

University of South Carolina Columbia

Act 629 – Summary Reports on Institutional Effectiveness
Fiscal Year 2003-2004

Introduction

This report includes Academic Advising Programs, Majors/Concentrations, Success of Transfer Students, and Policies and procedures to ensure that academic programs support the economic development needs in the State by providing a technologically skilled workforce.

Academic Advising Programs

Academic advising provides students with an understanding of their rights and responsibilities for completion of their degree, program and/or career preparation. Academic advising guidelines were jointly developed by student government and the academic Deans and Assistant & Associate Deans Councils in AY 1994-1995. These guidelines can be found at [Academic Advising at USC for Undergraduates](#) (PDF).

At the University of South Carolina Columbia, undergraduate advising is the responsibility of the Colleges offering undergraduate degrees. The individual College may choose a system of centralized advising, decentralized advising by departmental advisors, or some combination of centralized and decentralized advising. Colleges may choose whether undergraduate advising is performed by faculty, professional advisors, or some combination of faculty and professional staff advisors. Two excellent examples of college advising programs are from the [College of Science and Mathematics](#) and the [College of Liberal Arts](#).

A number of our colleges, schools, and departments have reported some specific activities involving the assessment of academic advising.

Undergraduate advisement in the School of Music is the responsibility of eighteen permanent faculty members who are assisted by two administrative assistants. The advisors specialize either in a particular degree program or serve students in a particular performance area. During the first advisement session, a questionnaire is distributed to solicit information about individual student profiles and to collect feedback on the admissions, audition process, and the initial advisement session. A more comprehensive questionnaire is distributed during an early Fall meeting of MUSC 100 (Recital Class.) The second survey is helpful in determining the need for any changes to the various processes, including advisement. Summer survey results indicate that 95% of students had a positive experience with the advisement process. Results have been shared with faculty advisors, and more personal attention is now offered during the initial advisement sessions. Improvements in communicating results of the admission audition to students have reduced the need for explanation during the advisement session. In the Fall of 2004, the Director of Undergraduate Studies will administer a follow-up survey to address more specific concerns regarding the admissions and advisement procedures.

For the Honor's College, program requirements are designed for each student by a faculty committee and the individual student, based on the student's written program proposal. As such, the question regarding student satisfaction with particular program requirements asked on the Honor's College exit assessment can indicate satisfaction with academic advising and its process. Of the 22 students who have graduated from the program since 2001, 17 reported being very satisfied, and 5 reported being satisfied.

Within the College of Nursing, the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program requires completion of a prescribed program of courses, with each semester building on the previous one. As a result, students must progress through the program in a sequential manner, and appropriate advising is essential to a student's success. The Director of Recruitment and Undergraduate Advisement advises all upper division students, and the Undergraduate Advisor advises all RN/BSN students and lower division

students, with the assistance of a graduate student. In addition to the centralized academic advisement process offered through the Office of Student Services, all upper division students are assigned a faculty member who assists them with professional and career issues and concerns. Graduates of the BSN program are surveyed to assess general program satisfaction, and two items specifically address advising. The survey uses a four-point satisfaction scale, and the College considers average ratings of three (3) to indicate general satisfaction. Thirty-one of 59 graduating students responded to this survey most recently. The average student ratings (and standard deviations) for the advising items were as follows:

Access to academic advising 3.39 (0.50)
 Accuracy of academic advising 3.29 (0.53)

Although the recent average ratings reflect general satisfaction with advising services, the standard deviations are somewhat large for the four-point scale. This indicates a broad range of responses, both above and below the average. Although students were given the opportunity to provide additional comments, there were none to help explain the size of the standard deviation on the advising items. The College will continue to monitor responses to these items.

The College of Liberal Arts has recently developed a web-based survey instrument to assess student satisfaction in a number of areas, including academic advising. The survey will be implemented during the Fall 2004 semester and administered to graduating seniors.

While the Alumni Survey, administered as part of the Institutional Effectiveness report in 2003, does not specifically deal with academic advising, it did provide former students the opportunity to comment on any aspect of their experience at USC. Some alumni chose to write about advising, and the following comments were reported:

"I felt like teachers and advisors took a serious interest in me and how I did."
 "I had a positive academic experience thanks to my major program and my advisor."

