



**Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges**

REPORT OF THE REAFFIRMATION COMMITTEE

Statement Regarding the Report

The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) is responsible for making the final determination on reaffirmation of accreditation based on the findings contained in this committee report, the institution's response to issues contained in the report, other assessments relevant to the review, and application of the Commission's policies and procedures. Final interpretation of the Principles of Accreditation and final action on the accreditation status of the institution rest with SACSCOC Board of Trustees.

Name of the Institution: College of Charleston

Date of the Review: March 28-30, 2017

COC Staff Member: Dr. John S. Hardt, Vice President

**Chair of the Committee Dr. Suzanne Ozment
Provost/Vice President Academic Affairs
University of Montevallo
Montevallo, Alabama**

Part I. Overview and Introduction to the Institution

The College of Charleston, established in 1770, is a public comprehensive institution that provides baccalaureate and master's degree programs in the arts and sciences, education, and business. The undergraduate curriculum is founded on a strong liberal arts and sciences base.

Academic programs are delivered through the School of the Arts; the School of Business; the School of Education, Health and Human Performance; the School of Humanities and Social Sciences; the School of Languages, Cultures, and World Affairs; the School of Science and Mathematics; and the Graduate School of the University of Charleston at the main campus in historic downtown Charleston and at several off-campus locations: the College of Charleston North Campus, Grice Marine Laboratory, 701 East Bay Street, and La Rochelle, France.

The fall 2015 enrollment was 11,946 students, with 9,590 full-time and 878 part-time undergraduates and 288 full-time and 775 part-time graduate students.

The Report of the Reaffirmation Committee is the final committee analysis and report that includes the findings of the Off- and On-Site Reaffirmation Committees. It will be forwarded to the institution for a formal response. The report and the institution's response are forwarded to the Commission's Board of Trustees for action on reaffirmation of accreditation.

Part II. Assessment of Compliance

A. Assessment of Compliance with Section 1: The Principle of Integrity

1.1 The institution operates with integrity in all matters. (Integrity)

Through extensive review of publications, policies, procedures and other documents as well as interviews with College administrators, faculty, and staff, the Reaffirmation Committee confirmed that the institution operates its programs, services, research, community outreach, and business and fiscal affairs with integrity.

B. Assessment of Compliance with Section 2: Core Requirements

2.1 The institution has degree-granting authority from the appropriate government agency or agencies. (Degree-granting authority)

The institution was created by an act of the South Carolina General Assembly on March 19, 1785. Pursuant to sections 59-101-10, 59-101-80, 59-103-35, and 59-130-30 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina and Regulation 62-4 of the South Carolina Code of Regulations, the institution is recognized by the General Assembly as a public university authorized to confer degrees in fields of studies approved by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education and by the institution's Board of Trustees. Those degrees for which the institution has

obtained legal authorization are listed in a degree inventory published by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education.

- 2.2** The institution has a governing board of at least five members that is the legal body with specific authority over the institution. The board is an active policy-making body for the institution and is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the financial resources of the institution are adequate to provide a sound educational program. The board is not controlled by a minority of board members or by organizations or interests separate from it. Both the presiding officer of the board and a majority of other voting members of the board are free of any contractual, employment, or personal or familial financial interest in the institution.

A military institution authorized and operated by the federal government to award degrees has a public board on which both the presiding officer and a majority of the other members are neither civilian employees of the military nor active/retired military. The board has broad and significant influence upon the institution's programs and operations, plays an active role in policy-making, and ensures that the financial resources of the institution are used to provide a sound educational program. The board is not controlled by a minority of board members or by organizations or interests separate from the board except as specified by the authorizing legislation. Both the presiding officer of the board and a majority of other voting board members are free of any contractual, employment, or personal or familial financial interest in the institution. **(Governing board)**

The institution's Board of Trustees is comprised of 20 members, 17 of whom are selected by the South Carolina General Assembly and 3 of whom are appointed or designated by the Governor. Members of the Board selected by the General Assembly are chosen by geographic district, and their four-year terms are staggered in two-year increments, so that approximately half the members of the Board are appointed every two years. Section 59-130-30 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina grants the Board of Trustees broad policy-making authority over the institution, and specifies the Board's authority to enact institutional bylaws for the management of its affairs, fix tuition and fees, confer degrees, and appoint committees in connection with the operation of the institution. Pursuant to 59-101-185 of the Code, all financial management of the institution is delegated to the Board of Trustees. The institution has provided an organizational chart describing the Board's ultimate authority over the administration of the institution. It has also provided a chart in which the institution verifies that all board members have affirmed that they have no contractual, personal, or familial financial interest in the institution. The institution is not a military institution for purposes of this standard.

- 2.3** The institution has a chief executive officer whose primary responsibility is to the institution and who is not the presiding officer of the board. *(See the Commission policy "Core Requirement 2.3: Documenting an Alternate Approach.")* **(Chief executive officer)**

Section I, Subsection 2, of the Board's bylaws states that the President is appointed by the Board to serve for such terms and on such conditions as may

be appropriate. By the terms of a five-year contract dated July 1, 2014, effective as of that date, the institution's Board of Trustees hired its current President. The contract requires that the President "devote full-time attention and energies to the duties as President of the Institution." The contract further requires that any outside activities engaged in by the President shall not interfere with the services required by the institution, nor shall they create even the appearance of a conflict of interest. Article II, Section 2.B of the institution's Faculty/Administration Manual states that the President, "appointed by the Board of Trustees, is the chief administrative officer of the College and the University and exercises general supervision over all of its activities. The President may not be an officer of the Board of Trustees." Section 1.2 of the President's contract lists the duties of the President, which include all duties required by law, by the contract itself, by the institution's policies, and by "custom and practice to be performed by a college president and chief executive officer."

- 2.4 The institution has a clearly defined, comprehensive, and published mission statement that is specific to the institution and appropriate for higher education. The mission addresses teaching and learning and, where applicable, research and public service. **(Institutional mission)**

The institution has a clearly defined and comprehensive mission statement that is specific to the institution and appropriate to higher education. The statement addresses the institution's history, its location, and its commitment to an undergraduate liberal arts education. The mission also broadly defines the institution's programs, levels and types of instruction and degrees, educational objectives, and types of students sought.

Teaching and learning, research, and service are addressed in the institution's current mission statement. The institution offers undergraduate, graduate and continuing education programs, encourages and supports research, and provides public service through its provision of cultural activities to the Lowcountry of South Carolina. The mission statement is published on the Board of Trustees website and in its bylaws. It also appears on the institution's Marketing and Communications website, in the *2016-2017 Undergraduate Catalog*, the *2016-2017 Graduate Catalog*, and the *Faculty/Administration Manual*.

