time, not degree related	11%	12%	25%
Part time, not degree related	7%	14%	11%
Seeking employment	12%	10%	14%
Job Placement Rate (% employed of those seeking employment)	88%	90%	86%

The Department of Nursing and Health Promotion tracks their graduates and reports on the Nursing pre-licensure graduates as follows:

Table 6: BSN Graduates Job Placement Rates

Cohort	Graduates		Licensed as RN		Employed as RN		Unknown Employment or Not Licensed	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
2011	27		25	93%	23	85%	4	14%
2012	32		30	94%	22	69%	10	31%
2013	30		27	90%	26	87%	4	13%
2014	26		24	92%	15	58%	11	42%

Table 7: RN-to-BSN Graduates Job Placement Rates

Cohort	Graduates		Employed as RN	
	N	%	N	%
2011	4		4	100%
2012	0		n/a	n/a
2013	4		4	100%
2014	4		4	100%

USCB also annually submits an Associate Degree program evaluation to SCCHE. This report includes the number of Associate Degree graduates for the past three academic years, current Fall headcount and FTE enrollment, the number of graduates from the most recent academic year who are employed in a related field, and the number who are continuing their education. The most [recent report](#), submitted in the summer of 2014 showed that, of four Associate Degree graduates in 2012-2013, two were employed in their field and one was continuing his/her education—a 75% success rate. SCCHE requires above 50% in order to continue a program.

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

Supporting Documents

1. [Factbook 2012-2013](#)
2. [Academic Council Minutes RE Data](#)
3. [Administrative Council Minutes RE Data](#)
4. [Enrollment Management Team Agenda RE Data](#)
5. [SCCHE Program Productivity Standards](#)
6. [Fall 2010 Math and Science Grade Distribution Spreadsheet](#)
7. [MATH B101 Academic Council Minutes](#)
8. [Persistence and Graduation Rates](#)
9. [Retention Committee Report](#)
10. [Academic Affairs Council Meeting RE Retention Report](#)
11. [Administrative Council Minutes RE Retention Report](#)

12. [Restructured USCB Admin Responsibilities Chart](#)
13. [USCB 2007 College Portrait Retention Rate](#)
14. [IPEDS Graduation Rate Data 2004 Cohort](#)
15. [IPEDS Graduation Rate Data 2005 Cohort](#)
16. [IPEDS Graduation Rate Data 2006 Cohort](#)
17. [IPEDS Graduation Rate Data 2007 Cohort](#)
18. [USCB 2007 College Portrait Success Rate](#)
19. [Degrees Awarded by Major from Factbook](#)
20. [USCB IE CHE Report 2014](#)
21. [USCB IE CHE Report 2013](#)
22. [USCB IE CHE Report 2012](#)
23. [SCCHE Associate Degree Report 2014 Final](#)