The Junior-Senior Survey, administered every other year by the Division of Student Affairs, asks students about their experiences at USC, including academic advising. In 2000, 444 students returned the survey. Students were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with a variety of campus resources. 75.5% of students responding indicated they were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the academic advising they received.

In 2002, some more specific questions about academic advising were asked on the Junior-Senior Survey. The following table shows the results of these questions for the 262 students responding.

Question	Percent Responding Agree or Strongly Agree
My academic advisor is available.	88.5
My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements for my degree.	87.8
My academic advisor is knowledgeable about general university policies and procedures.	86.6
My academic advisor is interested in my academic experience.	74.0
I have discussed my academic goals with my advisor.	74.8
I have discussed my career goals with my advisor.	62.2
Overall, I am satisfied with the relationship I have with my academic advisor.	77.5

Two national surveys also provide information about how well USC is meeting the needs of its students. The College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ) and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) survey students on a number of important issues, including academic advising. On the 2003 CSEQ, 56% of USC students surveyed responded "often" or "very often" to a question asking how often they discussed their academic program with a faculty member. The NSSE survey asks students to evaluate the quality of the academic advising they have received at USC using a four-point scale. In 2003, the average response for all first-year students surveyed was 2.88, and for seniors, it was 2.73. These are both very close to the average score earned by all other doctoral-granting institutions who participated (2.92, 2.71). USC will administer NSSE again in the Spring of 2005.

In October 2003, USC's Office of Fellowships and Scholar Programs received an Outstanding Institutional Advising Program Certificate of Merit from the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). USC's office was one of 12 programs nationwide to be honored in the competition. Since USC's office was established in 1994, USC students have won more than 225 awards totaling more than \$5 million in national fellowships and scholarship competitions.

The University's Office of Pre-Professional Advising, part of the Provost Office's advising program, was named an Outstanding Institutional Advising Program Winner as part of the 2004 National Academic Advising Association's National Awards Program. The program was one of four honored with the award in a nationwide competition. The Outstanding Advising Program Awards annually recognize programs that document innovative and/or exemplary practices resulting in improvement of academic advising service.

Each year since 1983, the NACADA honors individuals and institutions making significant contributions to the improvement of academic advising. The goal of NACADA is to promote quality academic advising and professional development of its membership to enhance the educational development of students.

Majors/Concentrations

Majors and concentrations provide students with specialized knowledge and skills. Primary responsibility for assessing the majors falls to academic departments and programs, and to external accrediting agencies, where applicable.

In 2003-2004, program reviews in Theatre, Music, Library and Information Science, and Physical Sciences, were scheduled. Unfortunately, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (SCCHE) did not fund program review at the state level.

Theatre

Undergraduate: Students are expected to be familiar with major dramatic texts and examples of public address, to be able to discuss ideas surrounding dramatic or rhetorical critical study, to be able to think critically and express themselves rhetorically or dramatically in a competent fashion, and to possess an appreciation of the importance of public communication and artistic expression to positive citizenships.

A synthesis course, THEA 578 Play Direction I, provides evidence of these abilities. To successfully complete the course, students must demonstrate in depth knowledge of acting, design, and stagecraft, as well as theatre history, text analysis, and research skills. Each semester, undergraduate performance students are reviewed by a panel of faculty and guest artists through the audition process for main stage performances. Senior Checks are conducted with all students for final advisement and to collect information about students' perceptions of the program's strengths and weaknesses. Required course evaluations provide information about students' perceptions of specific courses.

Results of course evaluations indicate courses are viewed as rigorous and worthwhile. Additionally, while students indicated general satisfaction with the program, faculty, and curriculum, graduates noted that additional practicum opportunities or internships would be valuable. In response, the department developed a second stage undergraduate production.

Graduate: Students in the Master of Arts program are expected to demonstrate strong written and oral communication skills, and to critically analyze and evaluate texts. Master of Fine Arts students are also expected to understand the world of dramatic literature and its history, as well as to demonstrate skill in directing, designing, and acting.