- 2.5 The institution engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that (1) incorporate a systematic review of institutional mission, goals, and outcomes; (2) result in continuing improvement in institutional quality; and (3) demonstrate the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission. **(Institutional effectiveness)**

The institution has functioning processes to provide on-going, integrated, institution-wide, research-based planning and evaluation. The current system of institutional strategic planning was initiated in 2007-2008. The current Strategic Plan was approved by the Board of Trustees in October 2009 and revised in February 2013. The Plan embodies the mission and is used as a framework to assess the institution's mission and goals. The Strategic Plan is integrated with other institution-level strategic planning processes that include enrollment

planning and resource allocation, institutional diversity, information technology, and campus facilities planning. Unit-level strategic planning takes place in administrative units and academic schools to ensure that the institution's strategic plan is implemented and reviewed at all levels. The annual academic program and administrative unit assessments are also integrated with institutional level planning and serve to assess the institution's mission and the success of individual units in making programmatic improvements. Reviews of assessment plans and reports produced by a series of assessment committees from the dean level to the institution level indicate both the communication and the integrated use of assessment results in the institution-level planning and resource allocation processes. Data and research inform decision-making for the internal planning and evaluation process and provide information for external reporting.

Unit-level strategic plans are reviewed annually. Academic Affairs Annual Reports, the Business Affairs scorecard, enrollment planning and resource allocation, periodic academic program review, and annual institutional effectiveness reporting, among other processes, confirm the institution's systematic, on-going review of mission, goals, and outcomes in an ongoing process that results in research- and data-driven improvement efforts. When combined with the institution's external reporting requirements such as the accountability report, the planning and evaluation processes demonstrate that the institution is effective in accomplishing its mission and goals.

2.6 The institution is in operation and has students enrolled in degree programs. (Continuous operation)

The institution has been in continuous operation since its founding in 1770. According to the 2016 Fact Book, the institution had 10,468 undergraduates and 1,063 graduate students enrolled in fall 2015.

2.7.1 The institution offers one or more degree programs based on at least 60 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the associate level; at least 120 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the baccalaureate level; or at least 30 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the post-baccalaureate, graduate, or professional level. If an institution uses a unit other than semester credit hours, it provides an explanation for the equivalency. The institution also provides a justification for all degrees that include fewer than the required number of semester credit hours or its equivalent unit. (Program length)

The College of Charleston awards baccalaureate and master's degrees. Requirements for the academic programs associated with each degree are fully described in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. The College uses credit hours for calculating minimum credit hours required for all degrees. All baccalaureate degrees awarded by the College of Charleston require completion of a minimum of 122 credit hours. Unless an exception is approved, graduate degrees require completion of a minimum of 30 credit hours. Nearly all baccalaureate degrees can be completed with the minimum of 122 credit hours,

and master's degree program requirements range from 30 graduate credit hours to 60 graduate credit hours.

The College confers the Artium Baccalaureatus, Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, and Bachelor of Professional Studies degrees. It confers six graduate degrees: the Master of Arts, Master of Sciences, Master of Business Administration, Master of Education, Master of Arts in Teaching, and Master of Public Administration.

The institution's submission describes several combined educational programs in which students may not earn the required minimum number of credit hours for each separate degree. There are two accelerated, combined master's programs: a five-year BS/MS in Mathematics and a five-year BS/MS in Computer and Information Systems. Two programs, the Master of Public Administration (MPA) and the Master of Science in Environmental Sciences (MES), may also be completed concurrently by students enrolled in both programs. The institution provided a detailed educational justification for the slightly reduced number of credits required in each of these accelerated and concurrent programs (the combined BS/MS in Mathematics requires a minimum of 140 semester hours [including at least 30 at the graduate level]; the combined BS/MS in Computer and Information Systems requires a minimum of 143 semester hours [including at least 30 at the graduate level]; and the combined MPA/MES requires a minimum of 56 graduate semester hours).

- 2.7.2** The institution offers degree programs that embody a coherent course of study that is compatible with its stated mission and is based upon fields of study appropriate to higher education. **(Program content)**

The institution provides multiple documents demonstrating that its processes of program approval ensure the coherence of its degree programs and their conformity with state mandates and guidelines (including the Approval Process for New Academic Programs, the SCCHE Academic Programs Inventory, the SCCHE Guidelines for New Program Approval, the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs, and published agendas and minutes from the Faculty Senate). To illustrate such processes, the institution provides specific documents about Professional Studies and the concentrations in Healthcare and Medical Services Management and Organizational Leadership and Management. The institution also provides a clear tracking chart of the entire program approval process, notably points of progress or where the degree proposals are in the approval process. All degree programs are appropriate to higher education, following the guidelines of the South Carolina Commission of Higher Education, demonstrated by the SCCHE approval process, and in accordance with its mission, also overseen and approved by SCCHE, as indicated by the document SCCHE Considers Compatibility with Mission.

- *2.7.3** In each undergraduate degree program, the institution requires the successful completion of a general education component at the collegiate level that (1) is a substantial component of each undergraduate degree, (2) ensures breadth of knowledge, and (3) is based on a coherent rationale. For degree completion in

associate programs, the component constitutes a minimum of 15 semester hours or the equivalent; for baccalaureate programs, a minimum of 30 semester hours or the equivalent. These credit hours are to be drawn from and include at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/fine arts, social/behavioral sciences, and natural science/mathematics. The courses do not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession. If an institution uses a unit other than semester credit hours, it provides an explanation for the equivalency. The institution also provides a justification if it allows for fewer than the required number of semester credit hours or its equivalent unit of general education courses. **(General education)**

The institution's general education curriculum reflects the college's mission statement in that it is "consistent with its heritage since its founding in 1770, the college retain[ing] a strong liberal arts undergraduate curriculum." Each undergraduate program requires the successful completion of a general education component in the liberal arts and sciences with a minimum of 30 hours for the bachelor's degree (actually 54 hours for the AB, BA, and BS). The core provides a breadth of knowledge by requiring classes from seven core distribution areas: writing, foreign language, humanities, mathematics/logic, natural science, social science, and history. No single course can satisfy more than one general education requirement. Documents GE Courses Approved in each Distribution Area and Gen Ed Reports 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 supported these assertions. Students receive information about the general education component during freshman orientation, through mandatory academic advising, and through advising in the majors (once students declare majors), as noted in the 2015-2016 Undergraduate Catalog.

The Bachelor of Professional Studies (B.P.S.) also requires a general education distribution of at least 35 semester hours, one that facilitates ease of transfer for adult students who have completed some college-level credits. The areas of coursework determined by the faculty to be appropriate to include in the GEDR are noted in Table 1a and includes the following curricular areas: Oral and Written Communication (6-7 credit hours); Humanities and Fine Arts (9 credit hours); Mathematics (6-7 credit hours); Natural Sciences (8 credit hours); and Social/Behavioral Sciences (8 credit hours) in order to assure a breadth of knowledge (noted in GE Courses Approval in Distribution Area). Students in the B.P.S. also complete four liberal arts seminars which represent a second common core, emphasizing the contemporary relevance and application of the liberal arts and sciences. The seminars are: Ethics in 21st Century Living; Science, Technology, and Society; Diversity in the Workplace; and Understanding Global Issues (syllabi for the Diversity and 21st Century Living courses are available in the evidence list).

