



April 19, 2024

Dr. Michael Amiridis  
President  
University of South Carolina - Columbia  
206 Osborne Administration Bldg.  
Columbia, SC 29208

Dear Dr. Amiridis:

Thank you for submitting the following substantive change:

Substantive change:

**New Program-Approval**

**Certificate of Graduate Study in Critical Incident Management and Primary Care (CIMPC)**

Submission date:

**2/13/2024**

Intended Implementation date:

**8/1/2024**

Case ID:

**SC025680**

The University projects an enrollment of ten students each semester in the Certificate of Graduate Study in Critical Incident Management and Primary Care (CIMPC). The courses will be delivered in an online format using a blended/hybrid method with peer-to-peer collaboration, and an in-person institute the final week of each term. The in-person institute will be delivered on the main campus. The target audience includes working professionals (athletic trainers) certified by the Board of Certification; and individuals who would like to expand their clinical practice by specializing in CIMPC. The university intends for the program to be ongoing.

The Certificate of Graduate Study in CIMPC is designed for working professionals (athletic trainers). The program will focus on the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) approved specialty areas of CIMPC by integrating best practices in emergency and primary care for optimal patient outcomes. The proposed certificate allows for additional training in specific content areas while gaining much-needed mentorship and job experience which is critical in the field.

The university's campus is well-positioned to offer this new certificate program. Currently, the university has a post-professional athletic training program, the Master of Science (MS) in Advanced Athletic Training, which has coursework in behavioral health and advanced clinical skills. Due to the ongoing degree transition in athletic training from the baccalaureate to the graduate level (master's degree), the need for the post-professional master's program is becoming obsolete. The institution has the resources and recognized history of excellence to support post-professional pathways in athletic training. In addition, the university is considered



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the flagship institution in South Carolina and the only institution that currently offers a post-professional pathway in athletic training. The university's master's in athletic training is a CAATE-approved professional program.

The Certificate in Graduate Studies in CIMPC for Athletic Trainers will advance the University's mission to educate the state's citizens through teaching, research, creative activity, and community engagement. The graduate program aligns with the mission by increasing the student's knowledge, skills, abilities, and potential earnings.

There has been an identified need for advanced/specialty practitioners within the approved specialty areas; and there is an established need for the program in the institution, state, region, and in the profession of athletic training. Currently, there is an ongoing degree transition in athletic training from the baccalaureate to the graduate level. There is a need to recruit and develop athletic trainers in the state of South Carolina and throughout the region. Athletic trainers provide healthcare to various populations involved in work, life, and sport including college/university athletes, high school and youth athletes, military, law enforcement, physician practice, hospital, clinic, performing arts, industrial, and more. Access to athletic trainers positively influences student-athletes health care across several measures.

Faculty have been involved in each phase of the assessment of need, the proposal, and presenting the new certificate program through the academic approval process. Faculty also participate in the awarding of credit for the program.

Approval from the Office of Academic Affairs and Licensing, under the authority of the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE), approved the new certificate program in a letter dated February 7, 2024. The letter of approval was provided in the plan.

The University demonstrates compliance with Standard 10.7 of the *Principles of Accreditation*, adhering to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) definition of a credit hour as a unit of measure representing the equivalent of an hour (50 minutes) of instruction per week over the entire term. Each course credit requires a minimum of 700 minutes of continuous and ongoing instructional time. A minimum of one calendar week of instruction with a cumulative total of at least 700 minutes is required for each credit offered. All courses offered at the University of South Carolina Columbia are recorded in terms of semester hours. The credit hours for these courses are determined by the faculty through the faculty governance process (approval by the Graduate Council).

Admission to the program requires an undergraduate degree; a bachelor's in athletic training, or a master's in athletic training through a CAATE-approved program. Candidates must have achieved a minimum 3.0 GPA for all degrees earned. Applicants to the certificate program must demonstrate Board of Certification (BOC) certification as an athletic trainer before matriculating. Candidates are expected to be computer literate and experienced in word processing. Accepted



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applicants are required to have a personal computer before matriculation and have access to a high-speed Internet connection.

To earn the Certificate of Graduate Study in Critical Incident Management and Primary Care in Athletic Training, all students must complete the required 18 semester credit hours with a passing grade of C or better in all required courses and have a cumulative 3.0 GPA upon graduation.

The university identified four program objectives and ten student learning outcomes (SLO). The university also included assessment methods and measures including, a risk factors presentation, patient care performance observations, and telemedicine exam.

The University provided the curriculum program of study, course descriptions, and a projected schedule of course offerings. The University provided the qualifications for six full-time and two part-time faculty. The qualifications appear to be adequate to teach courses in the new program. Keep in mind that the ultimate determination of faculty qualifications is the responsibility of the peer review team which will assess the program as part of the institution's next SACSCOC reaffirmation review.

Currently, the university reports it has six (6) full-time equivalencies (FTEs) that teach and support both the current MS in Advanced Athletic Training (AT) Program and the MS in Advanced Athletic Training Program. The current MS in Advanced Athletic Training Post-Professional Athletic Training (PPAT) program is projected to be closed at the end of Spring 2026. The four (4) existing athletic training faculty will transition their teaching responsibilities to the CIMPC certificate program.