Evidence of these abilities is collected in a variety of ways. Faculty regularly discusses student performance and progress in formal and informal settings. The department also monitors placement of graduates and uses this information to determine whether the program is meeting its goals. Evidence of student learning is also gathered from the Comprehensive Examinations students must pass before starting the culminating Professional Internship project. Students complete a written thesis project. MFA students also participate in Semester Performance Reviews each term where graduate faculty reviews the academic performance and artistic development of each student.

The tracking of alumni shows success in the placement of graduates. Most are employed either in the professional theatre or in teaching positions in educational theatre programs. About 50% of the most recent MA graduates are enrolled in Ph.D. programs. Results of the Comprehensive Exams reveal strong performance by students. Results of Semester Reviews are generally also strong and do not indicate need for major adjustments in the curriculum. A new course has been added, however, THEA 702 Research Methods, to increase the depth and productivity of scholarly research.

Music

Students are expected to demonstrate a high level of competence in musical performance. They are also expected to demonstrate knowledge in the areas of music theory, aural skills, and music history and literature. Transcript analysis is used to ensure students are fulfilling requirements and, thus being exposed to the courses necessary for gaining knowledge in a variety of areas.

Student performances at the end of each semester are reviewed by faculty. In the Spring of 2000, The National Association of Schools of Music's external review team found the quality of these performances compared very favorably with the level of performance seen at prestigious music schools. Quality of students, as well as retention and graduation rates, are expected to improve as changes in admissions policies now allow the School of Music to deny admission to unqualified students.

Faculty concerns about the mastery of music theory and music history concepts led to a study comparing the scores of USC music graduates with other prospective music graduate students on the Music Diagnostic Exam administered before matriculation at the USC School of Music. The aggregate scores of USC graduates tend to be higher than the scores of non-USC graduates.

Assessment of program quality for the B.M. with an emphasis in music education includes Praxis Exam scores and information from cooperating teachers working with the student teachers. Prospective student teachers demonstrated an eventual 100% pass rate on all portions of the Praxis Exam, and information from those working with student teachers indicated students were well-prepared for their experience. Common weaknesses noted by the cooperating teachers included classroom control and effective time management. These areas are currently addressed in methods courses taken before student teaching and in seminars during the student teaching semester.

The Graduating Student Survey was instituted to collect student opinions about the quality of instruction in the School of Music and to solicit comments and suggestions about curriculum and the total experience offered by the School. Although only a limited number of surveys have been collected, results indicate that students find their educational experience satisfactory (4.27 on a 5 point scale).

Library and Information Science (Graduate)

The graduate program expects students to demonstrate a number of competencies to perform effectively in the library and information professions. They include:

- A knowledge of library and information science professions, institutions, centers, programs, and their sociological and historical contexts, and their similar and different philosophies and characteristics,
- An understanding of the professional and ethical issues, trends, and problems facing the profession as well as the various responses developed to deal with these issues,
- A knowledge of the major professional organizations, and their roles and functions.

Additionally, and more specifically, students are also expected to demonstrate competence in the following areas:

- Organization of information,
- Reference/Information services,
- Management,
- Research and analysis, and
- Information technology.

Curriculum of required courses provides the opportunities for students to learn these skills and abilities.

The Graduate Studies Office is primarily responsible for the assessment of these competencies. A review of grades for each student is completed each semester, with a final review during the semester of application for graduation. Grades reflect how well a student has met each of the competencies, and students must maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average. Programs of Study for graduate students are used to ensure students are progressing toward their degree appropriately.

Assessment results have been satisfactory and, as such, no changes were indicated. The College of Mass Communications and Information Studies will continue to monitor and assess Library and Information Science students' competence in valued areas as changes resulting from the recent merger of two schools into the one college take place.

Physical Sciences *Chemistry*

Undergraduate: Students in this major are expected to demonstrate communication skills, computer skills, and the ability to access and retrieve information from the library and web. Additionally, mastery of Mathematics, Physics and other sciences, core Chemistry, and advanced chemical disciplines are also expected. To understand that Chemistry must be practiced in the world environment, students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of our cultural heritage.

Student performance in required courses demonstrates satisfactory attainment of learning objectives. In core Chemistry courses, students must pass with a grade of C or better before progressing to the next course, and only two opportunities are allowed to demonstrate adequate learning. The department solicits student comments and evaluations at the end of each course, and, during the advising period, students are asked to evaluate and comment on the advisement procedure. Information is also collected through an exit interview conducted with seniors during the last two weeks of school. Alumni are also contacted and encouraged to evaluate their academic experience and preparation.

