UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
SACS

Institutional Assessment and Compliance · Principles of Accreditation

SACS Home

Committees

Compliance Table

Quality Enhancement Plan

Supporting Document Index
- Alphabetical
- By Standard

Focused Report

SEARCH
○ USC ● THIS SITE

Comprehensive Standard 3.4.9

The institution provides appropriate academic support services.

Judgment: Compliant

Response:

Columbia Campus

Academic support for faculty and students is provided via a variety of programs in academic units and with the Division of Student Affairs. The Academic Centers for Excellence and the Student Success Center provide individual and small group skill development and learning opportunities. These types of services are promoted throughout the year at recruitment events, information fairs, web sites, faculty referrals, and others. Academic advising is mandatory and provided generally in the academic units. Faculty members are supported in their teaching and research efforts via the Center for Teaching Excellence, Teaching and Technology Services, and Gamecock Research Administrators Network Training. Because it can be difficult to precisely differentiate academic support from student support services and programs, some elements of this standard may also be found in Standard 2.10. Ongoing assessment and corresponding program modification ensures program suitability and effectiveness. Assessment goals and data for all programs are available in the *Blueprints for Service Excellence*.

The University offers considerable support programs for faculty and students. First, for faculty, The Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) was established to support a university culture that values and rewards excellent undergraduate and graduate teaching. The CTE offers a variety of engaging programs and convenient resources, for novices and veterans, to be a helpful part of the teaching life of the University of South Carolina.

In the 2009 fiscal year, the Center for Teaching Excellence sponsored and cosponsored twenty-seven colloquia, seminars and workshops, thirteen events for new faculty, ten events for teaching with technology, eight events for graduate students, five cohort programs, three teaching grant and technology loan programs, and other professional development events. CTE affiliated faculty and staff also provide confidential consultations for faculty, instructors and teaching assistants to discuss specific teaching concerns and effectiveness as they relate to a particular class. These CTE contributed to over 2830 hours of in-person professional development to faculty, instructors and graduate students in the 2009 fiscal year. The Center for Teaching Excellence evaluates all of the professional development events that it sponsors with a five questions participant exit survey that includes the question "What are one or two topics you would like to have discussed at future events," Several recurring suggestions from Fall 2009 were used to develop workshops in Spring 2010, including Dealing with Classroom Distractions, Motivating Students, Getting Students to Study, and Creating Rubrics. The CTE continually reviews evaluation results to plan upcoming activities.

Additional professional development hours are provided through the CTE website. For example, colloquia and seminars are streamed live and hosted after the event in a video archive. Online resources also include a teaching guide that is enhanced with multimedia such as teaching tips from Mungo Undergraduate Teaching Award and a video archive of past colloquia and seminars. The CTE communicates with its constituencies through the website, a listserv, and through newsletters and visits to faculty meetings.

Additional training for faculty and staff is also provided by the Gamecock Research Administrators Network Training (GRANT), which is a comprehensive training program developed to meet the research administration needs of University of South Carolina faculty and staff. Originally launched in 2005 to provide USC faculty and research support staff a deeper understanding of regulations, policies, and procedures; a fundamentally more unified and streamlined sponsored projects system; and access to vital resources and contacts for further assistance, GRANT has been newly upgraded for 2009.

Improvements center on grouping existing classes into three skill-based tiers-- Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced with this last tier composed of issue-driven classes focused on current "hot topics" in Research Administration. Geared primarily to GRANT graduates, these Advanced Tier courses are also available "ala carte" to non-graduate faculty and staff. This arrangement better complements training opportunities offered by professional associations such as the National Council of University Research Administrators and better supports national certification by the Research Administrators Certification Council.

For students, a Student Success Center exists to assist students in pursuing and achieving their personal and academic goals. The Center offers a Student Success Tutoring Program that aims to provide quality, content-specific assistance to enrolled USC students that will empower them to be independent learners. The tutoring program is College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) certified. The SSC employs 15 tutors who are recommended by faculty and well-trained by SSC staff. Course selection is determined through 3 possible criteria: department/faculty request, student request, and review of the DFW rates for past semesters. Courses include lower and upper division classes in Biology, Chemistry, Economics, Exercise Science, Management Science, Mathematics, Music, Nursing, Physics, and Spanish. During the 2008-2009 academic year, 2503 tutoring appointments were completed. In addition, tutoring services provided by academic units complement the services provided centrally in the Student Success Center.

Supplemental Instruction is a another learning enhancement program coordinated in the USC Student Success Center that consists of a series of weekly review sessions for students enrolled in historically difficult courses. Sessions are open to all students who want to improve their understanding of the course material, as well as their grades. Attendance is voluntary. SI leaders are students who have completed the course with a grade of "A", are recommended by their professor, and are well-trained by SSC staff. SI also offers students a chance to get together with classmates to compare notes, discuss important concepts, and develop strategies for studying.

Current disciplines that include at least one course with SI are Accounting, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Economics, Journalism, Mathematics, Philosophy, and Psychology.

During the 2008-2009 academic year, 4,844 students participated in supplemental instruction. Cumulative SI visits for this period totaled 19,061. Assessment data indicates students who attend SI earn higher grades in the course than students who do not attend SI. Overall grade data, however, indicates that Calculus II is the most challenging course of all for which SI is provided. For this reason, three additional SI leaders have been hired for 2010-2011 in order to provide SI for all sections of Calculus II.

In addition to general tutoring and instruction, instruction is available specifically for students returning from suspension through an 8-week non-credit seminar called Students Taking Academic Responsibility (STAR). Piloted in the Fall 2008 semester, STAR serves as a resource for students who have successfully petitioned for readmission following academic suspension. One full time Student Success Center staff member and a half-time graduate assistant design and teach the course. Two sections were established in Fall 2008 and 11 students attended. The course focuses on individual self-assessment and reflection, study skills, time management education and related topics, referral to campus resources as necessary, and individual consultation during and after the course concludes. This type of small group intervention for at-risk student populations proves helpful in keeping students on track to enhanced learning and degree completion.