Courses proposed to meet any general education requirement undergo a rigorous review by the General Education Committee and Faculty Senate to ensure that each college-level course fits the criteria for the general education curriculum (note documents Academic Affairs Gen Ed Website, GE Approval Criteria, GE Approved in Each Distribution Area, GE Student Learning Outcomes Mapping, and the 2016-2017 Undergraduate Catalog). The General Education Committee regularly reviews courses by following a curriculum review and

approval process; the next cycle of reviews is in 2017-2018. The faculty have developed approval criteria for each area of the distribution, identified common student learning outcomes for each area of the distribution, initiated a process of review and recertified every course in the general education program, and initiated an assessment process to measure the extent to which students have attained the learning outcomes (noted in Table 3: General Education Assessment, 2015 Assessment Retreat Agenda, and Agenda Gen Ed Retreat August 2014).

Degree audits are completed for every graduating student (see Graduation Status Notification document), with each audit showing that each graduate has completed substantially more than 30 credit hours of general education curriculum coursework. The college's online academic advising and degree audit system Degree Works aids students in tracking their progress in meeting the general education requirement. Transfer students must satisfy all of the general education curriculum coursework appropriate for their degrees (A.B., B.A., B.S., or B.P.S). Transfer policy document 12.1.6 Policy for Applicants for Undergraduate Admission outlines the process for transferring of credit hours. Courses from an accredited institution are reviewed by the academic program chair and approved based on alignment with this college's courses. If there is not a pre-approved equivalent of a course, the student may complete a petition for exception; the faculty coordinator for general education and the General Education Committee review the request. Eight degree audits were included to verify these review processes, as well as the SC-Transferrable –Courses-Gen-ed-list-2014-2015.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed documents including the General Catalog, Registrar's web site course listing, course syllabi, and minutes from the General Education Committee, and interviewed the Faculty Coordinator for General Education in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

- 2.7.4** The institution provides instruction for all course work required for at least one degree program at each level at which it awards degrees. If the institution does not provide instruction for all such course work and (1) makes arrangements for some instruction to be provided by other accredited institutions or entities through contracts or consortia or (2) uses some other alternative approach to meeting this requirement, the alternative approach must be approved by the Commission on Colleges. In both cases, the institution demonstrates that it controls all aspects of its educational program. (*See the Commission policy "Core Requirement 2.7.4: Documenting an Alternate Approach."*) (**Course work for degrees**)

The institution provides evidence in its Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs that all of its degrees can be completed by courses it offers. The institution also provided PDFs from DegreeWorks, its degree audit program, demonstrating the completion of all coursework for the MA in Communications and the BA in Communications.

- *2.8 The number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support the mission of the institution and to ensure the quality and integrity of each of its academic programs. **(Faculty)**

The institution's mission states that the College will provide a superior quality undergraduate program and master's degree programs. The College supports and encourages research and expects the faculty to be an important source of knowledge and expertise for the community, state, and nation.

The College's full-time faculty are defined as roster full-time faculty, full-time adjunct faculty, and full-time roster faculty at other accredited institutions teaching in joint programs with the College of Charleston. Roster faculty have full-time faculty appointments and are tenured faculty, tenure-track faculty, instructors, senior instructors, and visiting faculty. Full-time adjunct faculty are those hired to teach 12 hours per semester. Part-time faculty are defined as those who teach less than 12 hours on a per course basis. They consist of retired faculty, former full-time faculty, and full-time non-instructional employees.

The College tracks full-time and part-time faculty instructional contributions to programs by using student credit hours for full-time and part-time faculty for each course prefix, which is generally constant for all courses taught in a program content area. The College also uses headcounts of full-time and part-time faculty contributing to each program disaggregated by location and mode of delivery. The data indicate that an overwhelming majority of undergraduate and graduate SCHs taught at the main campus are taught by full-time faculty. Full-time faculty teach over 70% of SCHs in most program content areas. The List of Explanations for Program Content Areas with Low Full-Time Percentage provides a justification for any course prefix and location for which full-time faculty taught less than 70% of SCHs.

Online or hybrid courses are offered in two post-baccalaureate certificate programs and in the Bachelor of Professional Studies Program and constitute limited offerings in various undergraduate majors. These courses make up a small portion (1.9%) of the overall number of course offerings. In summer, this percentage rises to 21.5%, but distance/online education courses are taught primarily by full-time faculty. In fall 2015 and spring 2016, 45.6% of undergraduate SCHs and 100% of graduate SCHs were taught by full-time faculty. A justification is provided for the number of distance education SCHs taught by full-time and part-time faculty.

Three off-campus sites—Grice Marine Laboratory, 701 East Bay Street, and the College of Charleston North Campus—offer degrees. At the Grice Marine Laboratory, 55.6% of undergraduate SCHs are taught by full-time faculty, and 87.6% of graduate SCHs are taught by full-time faculty. At the College of Charleston North Campus, 42.6% of undergraduate SCHs are taught by full-time faculty, and 57.1% of graduate SCHs are taught by full-time faculty. The List of Explanations for Program Content Areas with Low Full-Time Percentage provides a justification for the number of SCHs taught by full-time and part-time faculty at both these locations.

As indicated in the Faculty/Administration Manual, the College's official teaching workload for roster faculty is 12 contact hours per semester, and faculty whose teaching workload is less than 12 contact hours are expected to engage in significantly more research or departmental assignments. Faculty on a tenure-track or tenured line teach the equivalent of no more than three, three-credit-hour courses in each of the fall and spring semesters in order to allow them to engage in curriculum development, assessment, advising, research, professional development, and service.

According to the Faculty Overload Policy, overloads require permission from the department chair and dean and are approved only in limited situations. No tenure-track untenured faculty member may teach an overload. The Provost's Annual Report provides data on SCH, enrollments, and courses taught by various types of faculty for use in annual planning and budgeting processes.

Most research at the College of Charleston is conducted by tenure-track or tenured faculty who have responsibility in all three areas of the institutional mission. As detailed in the Faculty Activity System Report, faculty produced numerous scholarly books; journal articles, anthologies, and book chapters; performances/productions/exhibitions; presentations at professional meetings or conferences; and funded or submitted grant proposals. The Office of Research and Grants Administration (ORGA) supports faculty in seeking external funding for research, academic projects, and scholarly activities.

Most service activity at the College of Charleston is conducted by the roster faculty. As documented by the Editorial and Review Activities and General Service Report, faculty served in numerous professional service and community service roles. They also engaged in editorial and reviewing/refereeing activities.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed teaching assignments disaggregated by faculty type, by SCH generation, and by program; interviewed the Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs; and visited the instructional sites located at North Campus, Grice Marine Lab and East Bay Street in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

- 2.9** The institution, through ownership or formal arrangements or agreements, provides and supports student and faculty access and user privileges to adequate library collections and services and to other learning/information resources consistent with the degrees offered. Collections, resources, and services are sufficient to support all its educational, research, and public service programs. **(Learning resources and services)**

The College of Charleston provides extensive and carefully selected collections in support of academic programs, comprehensive services for both students and faculty both on-site and remotely, and newly remodeled space to ensure that the library meets the needs of today's users. In support of its compliance, the institution provided over 50 supporting documents detailing policies, statistics, internal and external assessments, and plans.