The program is continuously evaluated by the American Chemical Society Common Professional Development, and in 2001, the program was fully reviewed and recertified by this group. The Organic Chemistry faculty recommended implementation of mandatory hands-on experiences in both Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy and Infrared Spectroscopy for undergraduates, especially those in the Intensive major. To facilitate these hands-on experiences, a gas chromatograph has been added to the organic labs.

Renovations to the Analytical lab and new instrumentation have been added to existing courses, and a new laboratory has been developed. New courses in Aquatic Chemistry and Environmental Chemistry have also been developed. The Physical Chemistry Division has revised many experiments as a result of curriculum changes and the new ACS guidelines for experimental work.

Graduate: Broad goals for students at the graduate level include critical thinking and evaluation skills, communication and technical writing skills, problem solving, and continued learning and the pursuit of discovery and knowledge.

Students are evaluated at various times and in a variety of ways. Upon admission to the program, students are assessed via the ACS Placement-Qualifying Exams. Students are also assessed through each course taken, and, more formally, at the end of the second semester when a written progress report is prepared by faculty. The most intense assessment for graduate students occurs via the Research Plan and Oral Comprehensive Exam, the Proposal and Written Comprehensive Exam, and the dissertation defense. The department also tracks retention of students as a measure of success. Of the qualified students admitted, it is expected that 90% will earn an advanced degree. Variance in the

number of degrees awarded annually is analyzed for cause. Program quality and student learning are also assessed through employment success of graduates.

All graduates have an exit interview with the graduate director and complete an exit form seeking feedback and starting the alumni tracking. Exit interviews with graduates in 2002-03 indicated that all were competitive for advanced educational opportunities or career positions. Since initiating the exit interview, no student has offered a strong criticism of the program. Alumni surveys have suggested the department should try to provide more insight into industrial and applied chemistry where the majority of graduates are employed. As such, visitations to industry, short coop experiences, and fostered collaborative research are planned.

Earth Resource Management (Graduate)

Students in this program are expected to have extensive knowledge of effective, environmentally safe use of natural resources, to understand the interrelationship between resources, business, and policy, and to understand sustainable development concepts within different ecosystems. Students must also demonstrate a working knowledge of appropriate recycling, be able to apply concepts of resource management to practical problems, and to demonstrate a broad understanding of the policies, laws, and regulations that govern the use and control of natural and environmental resources.

Information to determine how well the program is meeting its goals is collected in a number of ways. Students must complete a program of study which is reviewed to ensure they are exposed to various topics. Additionally, students must complete and publicly present results from a thesis experience, as well as pass an oral comprehensive exam. Each year, students are interviewed by School of the Environment faculty who assess the student's progress and their degree of preparation to continue in the program. At the time of graduation, students participate in an exit interview and complete questionnaires to provide information regarding program quality and student preparedness. All students also participate in the evaluation of courses.

Faculty reviewing students' theses find them to be of high quality. A SOE student was the co-winner of the outstanding thesis award in the area of engineering. Students appear to be adequately prepared through the program. Of the 15 students graduating in 2002-2003, 13 are employed in the environmental or natural resources field.

Information gathered in student interviews lead to a change that now allows students to select their advisor late in their first semester or early in their second. This change should allow more students to complete their degree within a two-year period. Additionally, in response to student requests for more information regarding employment, position announcements are distributed via e-mail to all MEERM students, and the School now subscribes to the National Environmental Employment Report publication.

Geology/Geophysics

Undergraduate: Students in this program are expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the sciences in general, geoscience in particular, and to demonstrate technical abilities, including the use of equipment and maps, and to have strong written and oral communication skills.

Senior Capstone Experience courses, which include written and oral assignments, are designed to assess students' knowledge. The department also collects information through course evaluations, surveys or interviews with students, alumni surveys, and graduation rates.

During the 2002-2003 year, all students taking Capstone courses in Geological Sciences received an acceptable passing grade. Scores on departmental course evaluations have been high for all courses, and students and graduates indicate a positive educational experience on surveys. Discussions with a portion of last year's graduates indicate that most students are either employed in a relevant area or have entered graduate programs. This appears to indicate students are being adequately prepared through this program.