Beyond the Student Success Center, other centers offer enrichment opportunities for students. The Writing Center, located in Humanities Classroom Building Room 014, helps students with various stages of the writing process, including: brainstorming ideas for papers; formulating theses; organizing ideas; structuring arguments; identifying recurring mistakes in standard punctuation, grammar, and usage; and revising drafts. Appointments are recommended. Satellite locations offer extended evening hours and are in the Bates House, Columbia Hall and Sims ACEs, as well as the Thomas Cooper Library. During the 2008-2009 academic year, a total of 805 students participated in writing consultations. Many of these students attended more than one time; cumulative consultations totaled 1,804.

The University also offers both resources for developing study skills as well as test preparation assistance. University Housing's Academic Centers for Excellence (ACE) enhance students' academic success through academic success coaching (e.g., time management, test preparation), after-hours Writing Center consultations, math tutoring, and online tools such as the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI). ACE services were initially located in three residence halls: Bates House, Columbia Hall, and Sims. Continuously growing numbers of students using ACE services prompted the university to open a fourth location in the Thomas Cooper Library. These free resources and services offered by ACE are available to all the University of South Carolina students. During the 2008-2009 academic year, 592 coaching sessions were conducted, with 140 of those as return appointments.

A test preparation website is also available that provides excellent resources on the GRE, GMAT, LSAT, SAT, and ACT. Test preparation includes various instructional sessions, courses, and programs for each of the tests provided by the Extended University office. Additional links for test websites are provided online.

University 101 - http://www.sc.edu/univ101 Currently in its 36th year, The University of South Carolina's hallmark course, University 101, is a national model for first-year seminars and is consistently named by US News and World Report as a 'program to look for'. The purpose of University 101 is to help new students make a successful transition to the University of South Carolina, both academically and personally. This course aims to foster a sense of belonging, promote engagement in the curricular and co-curricular life of the university, articulate to students the expectations of the University and its faculty, help students develop and apply critical thinking skills, and help students continue to clarify their purpose, meaning, and direction. Overarching goals of University 101 are tofoster academic success, help students discover and connect with The University of South Carolina, and prepare students for responsible lives in a diverse, interconnected, and changing world. A robust annual agenda of instructor development workshops help faculty, university administrative staff, graduate students, and undergraduate peer leaders hone their teaching and facilitation skills for use in UNIV courses and other educational settings. Through this course, student success and retention is enhanced at the University of South Carolina. Assessment data have been used to guide faculty development efforts and curriculum revisions, resulting in higher ratings of student satisfaction with the course, as well as higher GPA and persistence rates for students who complete the course (See University 101 Blueprint at http://www.sa.sc.edu/assessment/blueprints.htm for details).

In terms of assisting students in developing research skills, The Office of Undergraduate Research seeks to enrich the academic experience of all USC undergraduates by providing research and scholarly experiences in their chosen fields. The office promotes inquiry, discovery, and creativity in all disciplines through faculty-student mentoring relationships and the integration of instruction with research, scholarship, and creative activities.

Beyond academic enrichment services, academic advising, counseling, and mentorship are available to all students. Academic advising is mandatory, largely decentralized, and provided to students by faculty or professional staff members in each academic unit. Students are encouraged to declare a major upon application to the university and are advised accordingly. Undecided students are advised in the College of Arts & Sciences. Two exceptions to this model are pre-professional advising and cross campus advising which are provided by professional staff in the Division of Student Affairs and discussed below.

The Office of Pre-Professional Advising (OPPA) was established with the goal of providing USC undergraduates with the competitive edge in gaining admission into law school and other health related institutions. The OPPA helps students prepare for the complex application process to professional school and also provides information on various community service projects sponsored by area hospitals and agencies, job shadowing opportunities with local health professionals and lawyers, essay writing workshops, medical school tours and an annual trip to the Law School Forum in Atlanta.

Cross Campus Advising is provided by the cross campus academic advisor (CCAA) whom reports to the director of the Student Success Center and serves as a general resource for students in academic transition. The CCAA is trained in all undergraduate academic options and primarily assists students who are ineligible to declare or to continue in their major of choice due to academic or curricular deficiencies, and helps those students to create a plan for meeting entry requirements, to identify alternative programs if needed and to register for the appropriate courses. This new position was created in response to assessment data which indicated a high number of students in need of a centralized advising option.

Beyond advising, counseling is also provided to students. The Counseling and Human Development Center provides psychological counseling, education, and consultation, to the University community as well as clinical supervision for selected mental health graduates.

In addition, mentoring programs exist to assist students. Out-of-state and transfer students comprise about 40% of the undergraduate student population. These students benefit from structured mentoring programs, workshops and programming developed to ease the transition to USC and the southern region of the country. The mentors have a structured plan in place to guide mentees, which was developed in response to survey data which indicated mentees desired more contact and support. A Minority Assistance Peer Program (MAPP) is also provided that is designed to assist freshmen of color in their transition to USC. This is accomplished by providing the new students with a trained peer counselor for their critical first year. The program works diligently to establish support and encourage the student to adapt to the University and become involved academically, socially, and culturally. In 2008-2009, 70 MAPP counselors mentored over 200 first year students.

The Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS) is another provider of student-centered support. OSDS strives to encourage, enlighten, and promote academic and professional success to students with disabilities. OSDS serves students with appropriately documented disabilities, including physical, blind, deaf, psychiatric, traumatic brain injury, other health disabilities, learning disabilities and ADD/ADHD. Services are determined by committee review of documentation. Each student is considered on an individual basis, and appropriate accommodations are determined by the office.

Beyond specific support for faculty/staff and students, Teaching & Technology Services (TTS) provides advanced support to the entire university community in core technologies used in instruction and research. Supported technologies include Blackboard (suite of applications for online course management), Adobe Connect / Breeze (for online meetings and voice over PowerPoint), Camtasia (for creating content with still and video screen captures), LISTSERV (for streamlining email communication with students and colleagues), SAS and SPSS (for data collection, management and analysis with statistical packages), and Flashlight Online (for survey creation on the web). TTS offers classes in the software and systems supported.

