



April 23, 2021

Mr. Robert L. "Bob" Caslen, Jr.
President
University of South Carolina System
Osborne Administration Building
Suite 206
Columbia, SC 29208

Dear Mr. Caslen:

Thank you for submitting the following substantive change:

Substantive change:

Significant Departure Program
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Informatics

Submission date:

6/23/2020

Intended Implementation date:

1/4/2021

Case ID:

SC011261

Additional information was requested from the institution on September 22, 2020 and was received by SACSCOC April 2, 2021. It has been integrated into this response.

The 60 credit hour Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree program in Informatics, which is consistent with the mission of the University of South Carolina Columbia, will have an optional concentration in Health Informatics. The target audience is individuals with backgrounds in computing technologies, business, health sciences, or clinical practice who desire to advance their careers. Courses will be delivered through face-to-face instruction with an expected initial enrollment of five students. Administrative oversight will be provided by the Graduate Program Director. As a rationale for the program, the University cites Bureau of Labor Statistics data projecting an overall high growth rate for all information technology related positions. Multiple letters of support for the program were also included. The Ph.D. program was approved by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education on March 4, 2021.

A comprehensive list of all other programs offered by the University was provided, along with a list of approved off-campus instructional sites. The curriculum, course descriptions, and student learning outcomes were provided. Admission and graduation requirements, plus a definition of credit hours, were noted as well. Student learning will be assessed through research projects, written publications, a qualifying exam, and a dissertation. The Ph.D. program will be integrated into the University's ongoing institutional effectiveness process, which was described in detail. Annual assessment plans identify expected outcomes, determine the extent to which they are achieved, and provide analysis of the results. The data are then used to formulate changes for improvement of teaching and learning.



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The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reviewed the materials seeking approval of the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree program in Informatics. It was the decision of the Board to approve the program and include it in the scope of the current accreditation.

Enclosed is an invoice for \$500 to help defray the cost of reviewing the prospectus.

Should you need assistance, please contact Dr. Linda Thomas-Glover at 404-679-4501 or via email at lthomas-glover@sacscoc.org.

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

Note: The SACSCOC substantive change policy was revised in 2020. It includes many new requirements and changes to previous requirements. The Substantive Change Policy and Procedures and learning resources are available on the substantive change webpage at www.sacscoc.org.

Sincerely,

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

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.
President

BSW/SKO:lp

Enclosure (invoice with liaison's copy only)

cc: Mr. Donald Miles, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation
Dr. Linda Thomas-Glover