Graduate: Graduate programs in this area expect students to demonstrate an understanding and application of scientific methodology, quantitative problem-solving, and experimental techniques, and to understand the principles of the primary areas of the earth sciences and demonstrate a facility for advanced study in their chosen specialized area. Students are also expected to demonstrate

strong written and oral communication skills, and the ability to conduct independent scientific research. The program also seeks to prepare graduate students for careers in academia, industry, and government service.

Course requirements ensure that students are exposed to the needed information and provide opportunities to develop written and oral communication skills, and student must maintain a B average in all courses. Candidates must present a Thesis or Dissertation Proposal Presentation, and defend the completed project in a public seminar. The written thesis/dissertation and oral defense allows the student to demonstrate an understanding and application of scientific methodology, quantitative problem-solving, and experimental techniques, as well as their written and oral communication skills. The department also collects information via exit interviews and surveys to alumni.

Results of the assessments indicate the department is meeting its goals. 100% of graduate students maintained a B average. 95% of Master's students passed the Thesis Proposal Presentation/Qualifiers, and 100% of Ph.D. candidates passed the Dissertation Proposal Presentation/Qualifiers this past year. All Ph.D. students are required to pass a comprehensive exam on subject areas pertinent to their dissertation, and this requirement was successfully completed by all students. Additionally, all Ph.D. students are required to publish a paper in a refereed journal as evidence of their ability to clearly communicate scientific results in written form. 100% of Ph.D. students were published in a refereed journal prior to taking their comprehensive exams. 100% of MS students successfully wrote and defended a Master's thesis, as did 100% of Ph.D. students, with their dissertations and oral defenses.

In exit interviews, 90% of graduating students indicated that they had been "very well" or "well" prepared for careers in academia, industry, or government service. Additionally, 90% of graduating MS students were accepted into a Ph.D. Program or found suitable employment, and 90% of Ph.D. students found employment in the field of earth sciences in academic, industry, or government service.

Physics

Undergraduate: Students are expected to demonstrate problem solving in physical science-related activities using experimental techniques, basic physical principles, and advanced mathematics. Knowledge in the areas of mechanics, electricity and magnetism, general modern physics, relativity, nuclear physics, and condensed matter physics must also be demonstrated.

Student learning is assessed through a variety of ways including the use of computer-based homework assignments. Graduating students are asked to assess the program during an exit interview. The advising process is also used to collect information about student progress and courses.

Exit interviews indicated students desired more learning in the area of optics and thermodynamics. PHYS 208 has been added to the curriculum to meet these needs and reports from the first two offerings of the course were positive. The department has also matched faculty with courses they excel at teaching.

Graduate: Students in this program must demonstrate proficiency in the fundamental areas of physics, and the ability to plan, perform, document, and disseminate results of a research project. Students are also expected to have the scientific skills to participate in scientific activity at the academic, industrial, and National Laboratory levels.

To help insure that the program is meeting its goals, the department implemented a year-round advising system. Students are assessed as they enter the program through a placement examination, and results influence each student's specific program of study. A mid-semester review helps to correct any problems. Additionally, Ph.D. students' performance is again reviewed through the candidacy process which involves both written and oral examinations. Research participation is assessed along with performance in courses.

The placement examination and candidacy process allows the department to measure a student's ability to perform graduate-level work. The latter also allows the department to assess teaching methods in advanced courses.

The information gathered through the various assessments helps the department to custom tailor study programs for students to ensure their success in pursuit of an advanced physics degree. Through

feedback from students, faculty have also improved the content of their courses in order to better prepare students for modern research participation.

Interim Reports

Assessment of majors submitted as interim reports at the midpoint of either an accreditation or a SCCHE program review cycle from the following areas are described in the current report: Business, Foreign Languages, Biomedical Sciences, and Nursing.

Business

Undergraduate: Information is collected in a variety of ways including course evaluations, a Graduating Student Exit Survey, and an Alumni Survey. The curriculum for the BS in Business Administration program was reviewed due to assessment results. To increase student preparedness in accounting and economics, a second course in each area has been added to the program requirements. Additionally, a new major in International Business has been developed.