The adequacy of the collections in support of the academic programs has been extensively documented by the College, with data on the extent of the collections (696,823 monographic print volumes, 3,202 print serial titles, 110,032 electronic serial titles, 388,290 ebooks, 13,472 audiovisual titles, 863,721 microtext units, and 22,996 streaming media titles) along with detailed usage data for print and electronic materials and comparative data with peer institutions showing that the College has the highest number of volumes per FTE of its peer group (120 volumes per FTE). The College has increased its expenditures on collections by 39% in the past 8 years, and documentation provided shows how those funds have been used to support various subject areas, as well as the formats acquired. In addition to quantity, the College has provided documentation demonstrating the quality of those collections in support of the academic programs. Faculty are extensively involved with the selection of materials through the library liaison program and the Committee of the Library. A sample assessment of the collections in support of Religious Studies not only provides detailed information about the Religious Studies department, its curriculum, faculty research interests and how the collections support that program, it also provides data to show that 78% of the collections in support of Religious Studies have circulated at least once, which is a very high percentage for print collections. This sample assessment also provides summary data about the 16 specific collections assessments the library has conducted across the disciplines in the past 8 years. Assessment data provided demonstrates a high degree of satisfaction with the library's collections, and the institution has also provided extensive data on the collection development policies and the various tools used to select and evaluate materials for the collections.

In addition to the general collections, the College has robust and appropriately focused special collections with over 600 manuscript collections related to the history and culture of the South Carolina Lowcountry, and more than 40,000 rare books and pamphlets. In 2014, Special Collections staff served 1,043 research visits and taught 22 individual class sessions, as documented in the unit's Annual Report provided. In addition, the 2014 partnership with the South Carolina Historical Society added most of the Society's collections to the College and resulted in a much more extensive collection of primary source materials for use by researchers and students. The libraries have also developed a strong set of locally-created digital collections through the Lowcountry Digital Library (LCDL) which digitizes archival collections and helps users from the College and the region develop a better understanding of the history and culture of the South Carolina Lowcountry. As a partner of the South Carolina Digital Library (SCDL), the LCDL contributes digitized collections to the statewide digital library. In 2014, the LCDL recorded 18,879 user sessions for 12,857 users, as documented in the unit's report which was provided.

In addition to its own well selected and well used collections, the library provides access to the world's resources through traditional Interlibrary Loan, supplemented by the Partnership Among South Carolina Academic Libraries (PASCAL) and the Carolina Consortium. Documentation provided describes PASCAL as a consortium of 55 academic libraries in the state that provides shared access to electronic resources and borrowing services among member libraries. The Carolina Consortium of libraries in North Carolina and South

Carolina provides shared access to electronic resources. Through the PASCALDelivers program students and researchers associated with the College have access to over 12 million items owned by PASCAL member libraries, in addition to more than 235,000 ebooks. Interlibrary loan statistics attest to the strength of the in-house collections in that the College is a net lender (62% of all requests were to lend to other institutions) and with a very high (94%) fill rate for College patrons who requested materials from other institutions.

Library facilities that serve the College include the main library, the Marlene and Nathan Addlestone Library, and 3 smaller, specialized libraries: the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture, the Marine Resources Library, and the North Campus and Lowcountry Graduate Center Library. All library locations are open to students, faculty, staff, and the public (the main library is open more than 115 hours a week) and are served by a staff of 110 full- and part-time librarians, staff, and student employees. The 2014-2015 Library Committee report praised the 2014 renovation of the main library, noting that it increased student seating by 200 and study rooms by three, added new technology, increased access to power, added instructional space, and provided a Starbucks café. The library provided a policy on access to services and collections for distance learners that details how distance students are provided access to physical collections, as well as to research assistance, in addition to being able to access all of the online guides, tutorials, and electronic resources through the library's website and online catalog.

The library maintains a suite of services to provide one-on-one assistance and formalized instruction for both on-site and distance learners, including a one-credit LIBR 105 Resources for Research course; information literacy sessions comprised of embedded librarian partnerships with the First Year Experience and English 110 and single-session information-literacy special lectures throughout the curriculum; library- and computing-orientation sessions; and instructional orientations and tours. In 2014-2015, the library offered six sections of LIBR 105, enrolling 122 students, 278 information-literacy sessions for 5,194 participants, and 294 orientations and tours for 7,780 participants.

Instruction and assistance are offered at all locations in person, by phone, text, chat, and email through service desks and individual consultations, as well as through the online Ask Us service which is staffed seven days a week when classes are in session. In 2014-2015, the Libraries and Student Computing Support answered 38,210 desk questions and conducted 1,128 consultations. Patrons also have 24/7 assistance through the Ask Us Knowledge Base for answers to frequently asked questions, a service which was utilized 17,179 times in 2014-2015. These services are supplemented by over 370 research guides and online tutorials, accessed over 87,000 times in 2014-2015.

The results of a 2015 library survey showed 92% of survey respondents were either very or completely satisfied with the knowledge and service of library staff.

- *2.10 The institution provides student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission that are intended to promote student learning and enhance the development of its students. **(Student support services)**

The institution offers a broad array of programs and services designed to enhance the co-curricular experience and assist students with intellectual and personal development. Programs and activities range from leadership development, Greek life, living and learning environment, to clubs and organizations, to name only a few of the programs described in the institution's Compliance Certification. The institution offers personal and academic support services such as career exploration, student counseling services, and academic support services such as tutoring and advising. Additionally, the institution serves targeted populations through international and multicultural programs, veteran's services, and disability support.

As evidence, the institution provided numerous documents including activity schedules, mission statements, program descriptions, application forms for service use, an international student resource list, and a listing of disability services. Additionally, the institution provided detailed descriptions of offices and service areas that provide programs, services, and activities.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed documents including the Student Handbook, Student Affairs Division annual reports, NSSE College of Charleston Report, and Multicultural Student Programs and Services materials. The Committee also conducted interviews with the Executive Vice President for Student Affairs, Dean of Students, Director of Residence Life, and Director of Multicultural Student Services and Programs and visited off-campus instructional sites at the College of Charleston North Campus, Grice Marine Lab, and East Bay Street in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

- 2.11.1 The institution has a sound financial base and demonstrated financial stability to support the mission of the institution and the scope of its programs and services.

The member institution provides the following financial statements: (1) an institutional audit (or *Standard Review Report* issued in accordance with *Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services* issued by the AICPA for those institutions audited as part of a systemwide or statewide audit) and written institutional management letter for the most recent fiscal year prepared by an independent certified public accountant and/or an appropriate governmental auditing agency employing the appropriate audit (or *Standard Review Report*) guide; (2) a statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets, exclusive of plant assets and plant-related debt, which represents the change in unrestricted net assets attributable to operations for the most recent year; and (3) an annual budget that is preceded by sound planning, is subject to sound fiscal procedures, and is approved by the governing board. **(Financial resources and stability)**

The College of Charleston has provided a comprehensive annual financial report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2016. Included with this report is an

unqualified opinion from its independent auditor, Elliott Davis Decosimo. Also included in these financial statements is a schedule of operating and non-operating revenues by source for fiscal years 2006-2015. This information indicates steadily increasing total revenues. Also provided is a schedule of expenses by function for the same period. While also steadily increasing, expenditures are less than revenues in each year. A Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position is also provided. This statement reflects FY 2015, with an increase in net position of 5.1% following the restatement of FY2014 for the implementation of GASB 68 which requires the College to record its share of beginning net pension liability. This information and the same statement provided for FY2016 which also includes an increase of 5.1% demonstrates the College's financial stability.

