



July 7, 2023

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

Dear Dr. Amiridis:

Thank you for submitting the following substantive change:

Substantive change:
New Program-Approval
Master of Arts (MA) in Dance Studies
Submission date:
12/15/2022
Intended Implementation date:
5/1/2024
Case ID:
SC020412

As part of the review of the submission, additional information was requested by email. The institution's response has been incorporated into the originally-submitted materials.

We deferred and requested additional information on May 17, 2023; the institution responded on June 15, 2023. The institution's response has been incorporated into the initial review as discussed below.

The institution will offer the 36-credit hour master's program through distance education method of delivery, with two summer residencies on the main campus. The institution was approved for distance learning December 5, 2003. The degree can be completed in six semesters, including two summers of study. The program prepares students for future graduate study and creative and academic leadership in the profession. Students will be admitted in a cohort each summer.

Within the state, there are currently no opportunities for graduate study in dance, and there are no graduate distance education programs in Dance Studies within the southern region. The program will be the first graduate degree in dance in the state. Program need was supported by national and statewide data on job opportunities for dancers/choreographers and in dance teaching positions. The initiative aligns with the institution's mission and supports strategic priorities. The program was developed by faculty in the Department of Theatre and Dance and approved through the established internal approval process. Verification of program approval by the institution's Board of Trustees was provided by email (May 16, 2023). At the time of prospectus review, the institution was awaiting program approval by the South Carolina



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Commission on Higher Education. As requested in the deferral, approval by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE) was provided.

A curriculum, projected schedule of courses, and course descriptions were provided. Program goals and student learning outcomes were delineated and mapped to courses/assignments and expectation of student achievement. Assessment methods include final course projects, examinations, graduate thesis project, and others. Admissions and graduation requirements were noted, and prospective students must submit evidence of solo performance, choreography, and/or teaching in addition to other admissions requirements. As noted, the institution adheres to IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) definition of the instructional hour, and all courses adhere to the university academic policies, as affirmed. All coursework for the program is new, and courses were approved at the institutional level.

The program coordinator will oversee all administrative aspects of the program, and faculty will participate as readers, committee members, and committee chairs on thesis committees. The department chair ensures compliance with departmental, college, and graduate school policies and regulations, and the graduate director in the Department of Theatre and Dance will serve as the liaison between the graduate school and the program coordinator. The Associate Dean of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences serves as one of the liaisons between the department and the dean's office.

Teaching responsibilities in the new program will equal two full-time equivalent appointments that can be inclusive of the current Head of Dance Education, with summer teaching contracts for two to three current full-time faculty. A Faculty Roster Form for six full-time faculty and one part-time faculty to be hired noted academic degree, evidence of scholarship, related work experience, and experience in directing student research for selected faculty. As clarified by email, institutional policy allows approval of faculty who do not meet minimum requirements through documentation of alternative credentials. Alternative credentials may include work experience, research, certifications, or licenses related to course subject matter. Credentials for dance courses may include a degree in the discipline, significant study in dance with a master teacher, and experience in performance. Faculty qualifications and adequacy of faculty appear appropriate. Keep in mind that the ultimate determination of faculty qualifications is the responsibility of the peer review team who will assess the program as part of the institution's next SACSCOC accreditation review.

The extent of electronic and print library resources was noted, and lists of research resources and database subscriptions germane to the program were provided. The Educational Film Collection provides documentary and feature films for classroom education and is considered an essential resource for the dance program. Resources are available 24/7, and students and faculty access library resources from off campus using their network username and



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password. Class-tailored sessions are provided, and personal instruction is available at the reference desk, via email, telephone, and chat, as well as by appointment.

Students have access to established support services. The program coordinator will advise all program students; provide mentoring, counseling, and networking support; conduct pre- and post-program assessment; arrange thesis committees for students completing culminating projects; and others.

As the program is primarily delivered through distance education, existing facilities are adequate to support the initiative. The summer session, which will include workshop-style courses, will use the dance studio and classroom space that are not in use during June when the in-person instruction is planned. The program is supported by a general classroom for theory/lecture courses and three dance studios, and a list of studio equipment and supplies was included.

The program will be supported by tuition funding and reallocation of existing funds; the program will also have a fee of \$750 per student to cover program-specific costs. A five-year budget noted revenue to offset faculty costs, with positive net revenue projected with the implementation year. Financial support appears adequate, and contingency planning was provided by email.

Institutional assessment encompasses all programs that complete a two-year assessment process using the standard institutional assessment software systems. An assessment table indicates when students are assessed on each learning objective, and assessment data are reviewed each year by the program coordinator, program faculty, and department chair. All students will be asked to submit information on their professional accomplishments and subscribe to the Department of Theatre and Dance and Dance Program social media accounts that publicize accomplishments of students and alumni.

The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reviewed the materials seeking approval of the Master of Arts (MA) in Dance Studies. It was the decision of the Board to approve the program and include it in the scope of 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) 994-6557 or via email at lthomas-glover@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/MAC: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. Linda Thomas-Glover, Vice President, SACSCOC