The BEST (Blackboard and Educational Software Technologies) Institute is held twice a year and focuses on teaching and learning with 21st century technology. Over the course of the last calendar year, 55 BEST sessions were completed with 432 registrations (these are not necessarily unique participants). At least two sessions are planned per month during spring and summer 2010.

TTS also provides support with the development and implementation of Distance Education classes offered by the University. The Teaching and Technology Services Instructional Designer works with all USC faculty to assist them with innovative and evolving instructional technology uses for their traditional courses as well as hybrid or distance education courses. This assistance includes determining an appropriate mix of technologies for course delivery to facilitate learning, consulting with faculty on developing high-quality courses based on best practices, incorporating assessment practices, and incorporating appropriate pedagogical advice on teaching methods. Consultations and training can be conducted in a group setting, workshops, and seminars or on a one-to-one basis.

Beyond the technology and enrollment support provided to distance learning students through University Technology Services, the Vice Provost and Director of Distance Learning assures that students who cannot avail themselves of on campus services have access to academic support services that they need to succeed. The white paper on distance education and the five-year action plan build on data collected from students, faculty, and others and, based on analysis of the data, provides mechanisms for quality assurance related to academic support services. The Distance Learning Plan, which is updated annually, also includes multi-year strategic initiatives, which generally focus on assuring the quality of distance learning including academic support services.

Distance Education provides support for students pursuing degrees and taking courses using alternative delivery methods. Thirty-two graduate degree and certificate programs are available in 10 schools and colleges system wide. More than 80 undergraduate courses are available through independent learning, reaching 1,000 students each year. A comprehensive student handbook is available online. As well, a toll-free number, live chat online, and walk in office hours Monday through Friday exist to assist students with any questions or concerns.

In addition to the above mentioned services, scholar programs are available to students. Capstone Scholars are a select group of students at the University of South Carolina committed to academic excellence. First-year students are invited to the program based on their academic qualifications demonstrated during the undergraduate application process. The Capstone Scholars Program is open to students from all majors. The Capstone Scholars Program is an educational enrichment program, designed to provide opportunities both in and out of the classroom. Special sections of English 101, English 102, University 101, and University 290 help to create an academic bond among the Scholars. Special housing opportunities group students by major, making it easier to find study partners and fostering a sense of community. Over 500 students participate in Capstone Scholars each year.

The Office of Fellowships and Scholar Programs also provides innovative educational initiatives for exceptional students. The staff facilitates the pursuit of nationally prestigious scholarships by University students and coordinates an enhanced University experience for the Carolina and McNair Scholars. Their involvement and leadership make them prime candidates for national fellowships and scholarships. The process of applying for these fellowships and scholarships, and the experiences that result for those who attain them add significantly to enhanced student experiences in scholarship and leadership. During the 2008-09 academic year, USC students won 37 awards and more than $550,000.

Another group of scholastic programs are available to students at regional campuses. Palmetto Programs was created to enable place-bound students to complete selected baccalaureate degrees without leaving the Regional Campuses. The use of distance education provides baccalaureate-level courses to students whose family or employment obligations prevent them from relocating to complete a degree. Faculties from Lancaster, Salkehatchie, Sumter, and Union, as well as Continuing Education in Columbia, use two-way interactive video to teach students at multiple sites simultaneously. This delivery mechanism gives students access to many more course options than are available live on their campuses.

Last, The South Carolina Honors College provides a superlative undergraduate education for academically gifted students. With a focus on the individual educational needs, abilities and aspirations of each of its students, the College draws on the full resources and academic depth of a comprehensive research university. Integral to this mission is developing innovative approaches to undergraduate education that serve the broader University and beyond.

Students admitted to the College are expected to maintain a B+ average. In order to graduate "with honors from the South Carolina Honors College," a student must complete at least 45 hours of honors course credits, including courses in English, History of Civilization, Natural Science, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Beyond the Classroom categories. In addition, a student is required to complete a senior honors project or thesis. Currently

1270 students participate in the program. In 2009, 321 first year students were admitted to the College, with an average SAT score of 1404.

[BACK TO TOP]

Regional Campuses

USC Lancaster

The University of South Carolina Lancaster provides academic support services to ensure students' academic progress and success. According to its Statement of Purpose, "USC Lancaster strives to create a supportive educational climate that respects cultural and intellectual diversification, encourages innovation and adaptation, and responds affirmatively to the needs of its students. Students at USC Lancaster are helped to achieve the fundamental skills, knowledge, and capacity for critical thought necessary to pursue further learning, to succeed in their chosen career fields, and to assume the responsibilities of informed and enlightened citizenship in their communities and in the wider society." In support of this mission, the following programs and services are in place at USC Lancaster:

- ***Office of Admissions, Records and Financial Aid.*** The Office of Admissions, Records and Financial Aid provides and updates Programs of Study checklists for each degree offered at USC Lancaster. These degree sheets are published online and are easily accessible to students and academic advisors. Likewise, this office manages the official academic calendar for the campus as well as the Master Schedule of Courses offered on and through the campus. USC Lancaster students can access financial aid information as well as information about transcripts, residency and citizenship, and USC system change of campus.
- ***Academic Advising.*** Students are assigned an academic advisor (faculty or staff members) by the Admissions and Records Office when they are admitted to the campus. Students meet with their advisor to plan course schedules and discuss long-range goals and degree aspirations. Students officially meet with their advisors 2-3 times annually to plan an upcoming academic term. Academic advisors are trained annually and kept up-to-date with changes in curricula as necessary by memoranda or e-mail messages. Advisors and students access degree requirements through the *USC Lancaster Bulletin* as well as the *University of South Carolina Undergraduate Bulletin*. A recent survey of faculty, staff, and administrators revealed a number of issues including advisement training, balancing the teaching load with advising, as well as advising resources. All of the issues have been addressed by the addition of more regular advisor training sessions, by the redistribution of the number of advisees for those with larger numbers, and by easier access to advising resources on the USCL website and through the Office of Admission and Records. Similarly, a survey of students and recent alumni demonstrated that 88% of students strongly agree or agree with the following statement: "USCL's academic advisement program has been helpful and effective for me." Eighty nine percent strongly agree or agree that advisors are available to assist students with academic scheduling. Recent alumni surveys reveal that 97.1% of respondents thought the quality of academic advising was adequate or better.
- ***Student Handbook***. Incoming students at USC Lancaster receive a flash drive with an updated copy of the Student Handbook. The handbook details all academic affairs and student affairs policies as well as general campus regulations.
- ***Opportunity Scholars Program.*** The Opportunity Scholars Program is a federally funded Student Support Services program that has centrally-located offices and labs on the USC Lancaster campus. OSP staff members provide supplemental instruction and assistance to students who are admitted to the program. Staff members also provide academic counseling and other support services to students such as lunchtime roundtable discussion groups, workshops and scholarship opportunities. USCL's Statement of Purpose notes the comprehensive support the campus offers to first-generation college students. The Opportunity Scholars Program is one of several support systems for such students. Evidence of the program's success includes the facts that 87% of OSP participants achieve no less than a 2.0 GPA and that 47% of eligible participants graduate and/or transfer to a four year institution within three years of their initial entrance into USCL. Finally, OSP achieved a 79.65 % retention rate for the 2009-2010 academic year.
- ***Counseling Center.*** USC Lancaster is the only Regional Campus of the University of South Carolina to provide a Counseling Center for its students. Services are free and confidential and are provided by three qualified and competent educational and clinical psychologists. Students simply stop by the center, located in the heart of the campus, and make an appointment for assistance with academic, career-related or personal matters. Counselors in the center make referrals to Catawba Mental Health or other specialists as appropriate or necessary. In June 2010, the services of the Counseling Center will undergo an evaluation by a qualified outside consultant who is the Coordinator of Health and Wellness Services and Director of Disability Services at Pennsylvania State University Altoona as well as a site surveyor for the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC), an organization that accredits health and counseling center service providers. We will review the consultant's report and recommendations and make modifications and adjustments to our center as necessary. We see this as a first step in eventual accreditation of the USCL Counseling Center.
- ***Students with Disabilities.*** It is the duty of one of the Counseling Center psychologists to coordinate Disability Services for the USC Lancaster campus. The coordinator works to meet the needs of any student with a documented disability by notifying by letter faculty and staff when accommodations might be necessary in classroom or general campus settings. The coordinator works closely with the Office of Disability Services on the USC Columbia campus to determine need and necessary services and to provide them to the student. The coordinator is a member of the Association of Higher Education And Disability (AHEAD). During the summer of 2010, new policies for the office were adapted and implemented to better inform students of protocols, necessary documents, and complaints and grievance procedures.
- ***Information Technology Support.*** The campus of USC Lancaster features a wireless network for laptop computing. Besides providing technical support in all areas of computing, IT staff members work with students year around to encrypt computers and to offer general support for academic pursuits. Likewise, IT staff members maintain campus computer labs for class and general student use.
- ***University 101 (UNIV 101).*** This University 101 course, offered for academic credit, is taught in multiple sections each semester on the USC Lancaster campus. The course focuses on the transition from the environment of secondary education to the University environment through discussions and assignments related to academic integrity and success, stress and time management, degree and career choices, personal finance, sexual assault, general health and safety issues, and campus resources and

opportunities. Likewise, students enrolled in UNIV 101 complete at least 10 hours of community service. USC Lancaster has offered sections of UNIV 101 for students who are majoring in business, health professions, education or who are interested in community service or are members of OSP/TRIO.

- **Study Abroad.** Each year during Maymester, select USC Lancaster faculty, staff and students travel outside the US for a study abroad experience of approximately 8-12 days. Students earn academic credit (usually 3 credit hours) for this excursion and have the opportunity of a lifetime to experience a culture different from their own. Recent destinations include: 2004~Italy, France and Spain; 2005~France and Spain; 2006~Mexico and the Yucatan; 2008~France and Spain; 2009~Greece, 2010~China. Future destinations may include England, Ireland, Scotland and a West African country.

- **Undergraduate Research Opportunities.** Several USC Lancaster faculty members open their research projects to student participation. Faculty members encourage meaningful undergraduate involvement and active contributions. Currently, USC Lancaster students are involved in work in general psychology and cognitive psychology.

- **Medford Library.** USC Lancaster's Medford Library supports the academic pursuits of USC Lancaster's students and faculty. The library's mission is "to support the teaching and scholarship endeavors of USC Lancaster; to acquire, organize, make accessible, maintain and preserve information resources; and to educate users about the library's services, resources, and access." Along with traditional book and scholarly periodical collections, the library houses a growing Native American Studies Archive which includes pottery, photographs, letters and other items of the T. J. Blumer Collection of the Catawba Nation 1759- , the Monty Branham Collection, and the Fred Sanders Collection. Medford Library was designated a selective Depository of Federal Documents in 1990 and serves South Carolina's Fifth Congressional District. Currently Medford Library subscribes to approximately 135 databases. Other academic services include Internet access, Online Catalog (with Net library links to e-books), Interlibrary Lending and Borrowing, PASCAL delivers (statewide academic library borrowing and lending), photocopying, and study rooms. Faculty input is offered through the Library Committee. The library conducts separate annual surveys of faculty and students and is staffed by three professional academic librarians and various student assistants. Student survey results between 1998 and 2009 are archived here. In response to the question, "How well do you think our book collection supports your assignments?" 89% of respondents responded "Well" or better. Similar questions regarding journals/magazines and database usefulness revealed that 66% and 77% responded "Well" or better respectively. Finally to the question "How important is the library to you?" 97 % of respondents responded important or higher.