Graduate: Exit survey results indicated some student concern with instruction in certain required and elective courses. Changes have been made in these courses to increase the quality of instruction. Due to assessment results, the former MBA program has been combined with the former MIBS program, and the School now offers one International MBA program. The new program offers a streamlined and modernized core curriculum with an emphasis on internationalization. Students can study a non-English language and have additional opportunities to expand their functional area knowledge by taking additional elective courses.

The Professional Master of Business Administration program also underwent changes after the faculty executive committee reviewed assessment results. In response to suggestions from employers, current students and alumni, and faculty members, the program length has been reduced. Additionally, courses are now offered on a more flexible schedule to allow more students access to the variety of courses. The faculty executive committee is also exploring ways to improve the delivery of this program by looking at WEB based distance education options. Courses have been made more accessible through video-streaming, and two-way audio capabilities have been improved.

The Master of Human Resource program has utilized assessment results in a number of ways. In response to student concerns about the internship process, professional development activities have been formalized, and students are now required to participate in mock interviews. Additionally, the internship process is explained to students earlier in their program, and the department is actively working to collaborate with more firms to offer additional internships. Information gathered from students indicated they were also interested in more practical applications of their learning. As such, the program now offers an eight-week segment on the technology of Human Resource Information Systems, and offers more cases throughout courses in the curriculum.

Foreign Languages

Linguistics (Graduate)

The program is preparing to evaluate its curriculum and will likely make changes to course sequencing to ensure students are well-prepared for the more advanced courses. Program activities, including the regular colloquia and various research/interest groups will continue as they strengthen and supplement the core requirements for students. The department will also continue to strengthen relationships with graduate programs of other units as they allow students more variety in available courses and opportunities for collaborative research. The program is also exploring funding opportunities to be able to continue to support student presentation of work at professional meetings and to provide teaching experience for advanced students to ensure graduates are competitive in placement opportunities.

Comparative Literature

Undergraduate: Analysis of grade course sheets and student transcripts indicate that students are demonstrating the mastery required by this program. Additionally, exit interview information does not indicate any need for substantial change at this time.

Graduate: Results indicate that students are making satisfactory progress through the program, and are moderately successful in meeting program expectations. The majority of students who took the MA comprehensive exam or the Ph.D. qualifying exam passed both sections. The one student who took the Ph.D. comprehensive exam passed. These results are encouraging in light of the recent attempt to raise program standards. Alumni survey results indicate a high level of satisfaction with the program. Assessment results will continue to be examined and changes made, when indicated.

Classics (Undergraduate)

Student evaluations of courses are positive at all levels of instruction. Classics faculty are consistently rated "good" and "excellent" by students. In Fall 2000, a survey designed to measure student satisfaction with advisement was given to Classics majors. Although only two surveys were returned, both expressed satisfaction with the process.

The Senior Exit Exam illustrated some concern over requiring the regular History courses of Classics majors. Student responses showed poor knowledge of ancient history. The Classics faculty worked with the ancient historian in the History department to attempt to ensure more regular offering of these courses. Although now offered regularly, courses required of Classics majors continue to remain under the control of other departments. Classics faculty will continue to collaborate with faculty in other departments to emphasize the importance of courses required for the Classics program.

French

Undergraduate: Results from course evaluations show that the courses are well received by students at all levels of instruction and that students consistently rate the French faculty as "good" and "excellent." Alumni and graduating senior survey results have led to revisions to the curriculum to include more reading and writing across the curriculum.

At the end of each fall semester, the Program Director administers the written portion of the Senior Exit Exam to all graduating seniors. There is no discernible difference between students who have studied abroad and those who have not, in terms of reading comprehension. However, in terms of writing skills, the results vary widely, indicating that some study abroad programs may not provide adequate training in grammar and writing. The department will assist students in finding appropriate programs. All of the 2001-2002 graduating seniors tested have attained at least the rating of Advanced on the Oral Proficiency Interview. This can be attributed to the high participation rate in study abroad. As a result, a scholarship fund has been established to offset some of the financial burden associated with study abroad.