Oversight of the CIMPC Certificate Program will be provided through the program, department, Arnold School of Public Health, and the Graduate School. At the program level, the Post-Professional Graduate Director will oversee the administrative aspects of the certificate program including recruitment, graduate applications and admissions, academic advising, and assessment/evaluation. At the college level, the Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs will oversee the program including academic reviews and any proposed curriculum changes. At the university level, the Graduate School provides oversight for all graduate certificate programs.

Library and learning resources appear to be adequate to support the new certificate program. The library offers databases, journal searches, and online access to streaming video and audio. Students are made aware of library and learning/information resources available to them during several orientation sessions (in presentation and distributed digital information), course syllabi, and individual course orientation. Students can learn how to access and use resources through library instruction sessions, as well as through library tutorials and online guides. Students and



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faculty can access databases, online journals, and eBooks from anywhere with their network username and password.

The university provided the discipline-specific journals for the post-professional athletic training certificate including The Journal of Athletic Training, Medicine and Science in Sport and Exercise, the International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, the Psychology of Sport and Exercise, and the Athletic Training Education Journal.

Student support resources appear to be adequate to support the new certificate program. The Athletic Training programs have six full-time faculty that will assist in the mentoring and education of the students. The Post-Professional Graduate Director is also available to support students as needed. In addition, the Arnold School of Public Health (ASPH) has a graduate support office, to help students navigate the graduate school process.

Other support services include providing students with professional development in their search for appropriately credentialed positions upon completion of the certificate. The university also provides a Graduate Student Resource Hub to assist in integrating graduate student experiences.

The physical resources appear to be adequate to support the new certificate program. There is facility space from the Arnold School of Public Health to support delivery online and onsite for the in-person institute. Currently, the program has two specialized teaching spaces, two labs, and a functional athletic training clinical space within the Blatt PE Center dedicated to athletic training programs. There is also a private research lab that can support ongoing meetings and recordings for content creation. This teaching and research space includes standardized patient encounter cameras used for teaching.

The university provided the square footage for each of the instructional spaces. There are also private office spaces for the delivery of online learning. There is no identified need for new or modified existing facilities.

Equipment appears to be adequate to support the new online certificate program including adequate software such as Zoom and Qualtrics to deliver the program. Additional software such as video editing software, cloud storage, and access to live streaming services may be considered to elevate the distance delivery.

The current in-person Master of Science in Athletic Training program has adequate resources to deliver advanced-level training in behavioral health. These resources will remain shared resources for both the Master of Science in Athletic Training and the BH Certificate Program including high-fidelity simulators, part-task trainers, medical equipment, and simulation capture equipment.



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Financial resources appear to be adequate to support the new certificate program. The university provided a three-year proposed plan reflecting revenues exceeding expenditures. The tuition funding represents enrollment projections which were calculated with an estimated ten students in the first year, 15 in the second year, and possibly up to 20 by 2026-2027.

Sources of financing for the program by year and estimated costs associated with implementing the program are provided in the proposed budget. The university plans to transition existing funds from the MS in Advanced AT program to the new CIMPC Certificate Program. There are two dedicated staff members one to support the PPAT Program and one to support the Professional Athletic Training program; therefore, no additional staff support is necessary. However, additional equipment for online learning will need to be secured. This includes high-definition webcams.

The University reports enrollment projections are conservative based on anticipated demand. The University will not need to hire new faculty to support this program initially. Should enrollment numbers decline, the university will propose and implement a teach-out plan.

The University has an assessment protocol in place for all programs within academic units. The program assessment process occurs on a two-year schedule in which programs report their assessment data to analyze student performance, evaluate program efficiency, and utilize results to influence program and/or assessment revisions.

Assessment data will be reviewed each year by the program director, program faculty, and department chair to determine if changes need to be made to individual courses and/or the program. The Arnold School of Health Assessment Coordinator will assist in gathering assessment data each semester and will assist in the overall assessment process. Most resources for the Certificate for CIMPC-AT program build off the existing infrastructure that is already in place at the University.

**The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reviewed the materials seeking approval of the Certificate of Graduate Study in Critical Incident Management and Primary Care (CIMPC). It was the decision of the Board to approve the program and include it in the scope of accreditation.**

An invoice for \$500 to help defray the cost of reviewing the prospectus is enclosed with the liaison's copy of this letter.

Should you need assistance, please contact Dr. Kelli V. Randall at 404-994-6545 or via email at [krandall@sacscoc.org](mailto:krandall@sacscoc.org).



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Please include the Case ID number above in all submissions or correspondence about this substantive change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Belle S. Wheelan".

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.  
President

BSW/DDG:lp

Enclosure (invoice with liaison's copy only)

cc: Mr. Donald Miles, Executive Director Institutional Research, Assessment, and Analytics,  
University of South Carolina - Columbia  
Dr. Kelli V. Randall, Vice President, SACSCOC