- **Academic Success Center.** The Academic Success Center is housed on the second floor of Medford Library. The Center is staffed by professional and peer tutors and managed by a coordinator of services. According to its web page, the ASC is "designed to help USC Lancaster students attain academic success, the [center] provides students with a variety of resources to support their academic pursuits, including one-on-one tutoring, computer assisted instruction (CAI), instructional video tapes, supplementary handbooks and texts, and workbooks. The ASC works closely with faculty members to provide assistance that is linked to particular courses, and offers discipline- and course-specific tutoring in Math, Foreign Languages, and English. Peer Writing Consultants are available to work with students on writing assignments for any USCL course, at any stage of the writing process. Students can also use the resources of the ASC to improve study and time-management skills. Students who use the ASC have access to a state-of-the-art general computer lab. The computer workstations are open to students for course-specific or independent work. Available free of charge to all USCL students, the services of the ASC are designed to help students make the most of their educational opportunities." The center is open from 8:00 AM to 9:00 PM Monday through Thursday and 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM on Fridays. Tutoring is currently offered to USC Lancaster students in the following disciplines: English, math, sciences, accounting, public speaking and Spanish. Faculty input is also offered through the ASC Committee. Over the last six years the ASC has conducted faculty and student surveys. The ASC Spring 2009 survey of students revealed the following data: 75% of students responding to the survey say they have used the services of the ASC. Regarding the overall importance of the ASC to students, 78% of respondents rank the ASC between important and extremely important. Finally, during the 2009-2010 academic year, the staff of the ASC played a vital role in providing tutoring and study hall services to USCL's student-athletes. USCL's Director of Athletics and coaches attribute a .5 point increase in student-athletes' overall GPA from the previous AY to the dedicated work of ASC employees.

Faculty at USC Lancaster are likewise provided with academic support and services designed to ensure success in the classroom and in their other professional obligations:

- **Office of Academic Affairs.** Most academic support for faculty at USCL is provided by the Office of Academic Affairs, which sponsors a number of workshops during the course of the academic year, including
:
  - Academic Advisement Training – All USCL faculty serve as Academic Advisors for students and therefore must be familiar with various academic curricula and regulations. Workshops are generally held each year during the spring semester and are available for all faculty members.
  - Third Year Review Workshop – Beginning in 2010, USCL began hosting what will be an annual workshop for tenure-track faculty who will be undergoing the third-year review process in the upcoming academic year.
  - Electronic Blackboard Workshop – The Office of Academic Affairs has sponsored several workshops designed to train faculty and to improve their abilities to use Electronic Blackboard.
  - Professional Development Opportunities – The Office of Academic Affairs establishes a yearly travel budget of approximately $35,000 for faculty who wish to attend professional workshops and conferences.

- **OnLine Resources for USCL Faculty.**   USC Lancaster maintains a web page with numerous resources for its faculty. Items include information about the Faculty Organization and Faculty meetings, resources for Academic Advisors, information about First Year Review and Guidelines for Preparation of the Faculty Information Form (which faculty use in their yearly review process), and a listing of fellow faculty members who have volunteered to serve as advisors and mentors for junior faculty in different areas of expertise. Additional information and support materials is also located on the Resources for Faculty and Staff webpage.

- **Center for Teaching Excellence.** USC Lancaster faculty also have access to many of the resources provided by The Center for Teaching Excellence at USC Columbia. Representatives from CTE have made presentations to USCL faculty during their monthly faculty meetings.

- **Regional Campuses Tenure & Promotion Workshop.** Additional support for tenure-track faculty is provided by the Regional Campuses Faculty Senate Tenure and Promotion Workshop, which is sponsored yearly by the Regional Campuses Senate Faculty Welfare Committee.

USC Salkehatchie

The University of South Carolina Salkehatchie is committed to providing academic support services for its students outside of the classroom setting. Our academic advising program aids students in their degree planning and course selection. New student orientation and University 101 help students navigate their way through the campus and the support services available. The computer labs provide access to students to complete their academic work. The academic progress report system alerts the campus about students with academic difficulty in time to provide them the support services they need, including referral to our Opportunity Scholars Program, counseling, or assistance for students with disabilities.

Academic and student support services available on campus are described in the USC Salkehatchie Bulletin. Students are also informed about support services through a Student Handbook, which is distributed at new-student orientation (with additional copies available at any time from student services) and is also available online. Faculty members are informed about support services through a Faculty Handbook, which is available in hard copy and online. Brochures, flyers and class announcements are also utilized to make students and faculty members aware of special offerings and other services.

Academic support services are provided through a network of programs and services, including:

- ***Academic Advising.*** Academic advisement at USC Salkehatchie is provided by all full-time faculty as well as some key administrators and staff members. For the first two years of general education, students can select any faculty advisor as all are trained to advise the first two years of general education. Students may make appointments directly with the individual advisor or through the central appointment system in the student services office in Allendale or the main office in Walterboro. Students who participate in the four year degree programs offered by sister four-year campuses at USC Salkehatchie are assigned specialized advisors. Those include nursing, elementary education, liberal studies, and organizational leadership.

  Information regarding academic advisement is provided in the student's initial acceptance letter, in *Salk Talk* (the campus newsletter), and on flyers and class announcements at key times during the semester. Students may access degree requirements for the degrees provided by USC Salkehatchie online in the USC Salkehatchie Bulletin and also online through the greater University of South Carolina Undergraduate Bulletin for degree requirements following the initial general education requirements.

  Advisement training workshops are provided for all academic advisors on the campus. Frequent updates are provided to all advisors through e-mail. Academic advisement is evaluated each year using the Student Satisfaction Survey. USC Salkehatchie administrators use the results of the survey to evaluate and make changes to the advisement system as indicated. The USC Salkehatchie faculty organization has a standing committee, the Retention Committee, which also uses the results of the survey as well as student and advisor experience to evaluate the advisement system and make any necessary adjustments.