The College describes a comprehensive decentralized budgeting process. Division budget requests represent issues that support the strategic goals and initiatives of the College as well as the ongoing operational needs of the divisions. An example of the Faculty Budget Committee Report for the division of Academic Affairs for 2015-16 was presented and reviewed. This document supports an inclusive budgeting process. An example of the IT budgeting process was also presented. Once drafted, the full revenue and expenditure budget is presented to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees which if in agreement will present a resolution to approve a final budget to the full College Board each June. Minutes of the June 15, 2015 Board of Trustees meeting confirms that the 2015-16 budget was approved by the Board.

On October 24, 2016, as noted above, the institution provided a comprehensive annual financial report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2016. The report includes an Independent Auditor's Report and an unqualified opinion from Elliott Davis Decosimo, LLC. The report also includes an institutional management letter for this fiscal year. However, the institution has not provided a statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets, exclusive of plant assets and plant related debt for the most recent year, FY2016.

The required document, which was not available to the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee, was provided to the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee to strengthen the institution's case for compliance.

2.11.2 The institution has adequate physical resources to support the mission of the institution and the scope of its programs and services. (Physical resources)

The College has adequate physical resources to support its mission. The institution identifies 3.8 million gross square footage of buildings. Of these, more than a third are classified as used for instruction or academic support. A 2012 Campus Master Plan is presented to support how the College operationally supports the goals of its strategic plan.

The College monitors its physical resources through use of the State of South Carolina Comprehensive Permanent Improvement Program. This provides the capital improvement program for five years based on the priorities of the Campus Master Plan and the Building Conditions Survey.

The College lists 157 buildings on its campus map which represent 3.8 million gross square feet. As an historic campus, the average age of facilities is 101 years so the College's active monitoring of capital improvements for progress and for compliance with established standards is important. The institution maintains a physical plant which represents multiple disciplines who continuously inspect and evaluate the condition of facilities. A tool used for this is the Physical Plant Department Major and Minor Construction and Repair Projects Report.

The College identifies an overall space deficit of 280,000 square feet in its Master Plan and provides numerous examples of projects completed or in progress intended to address this issue. The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education provides utilization standards for facilities. The College's utilization rates exceed these established standards with average hours of instruction at 31 against a standard of 30. The station occupancy standard is 60% and the College's actual is 69%.

The College has three main off-campus instructional sites. It also monitors these sites utilizing the Building Conditions Survey.

- 2.12** The institution has developed an acceptable Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that includes an institutional process for identifying key issues emerging from institutional assessment and focuses on learning outcomes and/or the environment supporting student learning and accomplishing the mission of the institution. **(Quality Enhancement Plan)**

The institution developed an acceptable QEP. See Part III for additional information.

C. Assessment of Compliance with Section 3: Comprehensive Standards

- 3.1.1** The mission statement is current and comprehensive, accurately guides the institution's operations, is periodically reviewed and updated, is approved by the governing board, and is communicated to the institution's constituencies. **(Mission).**

The institution's mission is current, periodically reviewed and updated, and approved by the governing board. It was most recently reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees on August 25, 2014 and by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education on September 4, 2014. The statement has been reviewed and approved six times since 1974. The mission is comprehensive covering the institution's history, and service area, its programs, and its desired students as well as its institutional commitments to teaching and learning, research, and service.

The statement is widely communicated to the institution's constituencies through the institutional website, the *2016-2017 Undergraduate Catalog*, the *2016-2017 Graduate Catalog*, the *Faculty/Administration Manual*, the Board of Trustees website, and it is also published in the Board of Trustees By-Laws..

3.2.1 The governing board of the institution is responsible for the selection and the periodic evaluation of the chief executive officer. (CEO evaluation/selection)

The institution's Board of Trustees is granted authority by South Carolina Code of Laws section 59-130-30 to appoint the institution's President, who shall "report to and seek approval of his actions and those of his subordinates from the board." As documented in the minutes of the Board meeting for October 18, 2013, the Chairman of the Board appointed a Search Committee to replace the departing President. Board By-Law G.1.a states that matters involving the hiring and termination of the institution's President may not be handled by the Executive Committee between Board meetings, but are matters reserved to the full Board. Before a meeting of the Faculty Senate on March 11, 2014, the Chairman described the Board's national search process that would lead to the appointing of the institution's next President. The search resulted in the hiring of the institution's current President, whose contract, dated July 1, 2014, is signed on behalf of the institution by the Chairman of its Board of Trustees. Pursuant to rules established by the State of South Carolina Agency Head Salary Commission for heads of all public agencies, the Board of Trustees completed an official evaluation score sheet for the President on August 7, 2015. The score sheet asks Board members to rate the President on a five-point scale with regard to fifteen dimensions of leadership and management. The Chairman's signature is affixed on the score sheet below a printed statement that "I acknowledge that the above composite represents the scores from the individual surveys of the Board/Commission members."

3.2.2 The legal authority and operating control of the institution are clearly defined for the following areas within the institution's governance structure: (Governing board control)

3.2.2.1 the institution's mission

South Carolina Code of Laws section 59-130-30 grants broad authority to the institution's Board of Trustees to adopt measures necessary for the operation of the institution. Board By-Laws section G.1 requires that any change in the institution's mission statement must be considered by the full Board, not by the Executive Committee meeting between meetings of the full Board. South Carolina Code of Laws Section 59-103-45(6) requires the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education to review and approve the institution's mission. Therefore, any proposed mission statement must be adopted by the institution's full Board before submission to the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education for review and approval. Pursuant to that process, the institution's current mission statement was adopted by the full Board at its August 25, 2014, meeting and was approved by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education at its September 4, 2014, meeting.

3.2.2.2 the fiscal stability of the institution

South Carolina Code of Laws section 59-130-30 grants to the institution's Board the authority to govern all relevant fiscal affairs of the institution, including tuition

and fees, contracts, real and personal property transactions, and all policies and regulations necessary to handle financial operations. That section also authorizes the institution's Board to appoint a President whose actions shall be subject to Board approval. Pursuant to that statute, the Board has, in accordance with its section I.7 of its By-Laws, delegated authority to the President to handle the fiscal and personnel affairs of the institution, subject to Board oversight. Two standing Board committees have been established to oversee the President's actions relative to the fiscal affairs of the institution: (1) the Audit and Governance Committee established pursuant to By-Law G.5; and (2) the Budget and Finance Committee established pursuant to By-Law G.6. Minutes of January 2015 and October 2015 meetings of the Board include reports from those two committees, confirming that the legal authority and operating control of the institution are clearly defined for its fiscal stability.