Graduate: Students' grades and progress through the program are monitored each semester by the French Program's graduate advisor. The graduate advisor reports that all students are making satisfactory progress. All MA degree candidates in 2001-2002 who took the MA comprehensive examinations passed both the written and oral parts and completed a thesis by the end of summer their second year. Of the MA students who finished in 2001-2002, three have full-time teaching positions in South Carolina middle or high schools, one is completing a teaching degree in Germany, and one is applying to Ph.D. programs in French across the country.

German

Undergraduate: Results from course evaluations show that courses are well received by students at all levels of instruction and that students consistently rate the German faculty as "good" and "excellent." Fall 2002 was the first time assessment was conducted on students in GERM 410 to ascertain language proficiency. Preliminary results of the assessment show that 33% of students rated "advanced" and 67% rated "advanced plus."

Faculty meet on a regular basis to exchange ideas on program matters such as teaching, extra-curricular offerings, and overall student morale. Discussions at faculty meetings have shown that students who have studied abroad have an advantage over their peers in oral comprehension and speaking ability. As a result, the Program has increased its efforts to encourage students to study abroad, and is currently exploring additional study abroad opportunities in Berlin.

Graduate: Each semester the graduate advisor monitors students' grades and progress through the program. The graduate advisor reports that all students are making satisfactory progress and meeting departmental expectations. Although part time students are progressing at a slower rate due to full time employment, their pace has been consistent and satisfactory. In particular, the first student to elect the non-thesis option took the MA comprehensive examination and completed the expanded research paper within the relevant time period and achieved exceptional results.

Through an alumni survey, the Department collects information regarding the effectiveness of the program and the placement, career, or life-choices of its graduates. Alumni responses to the questionnaire during the last reporting period were overwhelmingly favorable.

Italian (Undergraduate)

Each semester the Italian Program Director monitors students' grades and progress through the program. Monitoring shows that most students are making good progress in their program, and students have been successful in meeting the Program's expectations in Italian courses. Most Italian majors are passing language and culture courses with a grade of B or better. All students who have applied to study abroad programs in Italy have been accepted.

Students are encouraged to meet with program faculty outside of the classroom to discuss course material, academic programs, and post-graduate plans. Students have taken full advantage of faculty availability for consultation, regarding both current work and future plans. In addition, the faculty have also assisted graduates in finding related post-graduate employment or placement in appropriate graduate programs.

Russian (Undergraduate)

The Russian Program Director monitors student grades and progress through the program each semester. Monitoring shows that most students are making good progress in their program and have been meeting the Department's expectations in Russian courses. Those students whose grades dropped into the C+ range were advised to seek extra help and are now performing better.

Results from teaching evaluations have been consistently high, and last year, the Russian Program Director won a University teaching award. Students are encouraged to meet with program faculty to discuss course material, academic programs, and post-graduate plans. Faculty encourage students to apply for fellowships and to study abroad. As a result, all students who have applied to study abroad programs in Russia have been accepted.

Spanish

Undergraduate: Results of the course evaluations indicate a high degree of satisfaction with the performance of instructors. Student evaluations have been useful to the Department in the selection of appropriate instructional materials and in devising ways to reduce performance anxiety. Through a variety of assessment measures, the department has identified and addressed common student interests and needs through the creation of special-interest courses on various topics.

Graduate: The Spanish Graduate Advisor monitors students' grades and progress through the program each semester, and reports students are making satisfactory progress. Many students, as a result of job availability and demonstrated critical needs within the State of South Carolina, are attracted by schools before graduation and require more time to complete their M.A. degree. Students find little difficulty in finding a job in their field, either as instructors in colleges and universities or in public schools.

Biomedical Sciences (Graduate)

The Graduate Directors reviewed all courses in the curriculum and have made changes to offerings and credit hours as necessary to help meet student learning objectives. The curriculum for the Master's program was reviewed and, based on faculty feedback and peer-institution practice, was continued without a non-laboratory track. The program continues to utilize the SOM Office of Curricular Affairs and Faculty Support forms to learn about student experiences. The recent switch to on-line evaluations, however, has lowered the return rate. Faculty will continue to encourage participation and will consider returning to paper evaluations if on-line ones do not produce the needed information. Past evaluations, however, indicate a high level of satisfaction with courses in the program.