- ***Academic Progress Reports.*** Four times each semester, the Associate Dean for Student Services requests of all faculty members an academic progress report from their classes. Faculty members are asked to identify and forward to the Associate Dean the names of any students who are having difficulty in the class (along with a brief explanation). The Associate Dean takes those reports and refers the student to the appropriate support service for assistance.
- ***Opportunity Scholars Program (OSP).*** This federally funded Student Support Services program has staff and labs on both campuses to provide supplemental instruction and assistance to students who are admitted to the program. Tutors in math and English as well as computerized tutoring in many other disciplines are available in the OSP computer labs on both campuses. Staff members also provide academic counseling and other support services to students.
- ***Counseling.*** Two USC Salkehatchie administrators have Master's degrees in counseling disciplines and have experience as counselors. Additionally, a third administrator has a Ph.D. in psychology and experience as a therapist. These administrators are available to provide counseling on campus. USC Salkehatchie also refers any students who need ongoing or more extensive counseling to the Departments of Mental Health in either Allendale or Colleton counties. Students with alcohol or drug issues may be referred to the local Alcohol and Drug Abuse offices in those respective counties. In addition to referrals from on-campus administrators, students have access to information on substance abuse issues through the Student Right-to-Know Handbook that is available to students online. A postcard is mailed to all students at the beginning of each academic year to inform them of the availability of this document online.
- ***Students with Disabilities.*** The Associate Dean for Student Services works to meet the needs of any student with a documented disability. Students are informed of this at New Student Orientation as well as through the Salkehatchie Student Handbook. The Associate Dean for Student Services works closely with the Office of Disability Services on the USC Columbia campus to determine need and necessary services and to provide them to the student.
- ***New Student Orientation.*** New Student orientation is held on each campus at the beginning of the academic year. In addition to receiving copies of the Salkehatchie Student Handbook, students are given an overview of advisement, Opportunity Scholars, computer lab accessibility, the library, and all other academic support services available to students.
- ***University 101.*** University 101 is a University credit course that is available to all new students. In University 101, extensive time is used to assist students with knowledge of all academic support services on campus as well as actual training in time management, note-taking, test-taking and other study skills.
- ***Computer Support.*** Computer labs are available on each campus for student use. Students may use the labs for word processing, to access Blackboard or other online systems for their courses, or for other academic uses. All computers have up-to-date software and programs to meet student needs. In addition to the two labs, computers for student use are available in the libraries on each campus. The Opportunity Scholars Program (OSP) also maintains computer labs on each campus for the use of students in the OSP program. The campus is now implementing wireless access in designated areas on both campuses as a further means for students to have computer access.

For faculty and staff, the following professional development programs are available:

- The Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) was established to support a university culture that values and rewards excellent undergraduate and graduate teaching. The CTE offers a variety of engaging programs

and convenient resources, for novices and veterans, to be a helpful part of the teaching life of the University of South Carolina.
- The Gamecock Research Administrators Network Training (GRANT) is a comprehensive training program developed to meet the research administration needs of University of South Carolina faculty and staff.
- All professional development opportunities offered through USC Columbia.

USC Sumter

The University of South Carolina Sumter is committed to providing academic support services for its students outside of the classroom setting. Our academic advising program aids students in their degree planning and course selection. New student orientation and University 101 help students navigate their way through the campus and the support services available. The computer labs provide access to students to complete their academic work. The academic progress report system alerts the campus about students with academic difficulty in time to provide them the support services they need, including referral to our Opportunity Scholars Program, counseling, or assistance for students with disabilities.

Academic and student support services available on campus are described in the USC Sumter Academic Bulletin. Students are also informed about support services through a Student Handbook, which is distributed at new-student orientation (with additional copies available at any time from student services) and is also available online. Brochures, flyers and class announcements are also utilized to make students and faculty members aware of special offerings and other services.

Faculty work directly with students in foreign language labs, and a staffed mathematic lab, and efforts to establish a staffed writing lab is currently under review by the Faculty Organization and Campus Dean.

Academic support services are provided through a network of programs and services, including:

- **Academic Advising and Counseling.**   Academic advisement at USC Sumter is provided by two full time professional advising staff. It is the goal of the Advisement and Counseling Center to develop and strengthen an environment conducive to meaningful growth of all students and members of the University. It is an environment that respects the diversity and the dignity of each individual's experience in relation to academic performance and the pursuit of life and career goals. Students are assisted in the clarification of their life and career goals, along with the development of their educational plans for realization of these goals.

  Students may access degree requirements for the degrees provided by USC Sumter online in the USC Sumter Academic Bulletin and also online through the greater University of South Carolina Undergraduate Bulletin for degree requirements following the initial general education requirements.

  Academic advisement is evaluated each year using the Academic Advisement Survey. The USC Sumter Director of Advising and Counseling uses the results of the survey to evaluate and make changes to the advisement system as indicated.

  USC Sumter has a standing institutional committee, the Recruitment and Retention Committee, which also uses the results of the survey as well as student and advisor experience to evaluate the advisement system and make any necessary adjustments.

  USC Sumter refers students who need ongoing counseling to the Departments of Mental Health in either Allendale or Colleton counties. Students with alcohol or drug issues may be referred to the local Alcohol and Drug Abuse offices in those respective counties. In addition to referrals from on-campus administrators, students have access to information on substance abuse issues through the Student Right-to-Know Handbook that is available to students online. A postcard is mailed to all students at the beginning of each academic year to inform them of the availability of this document online.