3.2.2.3 institutional policy

South Carolina Code of Laws section 59-130-30 grants broad authority to the institution's Board of Trustees to adopt measures—including bylaws and regulations--necessary for the operation of the institution. Although the institution's compliance report cites a document titled Campus Wide Policy Formation Procedures (CPFP) which includes notations that it was "Approved: June 2009" and "Revised: August 2015," it was unclear whether the approval and subsequent revision were approved by the Board of Trustees or by some other person or body. A reference to the document could not be found in the Board minutes for the August 7, 2015 meeting.

The institution provided a copy of the minutes of the January 27, 2017, Board of Trustees meeting to the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee showing approval of the CPFP.

3.2.3 The governing board has a policy addressing conflict of interest for its members. (Board conflict of interest)

South Carolina Code of Laws sections 8-13-700 and 8-13-705 require members of the institution's Board of Trustees to avoid using their public office for the purpose of furthering a personal financial interest. Sections 8-13-710 and 8-13-1110 require Board members to file a Statement of Economic Interest with "the appropriate supervisory office" prior to assuming office. Section 7.1 of the Board's Ethics Policy dated August 12, 2016, includes Board members as "Covered Persons" under the Policy, which requires them to file the statements of economic interest required by state statute as described above. The institution's narrative for this standard states that Board members address their compliance with these legal and policy requirements in their annual self-evaluations; however, the narrative also includes the following statement: "These self-evaluations/self-assessments are not collected due to South Carolina Sunshine Laws or the Freedom of Information Act." Thus, the institution appears to be unable to verify that Board members are actually observing the Ethics Policy. Nor is the institution able to confirm that no Board member has expressed a

reservation about his or her ability to conform to the institution's expectations regarding the prohibition of conflicts of interest.

The institution provided documentation to the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee confirming that each Board member has signed a Disclosure of Ethics Compliance Form which acknowledges compliance with state ethics requirements and with the institution's Ethics Policy. These documents and an interview with members of the Board of Trustees support the institution's case for compliance.

- 3.2.4** The governing board is free from undue influence from political, religious, or other external bodies and protects the institution from such influence. **(External influence)**

The institution is a public institution whose trustees are selected according to state statute. South Carolina Code of Laws section 59-130-10 provides for the election of 17 members of the institution's Board of Trustees by the South Carolina General Assembly, a majority of whom are selected according to Congressional district. An additional 3 members—one of whom is recommended by the institution's Alumni Association—are appointed by the Governor. Board members come from a diverse array of occupations and their respective four-year terms are staggered. Paragraph C of the Board's By-Laws requires that each Trustee owes a duty of faithful and diligent service to the institution and shall act at all times in the best interests of the institution. The institution's narrative reports no knowledge of an occasion in which an outside organization has attempted to influence a decision of the Board.

- 3.2.5** The governing board has a policy whereby members can be dismissed only for appropriate reasons and by a fair process. **(Board dismissal)**

The institution's Board of Trustees has adopted a Board Member Dismissal Policy in accordance with Article VI and Article XV of the South Carolina Constitution regarding impeachment of public officials. In order to dismiss a member of the Board in accordance with the Policy, the Board must first determine by a majority vote in public session that the conduct of the member meets the applicable standard set forth in Article XV of the South Carolina Constitution. In the case of such a vote, the policy vests responsibility in the Board to request initiation of impeachment proceedings by the South Carolina General Assembly pursuant to Article XV, Section One of the South Carolina Constitution or to petition the Governor to initiate proceedings for removal pursuant to Article XV, Section Three, depending on which section would be appropriate for the particular case.

The institution's narrative indicates no Board member has ever been dismissed.

- 3.2.6** There is a clear and appropriate distinction, in writing and practice, between the policy-making functions of the governing board and the responsibility of the administration and faculty to administer and implement policy. **(Board/administration distinction)**

The institution has provided an organizational chart consistent with paragraph A of the By-Laws of the Board of Trustees. Paragraph A states that the final authority and responsibility for the governance of the institution is vested in the Board in accordance with South Carolina law. Paragraph I.6 of the By-Laws delegates to the President, in a shared role with the faculty, "the responsibility for proposing educational programs and policies," raising the assumption that it would be the Board to whom these programs and policies would be "proposed" by the President and Faculty for the Board's approval as opposed to the policies being approved at the discretion of the Faculty or the President without Board approval. Paragraphs I.8 and I.9 use broader language with respect to the President's policy-making authority, but only in matters relating to the library and to athletics. These two paragraphs refer to the President's being "directly responsible for the formulation of policies" and "for the development of policies," in those two areas, respectively.

Paragraph 1.6 of the Board's By-Laws describes a system of shared governance involving the President and, in certain cases, the Faculty; however, in paragraph G of the By-Laws, the Board has established standing committees, one of which—the Information Technology Committee—is vested with authority not just to review policies adopted by the administration, but also to "enact" policies that could govern the institution's operations in some areas which may be in conflict with those described above. According to paragraph G, a majority of the voting members of each standing committee constitutes a quorum. Thus, it appears possible for a bare majority of the voting membership of the Information Technology Committee to adopt policies that might be contrary to the will of the full Board and/or the will of the President.

The institution, in its narrative, cites a document titled "Campus Wide Policy Formation Procedures," a document which includes no reference to the body which approved it. It is therefore unclear whether the Board has approved this document, whether the document applies to the Board itself, or whether the Information Technology Committee has agreed to be governed by the terms of the document. Although paragraph 10.0 of the Campus Wide Policy Formation Procedures reserves certain policy actions to the Board, the role of the Information Technology Committee in policy formulation is not mentioned. Final determination on the question of whether a policy should be approved by the Board is reserved, under paragraph 10.0(b), to the President rather than the Board or the chair of the Information Technology Committee. It is not clear whether the Board has approved this grant of discretion to the President.

In response to the concern that the stated authority of the Information Technology Committee of the Board may be in conflict with the authority of the full Board of Trustees, the College provided evidence in the Focused Report that Paragraph G, Section 10 of the By-Laws has been amended. The amended By-Laws now state that the committee is charged to "monitor and make policy recommendations" to the full Board of Trustees. The amendment was approved by the Board of Trustees on January 27, 2017.

Also addressing the concerns of the Off-Site Committee, the College provided evidence that on January 27, 2017, the Board of Trustees approved a revision of the Campus Wide Policy Formation Procedures (CPFP) that removed the

language that referred to the President's authority to make determinations for policy actions approved by the College Board in Paragraph 10.0 (a) and added the statement that "all other determinations not pursuant to (a) shall be made by the President."