Nursing

Undergraduate-Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree Program: The College monitors students' grades and progress through the program each semester. Of approximately 200 students enrolled in the Upper Division, 183 fall semester and 182 spring semester students earned grades of C or better in all required upper division nursing courses. Progression criteria require that students earning a grade less than C in one upper division nursing course are required to repeat it, and those earning grades less than C in two nursing courses are ineligible to remain in the program. Progression GPA was increased from 2.5 to 2.75. The retention rate in the upper division continues to be very high.

The College administers the Total Assessment Program (TAP) which includes standardized testing; individual reports are distributed to students and group reports to course faculty. Student data are used to determine remediation needs and group data are used by faculty to assess gaps and strengths of the curriculum. In 2002-03, the majority of student scores were above the National Average (NA) Score. Student scores on the NCLEX Course Pre and Post-tests reflect comprehension of content at and above the NA. Program Assessment results at completion of the program indicated that most students either already had employment or had received offers of employment. Alumni assessments indicated that over 50% felt confident in their job in six months or less, and that 75% had continued their training in some form. Alumni rated their level of preparation in all program objectives at 3 or higher on a 4-point scale. NCLEX pass rate was 92.4%. Employers tend to rate graduates' performance above that of graduates from similar programs.

Graduate-Master of Science in Nursing Degree Program: Most students earned satisfactory grades in required coursework; four sought relief from progression requirements with only two being approved. All students performed satisfactorily on the end of program comprehensive examination and practiced according to national standards for advanced practice nursing. Graduates rated achievement of program objectives at 3.25 or higher (on a 4-point scale). Students continued to perform well on national certification examination with a 94% pass rate. Anticipated program changes include elimination of the comprehensive examination requirement.

Graduate-Certificate of Graduate Studies: This is offered for post-master's study to build upon the master's level competencies to prepare the graduate in a second advanced practice specialty. As with the MSN students, all were successful in practicing according to national standards and considered they had achieved program objectives. Performance on national certification examination is not reported separately and is, therefore, included in the above MSN report of 94%.

Graduate-Doctor of Nursing Degree Program: This relatively new program has graduated two students, one prior to the 2002-2003 AY and one during the year. Two additional students are due to graduate during the 2003-2004 year. Students thus far performed well academically and clinically. They performed well on the comprehensive examination, part of which requires completion of a research utilization project. They were successful on national certification examinations for their areas of specialization. They have obtained employment appropriate to their advanced level of preparation. Anticipated changes include reduction in overall credit hours from 94 to 82 and increasing the credit allotment for the research component.

Graduate-Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing Science Degree Program: Three students graduating in 2002-03 had a grade point average of 3.8/4.0. All students demonstrated satisfactory performance on candidacy exams and were successful in the defense of their dissertation. Program assessment results indicated that students found employment appropriate for level of preparation, and that graduates from

the past three years continued to refine and publish from completed and ongoing research, resulting in 10 journal publications, 14 papers, and two funded projects. Graduates received awards from a variety of sources for their scholarly activities. The faculty will continue to monitor student progress through the program, but no major programmatic changes are indicated at this time.

Title II of the Federal Higher Education Act of 1998

Information regarding Title II is not yet available from the State Department of Education. When the information is released to the University, it will be available at: www.ed.sc.edu

Policies and Procedures to Ensure that Academic Programs Support the Economic Development Needs in the State by Providing a Technologically Skilled Workforce

As part of its mission, the University is resolved to enhance the industrial, economic, and cultural potential of the state so that South Carolina and the University can prosper together. All USC campuses play a vital role in the economy of South Carolina. A study by the Division of Research in the Moore School of Business that quantifies this economic impact can be found at <http://kudzu.ipr.sc.edu/IEReports/uscimpact.pdf>

Since 1993, the University has included a technology and computer use goal in its *Eleven General Education Goals* that were established by the Provost's Assessment Advisory Committee. The goals state that students will be able to use computers and other technology to perform tasks appropriate to their major fields. Each college is responsible for establishing minimum standards that students must meet before graduation, outlining the courses offered that help students learn these skills, and how the skills are assessed. This information is available at <http://kudzu.ipr.sc.edu/assessment/compskills>. To reach the goal, students are expected to use computers to create, edit, and revise written texts, analyze quantitative data, access information and databases, integrate graphical, visual, and statistical information into written presentations, and send and receive electronic communication.