- **Opportunity Scholars Program (OSP).**   This federally funded Student Support Services program has staff and labs on both campuses to provide supplemental instruction and assistance to students who are admitted to the program. Tutors in math and English as well as computerized tutoring in many other disciplines are available in the OSP computer labs on both campuses. Staff members also provide academic counseling and other support services to students.
- **Students with Disabilities.** The Director of Advising and Counseling works to meet the needs of any student with a documented disability. Students are informed of this at New Student Orientation as well as through the USC Sumter Student Handbook. The Associate Dean for Student Services works closely with the Office of Disability Services on the USC Columbia campus to determine need and necessary services and to provide them to the student.
- **New Student Orientation.**   New Student orientation is held several times on campus prior to the beginning of the academic year. In addition to receiving copies of the USC Sumter Student Handbook, students are given an overview of campus safety, advisement, Opportunity Scholars, computer lab accessibility, the library, and all other academic support services available to students.
- **University 101.**   University 101 is a University credit course that is available to all new students. In University 101, extensive time is used to assist students with knowledge of all academic support services on campus as well as actual training in time management, note-taking, test-taking and other study skills.
- **Computer Support.**   Several computer labs are available on campus for student use. Students may use the labs for word processing, to access Blackboard or other online systems for their courses, or for other academic uses. All computers have up-to-date software and programs to meet student needs. In addition to the two labs, computers for student use are available in the libraries on each campus. The Opportunity Scholars Program (OSP) also maintains computer labs on each campus for the use of students in the OSP program. The campus is now implementing wireless access in designated areas on both campuses as a further means for students to have computer access.

USC Union

USC Union provides a variety of academic support services for students and faculty. Student academic support services are designed to ensure the success of the student in meeting the goals of their academic program.

Faculty academic support services focus on providing continuous improvement in all aspects of their career at the University.

Student academic support begins when a student enrolls in USC Union as they are assigned an academic advisor. Coordinated by the Institutional Effectiveness Officer, the academic advising program links students with faculty or counselors who have a deep knowledge of a particular academic program and have been given specialized training in effective advising. Feedback on advisor effectiveness and availability is given each semester through student course evaluations as well as in a special withdrawal survey when a student leaves USC Union. These results are reported in the Annual Accountability Report (page 34, Graph 7.2-1 and page 35, Graph 7.2-3).

In addition, every four years academic advising is the focus of the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education Annual Effectiveness Report. Changes to the advising program, particularly advanced training for advisors, are made based on the results from these reports.

Students are advised of academic support programs during orientation, by advisors during advising, in UNIV 101, special information sessions and by faculty in individual classes. Students whom faculty members deem in need of academic support programs are given intervention to direct them to the programs. Faculty members are advised of programs during advising orientation and at regular intervals by the Academic Affairs office through e-mails and special information sessions.

Academic support services are provided through a network of programs and services, including:

- **Opportunity Scholars Program.** Students having difficulty in courses can make use of the comprehensive tutoring services provided by the federally-funded TRIO grant Opportunity Scholars Program (OSP). OSP employs Peer Mentor Tutors that provide one-to-one and group tutoring in all courses at USC Union daily at a wide range of times. Computerized tutoring in a variety of disciplines is also provided in the OSP Tutoring Lab. OSP also supports a Writing Satellite Center to aid students in the writing of essays and research papers. Usage statistics of tutors and computers as well as student feedback is used by the OSP Director and Administrative Assistant to make changes as needed. Students are also eligible for tutoring in reading and mathematics if they participate in the Career Start program, funded by the Upstate Workforce Investment Board and the Upstate Youth Council, and do not score at a competent level on the WorkKeys Assessment. OSP and Career Start also offer a plethora of counseling services for academic and career success. Program effectiveness is annually reported to the U.S. Department of Education (OSP) and the S.C. Department of Commerce (Career Start).
- **Information Technology Support.** Students needing information technology have a wide variety of options. There are dedicated computer labs at the main campus and the Laurens Campus. The USC Union Library has computers for student use. The primary distance learning classroom has laptop computers for classroom use. OSP provides not only a computer lab but also allows students to check out laptop computers for home use. All computers on the USC Union campus are able to access the web. Faculty use of Blackboard course management software is also encouraged to enhance student learning.
- **Office of Student Disability Services.** Students with special learning needs are assisted by the Dean's Office with the help of the USC Columbia Office of Student Disability Services. The professionally trained staff works toward accessibility for all University programs, services, and activities in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Some of the services offered include orientation, priority registration, library access, test proctoring, classroom adaptations, and academic, personal, and vocational counseling.
- **Counseling Services.** Due to its size, it is not feasible for USC Union to have a wide variety of counseling services apart from those provided by OSP and Career Start. USC Union students do have access to the services of Career Center and Student Health Services/Counseling and Human Development Center on the Columbia campus.
- **Center for Teaching Excellence.** The Office of Academic Affairs provides the bulk of the academic support for faculty at USC Union. Workshops and day retreats are held on a regular basis to improve effectiveness in advising, assessment and learning environment. These may be facilitated by a faculty member at USC Union or provided by The Center for Teaching Excellence at USC Columbia. Support for tenure-track faculty is provided by the Regional Campuses Faculty Senate Tenure and Promotion Committee.
- **USC Union Library.** Both students and faculty are supported by the services of the USC Union Library. The USC Union library provides access to collections (print and electronic) and databases, circulation of library materials, reference assistance, inter-library loan, consultation and library instruction. Students are given a library orientation in ENGL 101, UNIV 101 and ENCP 101 courses that. The library also provides resources for aiding students in the documentation of research for papers. Faculty members have access to materials in support of their research and are consulted in the purchase of new materials to enhance the collections. Library personnel are available in-person, by phone and by e-mail for consultation.