3.2.7 The institution has a clearly defined and published organizational structure that delineates responsibility for the administration of policies. (Organizational structure)

The institution has provided an organizational chart consistent with paragraph I.6. of the By-Laws of the Board of Trustees, which delegates a system of shared governance to the President and the faculty, working with applicable executive officers of the institution. Paragraph 1.6 presents a system of shared governance involving the President and, in certain cases, the faculty; however, in paragraph G of the By-Laws, the Board has established standing committees, one of which—the Information Technology Committee—is vested with authority not just to review policies adopted by the administration, but also to "enact" policies that could govern the institution's operations in some areas which may be in conflict with those described above. According to paragraph G, a majority of the voting members of each standing committee constitutes a quorum. Thus, it appears possible for a bare majority of the voting membership of the Information Technology Committee to adopt policies that might be contrary to the will of the full Board and/or the will of the President. Thus, while the institution's organizational chart indicates that matters involving information technology would flow upward to the Executive Vice President for Business Affairs and then to the President, paragraph G.10 of the Board's By-Laws establishes a parallel system of management whereby the Information Technology Committee of the Board "will work with the Senior Vice President/Chief Information Officer on matters relating to Information Technology initiatives." Given this committee's authority to enact policies, it appears as though policies relating to technology can be promulgated outside the institution's organizational chart. Paragraph G.10 does not refer to the role of the Executive Vice President for Business Affairs or the President in matters relating to technology.

For example, in the minutes for the Board's meeting on October 23, 2015, the report of Information Technology Committee refers to the committee's review of the College Privacy Policy, which is described as a "20 page policy written in 2009." The minutes further refer to committee members' desire to "update the policy in light of all the changes in technology" and to "sharply separate statements of policy from the description of the implementation of the policy." As indicated above, it would appear from paragraph G.10 of the Board's By-Laws that the Information Technology Committee would be authorized to enact these policy changes independently. Since neither the Executive Vice President for Business Affairs nor the institution's President are shown in the minutes as persons in attendance at this meeting, it is unclear whether the Senior Vice President/Chief Information Officer (who reports to the Executive Vice President) was seeking a policy change in line with the organizational chart or not.

The respective roles of other standing committees as described in the Board's By-Laws appear to be less problematic, since paragraph G uses words like

“oversight,” “review,” “monitor,” and “subject to Board approval” for the actions of those committees.

In response to the concern about the authority of the Information Technology Committee of the Board, the College provided evidence in its Focused Report that Paragraph G, Section 10 of the By-Laws has been amended. The amended By-Laws now state that the committee is charged to “monitor and make policy recommendations” to the full Board of Trustees. The amendment was approved by the Board of Trustees on January 27, 2017.

***3.2.8 The institution has qualified administrative and academic officers with the experience and competence to lead the institution. (Qualified administrative/academic officers)**

The institution's administrative officers include the President and four executive vice-presidents (Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Executive Vice President for Business Affairs, Executive Vice President for Student Affairs, and Executive Vice President for Institutional Advancement and Executive Director of Foundation). Two of the four executive VPs hold terminal degrees in their respective fields, and all four have appropriate progressive experience. Other administrative staff members also hold appropriate degrees in related fields and have progressive experience in their respective fields. A comparison of the job descriptions for each position with the CVs of the individuals in the position verify that administrative and academic officers are appropriately qualified to lead the institution.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed documents such as CVs and position descriptions and conducted interviews with the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Executive Vice President for Business Affairs, and the Executive Vice President for Student Affairs along with a number of Associate Vice Presidents, Directors, and Deans in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

3.2.9 The institution publishes policies regarding appointment, employment, and evaluation of all personnel. (Personnel appointment)

Policies and procedures pertaining to personnel appointments are published on the Office of Human Resources Policy Website and the college's policy website. Newly hired employees are notified of policies and sign a Policy Acknowledgement Form to assure that new hires know their responsibilities and how to access policy information. The signed Policy Acknowledgement Form is placed in their personnel file. Additional policies that pertain to faculty and academic administrators are published in the Faculty/Administration Manual and are additionally noted in faculty appointment letters and during new faculty orientation.

The college has a defined three-step process for staff and faculty recruitment, as noted in such documents as the Faculty Recruitment Procedure Guide,

Recruiting Guidelines for Staff Positions, and Request for Employee Posting Hiring Authorization Form:

- 1) Hiring manager seeks approval to post vacant positions by using the Request for Employee Posting Hiring Authorization Form.
- 2) Open position with job description and required qualifications is posted in writing.
- 3) Applicants selected for interview are approved in advance by the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs to ensure compliance with the Affirmation Action Plan and the policy on Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment Including Sexual Harassment and Abuse.

There are policies and procedures (documented in the Faculty/Administration Manual, Faculty Recruitment Procedure Guide, Faculty Appointment Letter Sample, and Recruiting Guidelines for Staff Positions) that provide an overview of the procedures for Faculty and Academic Administrators Appointment, Employer and Evaluation. All tenure-track faculty applicants are evaluated by a search and screening committee, with the search committee making a recommendation to the chair. The chair, along with the dean and after approval of the provost and the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, offers the position in writing. The offer letter includes the terms of the appointment, compensation, employment policies, tenure status, and probationary period.

Policies for evaluation of faculty and academic administrators are noted in the Faculty/Administration Manual. Deans are evaluated at least every three years by the provost, with faculty input. Evaluation of academic administrators are completed yearly. Faculty who have been granted tenure or who have been promoted to senior faculty are evaluated at least once every three years. Tenure-track faculty and instructors are evaluated annually. Visiting or adjunct faculty are evaluated at the end of each semester or annually, although they may request evaluation to be held only once every three years after they have had three consecutive favorable annual evaluations. The faculty member, the chair, or the dean has the right to ask for an annual evaluation in any year, as authorized in the Faculty/Administration Manual. Sample completed Evaluation Forms were provided by the institution.

Policies and procedures for appointment and employment of staff appear in various provided documents: several from the Human Resources office, State Human Resources Regulations, Compensation Policy, Classified Employees, Staff and Faculty Offer of Hire Approval form; Staff Employee Interview Approval Email; and Staff Employment Offer Letter Sample. Vacant positions are posted and include job responsibilities and requirements; hiring panels are used for upper-level positions. Hiring managers are provided with Recruiting Guidelines for Staff Positions to ensure an appropriate process. Hiring managers must seek approval to post vacant positions by completing the Request for Employee Posting Hiring Authorization Form. The processes are conducted electronically through the online People/Admin system.

Staff employees are evaluated on an annual basis, and the institution provided several redacted staff evaluations to demonstrate that its written policies have been implemented.

3.2.10 The institution periodically evaluates the effectiveness of its administrators. **(Administrative staff evaluations)**

The institution uses an Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) policy that guides the evaluation process for staff employees and administrators, excluding the deans (who are on a three-year evaluation system). As evidence of use of the system, the institution provided redacted examples of four administrative staff evaluations.

College Deans are evaluated at least every three years. The institution provided three redacted examples of those evaluations and a copy of the Deans' Evaluation Rubric. Additionally, the institution provided a copy of the Faculty/Administration Manual, which describes the process, and an email notice of the 2015 Deans' Review.

Although not all administrators were evaluated in 2015 due to the "transition of administration," the examples of redacted 2014 evaluations provided by the institution clearly indicate that administrative staff evaluations are done periodically and on a consistent basis.