[BACK TO TOP]

Supporting Documentation:

Description	Source
Student Academic Support Services	
Academic Centers for Excellence	http://www.housing.sc.edu/ace/
Academic Advising – Columbia	http://www.sc.edu/academicsuccess/advise.html
USC Lancaster	http://usclancaster.sc.edu/admissions/major-advisor.htm
Student Success Center	http://www.sa.sc.edu/ssc/index.htm
USC Lancaster	http://usclancaster.sc.edu/asc/index.html
Student Success Tutoring Program	http://www.sa.sc.edu/ssc/tutoring.htm
Departmental Tutoring Services	http://www.sa.sc.edu/ssc/tutoring/moretutoring.htm
Supplemental Instruction	http://www.sa.sc.edu/supplementalinstruction/
The Writing Center	http://www.cas.sc.edu/write

University Housing's Academic Centers for Excellence (ACE)	http://www.sc.edu/ace/
Test Preparation Website	http://saeu.sc.edu/testing
The Office of Undergraduate Research	http://www.sc.edu/our/
Capstone Scholars	
Opportunity Scholars – USC	http://www.sc.edu/capstonescholars/
Lancaster	http://usclancaster.sc.edu/osp/index.html
Opportunity Scholars – USC Union	http://uscunion.sc.edu/OSP/osp.html
The Office of Fellowships and Scholar Programs	http://www.sc.edu/ofsp/
Palmetto Programs	http://pp.sc.edu/
The South Carolina Honors College	http://schc.sc.edu/
Office of Admissions, Records, and Financial Aid – Lancaster	http://bulletin.usclancaster.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=2361
Library – Union	http://uscunion.sc.edu/library/library.html
Student Support Services	
The Office of Pre-Professional Advising (OPPA)	http://www.sc.edu/oppa/
The Counseling and Human Development Center - Columbia	http://www.sa.sc.edu/shs/chdc/
Lancaster	http://usclancaster.sc.edu/counseling/index.html
Structured Mentoring Programs	http://www.sa.sc.edu/ssc/initiatives.htm
Minority Assistance Peer Program	http://www.sa.sc.edu/omsa/map/index.htm
The Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS)	http://www.sa.sc.edu/sds/
Lancaster	http://usclancaster.sc.edu/academics/Disability.pdf
OSDS Brochure	http://www.sa.sc.edu/sds/docs/SDSbrochurefinal.pdf
Distance Education Student Handbook	http://www.sc.edu/uis/pdfs/ti_student_handbook.pdf
Distance Education	http://www.sc.edu/uis/de/
University 101	http://www.sc.edu/univ101/
Study Abroad – Lancaster	http://usclancaster.sc.edu/studyabroad/index.html
Career Start – Union	http://uscunion.sc.edu/CareerStart/careerstart.htm
Faculty/Staff Support Services and Technology	
Center for Teaching Excellence	http://www.sc.edu/cte/
Teaching and Technology Services	http://www.uts.sc.edu/academic/
Information Technology - Lancaster	http://usclancaster.sc.edu/IT/index.html
TTS Class Calendar	http://www.uts.sc.edu/tts/training/classCalendar.php
Gamecock Research Administrators Network Training	http://grant.sc.edu/
Teaching Guide	http://www.sc.edu/cte/guide/
Blackboard and Educational Software Technologies	http://www.uts.sc.edu/academic/blackboard/
Faculty Handbooks - Salkehatchie	http://uscsalkehatchie.sc.edu/SACS/FacultyHandbook.pdf
Professional Development	http://hr.sc.edu/profdevp.html
Faculty Online Resources – Lancaster	http://usclancaster.sc.edu/faculty/faconly.htm
For Faculty and Staff	http://usclancaster.sc.edu/facstaff.htm
Supporting Data Links and Misc	
Center for Teaching Excellence Statistics	http://www.sc.edu/cte/about/
The Office of Fellowships and Scholar Programs Awards	http://www.sc.edu/ofsp/awards.html.
Honors College Statistics	http://schc.sc.edu/about/aboutthestudents.aspx.
Surveys/Reports	
Institutional Effectiveness - Lancaster	http://usclancaster.sc.edu/planning/IE_SummaryRprt2008.pdf
Student Survey Results – Lancaster	http://usclancaster.sc.edu/library/data/Students%20Surveys%20cumulative.pdf
ACS Survey Results - Lancaster	http://usclancaster.sc.edu/library/data/2009StudentASCSurveyResultsSummary.pdf

Student Satisfaction Salkehatchie	http://uscsalkehatchie.sc.edu/survey.html
Advisement Survey - Sumter	http://ire.uscsumter.edu/advise/advSurveyFrontPage.html
Annual Accountability - Union	http://uscunion.sc.edu/about/inst_repts.html
Annual Effectiveness – Union	http://uscunion.sc.edu/about/inst_repts.html
Academic Advising Assessment– Union	http://kudzu.ipr.sc.edu/effectiveness/IEReports/2008/Union_08_IE_Summary.pdf
Academic Bulletin – Columbia	http://bulletin.sc.edu/
Lancaster	http://bulletin.usclancaster.sc.edu/
Salkehatchie	http://bulletin.uscsalkehatchie.sc.edu/
Sumter	http://bulletin.uscsumter.edu/
Statement of Purpose – Lancaster	http://bulletin.usclancaster.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=2360
Library Mission Statement	http://usclancaster.sc.edu/library/aboutlibrary.htm - mission
Master Schedule of Courses –Lancaster	http://usclancaster.sc.edu/academics/semschd.htm
Lancaster programs	http://bulletin.usclancaster.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=2360
Student Handbook	
Lancaster	http://usclancaster.sc.edu/studentlife/2009-2010StudentHandbook.pdf
Salkehatchie	http://uscsalkehatchie.sc.edu/SACS/StudentHandbook.pdf
Sumter	http://www.uscsumter.edu/students/Handbook.pdf
Students Right-to-Know	http://saeu.sc.edu/students/docs/StRK09-10.pdf
Recruitment/Retention Committee - Sumter	http://www.uscsumter.edu/index.php/committees.html#RECRUITMENT
Standard 2.10	CR_2.10.html
Blueprints for Service Excellence	http://www.sa.sc.edu/assessment/blueprints.htm
Distance Education Five-Year Plan	http://ipr.sc.edu/pdf/evaluations/DistEd5YrPlan.pdf
White Paper on Distance Education	http://ipr.sc.edu/pdf/evaluations/DistLrn5YrPlan.pdf