3.2.11 The institution's chief executive officer has ultimate responsibility for, and exercises appropriate administrative and fiscal control over, the institution's intercollegiate athletics program. **(Control of intercollegiate athletics)**

Paragraph I.9 of the By-Laws of the Board of Trustees states that "The President is directly responsible for the orderly conduct of the intercollegiate athletic program of the College." The institution's organization chart and the job description of the Athletics Director indicate that the Athletics Director reports directly to the President. The President's job description states that the President directly supervises executive administrators across the institution, with athletics being the first area listed. The President's meeting schedule since August 2015 indicates a biweekly standing meeting with the Athletics Director. Recent decisions by the President in matters relating to the dismissal of a coach and rehiring a new coach—including public statements wherein the President assumes personal responsibility for these decisions—indicate the President's responsibility for, and control of, important athletic decisions. The institution has also documented the President's ultimate control of the athletic budget and of athletic fund-raising (through the Cougar Club).

3.2.12 The institution demonstrates that its chief executive officer controls the institution's fund-raising activities. **(Fund-raising activities).**

According to the institution's Fundraising Statement, it is the responsibility of the institution's President to shape the vision for fund-raising and to set institutional fund-raising strategies and priorities. The institution's Gift Acceptance Policy refers to three independent, tax-exempt organizations through which gifts to the institution may be accepted. These include the institution's main foundation, its Alumni Association, and an athletic foundation. The policy refers to these three

organizations collectively as the Charitable Recipients. Board of Trustee's By-Laws paragraph I.7.e states that the President's powers include the power to "solicit and receive funds" on behalf of the institution's foundation.

Found among the documents offered by the institution in relation to CS 3.2.13, an MOU exists between the institution and its main foundation. Paragraph 1.4 of this MOU states that, among the administrative support services that the institution shall offer to the foundation, the "President of the College shall assume a prominent role in fund-raising activities" of the foundation.

Also found among the documents provided in relation to CS 3.2.13, an MOU exists between the institution and its athletics foundation. Article XIII of the bylaws of this independent foundation and paragraph 5.7 of the institution's MOU with this foundation grant to the institution's President the right to designate personnel to oversee the fiscal management of funds and transactions relating to the institution.

The institution also provided documentation of the President's activities which confirm that he has exercised his authority and responsibility to control the institution's fund-raising activities.

- 3.2.13** For any entity organized separately from the institution and formed primarily for the purpose of supporting the institution or its programs: (1) the legal authority and operating control of the institution is clearly defined with respect to that entity; (2) the relationship of that entity to the institution and the extent of any liability arising out of that relationship is clearly described in a formal, written manner; and (3) the institution demonstrates that (a) the chief executive officer controls any fund-raising activities of that entity or (b) the fund-raising activities of that entity are defined in a formal, written manner which assures that those activities further the mission of the institution. **(Institution-related entities)**

The College currently has three separately organized entities which support it: the College of Charleston Foundation, the College of Charleston Alumni Association, and the College of Charleston Cougar Club. The Foundation supports the academic and financial goals of the College, while the Cougar Club supports athletics. The Alumni Association provides scholarship support. The presidents of the Cougar Club and the Alumni Association also serve as members of the Foundation Board.

Each of these entities is a 501(c)(3) organization. Excerpts from the bylaws for each entity were provided and reviewed. Article I, Section 2 of the Alumni Association bylaws specifies that "The purpose of the Association shall be to manifest an interest in, and to promote the welfare of, the College of Charleston." Section 2.1 of the Foundation bylaws specify that "The purposes of the Foundation are to promote programs of education, research, student development, and faculty development for the exclusive benefit of the College of Charleston." Article II, Section 1 of the Cougar Club bylaws state "The purpose of the Cougar Club shall be as follows: To unite in an organized effort, the friends and alumni of the College of Charleston who desire to support College of Charleston Athletics."

The institution provided a written and signed MOU for the foundation which describes the relationship of the foundation to the College, expectations, and liabilities. The MOU also specifies that the College and the Foundation shall coordinate fund-raising efforts for the benefit of the College. The MOU also recognizes the general policy of the College to delegate receipting, management and, administration of all private philanthropy benefitting the College to the Foundation.

The MOU with the Cougar Club recognizes the right of the President of the College to provide oversight of the Club by designating staff to oversee fiscal management and monitor all matters and/or transactions relating to the College. According to the Athletic Department organization chart presented in relation to CS 3.2.11, the Executive Director of the Cougar Club reports to the Athletic Director who in turn reports to the President of the College.

According to an MOU between the Foundation and the Alumni Association, fund-raising activities of the Alumni Association are managed and coordinated through the Foundation. The Association communicates fund-raising activities to the Foundation and entrusts the management of the Association's endowed scholarship funds to the Foundation.

- 3.2.14** The institution's policies are clear concerning ownership of materials, compensation, copyright issues, and the use of revenue derived from the creation and production of all intellectual property. These policies apply to students, faculty, and staff. **(Intellectual property rights)**

In an email in February 2016, the President informed the campus of a new institutional policy on intellectual property rights, approved by the Board of Trustees. In its *Faculty/Administration Manual* and *Student Handbook*, the institution published this newly approved policy, outlining a range of issues, from intellectual property and copyright issues, to related issues of compensation and dispute resolution. There are also links on the Office of Research and Grants Administration (ORGA) website and on the institution's policy website page. The institution also provides a redacted Discovery and Invention Disclosure Form, indicating that the inventor understands and records those efforts that were conducted on behalf of the institution and that used institutional resources. According to the policy website, the institution has an Intellectual Property Committee, although disputes and appeals in relation to intellectual property issues are brought to the Provost. A three-member panel (one member chosen by the Provost, one by the inventor/appellant, and one by the Executive VP for Business Affairs) then weighs the evidence and sends a recommendation to the President, who has twenty working days to render a decision. The institution provided a redacted disclosure form that demonstrates implementation of the outlined process.

- 3.3.1** The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas **(Institutional Effectiveness)**:

***3.3.1.1 educational programs, to include student learning outcomes**

The institution follows an annual assessment cycle for submission of assessment plans and reports for its educational programs. An assessment template structures the assessment plans and reports in Compliance Assist where the information is input for campus review. Assessment plans are due in early fall, and reports of the implementation of those plans and the implications of the results are due at the completion of the spring term. The Deans Assessment Committees and the Institutional Assessment Committee provide feedback to disciplinary units through the use of the Institutional Effectiveness rubrics.

Assessment reports for all academic programs are available for 2013-2014 through 2015-2016. The reports demonstrate that the educational programs define student learning outcomes and often define program outcomes. They provide results of assessments of the outcomes using multiple measures and demonstrate the extent to which outcomes were achieved. The reports show how assessment results were used to make improvements. Use of results varied widely, including among other actions changes to prerequisites, improvements in teaching methodologies in specific courses, changes to course assignments, development of new courses, additional required courses, and changes in textbooks. The institution also provided assessment reports for educational programs offered at branch campuses and from the single distance education certificate program, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed academic program assessment reports and conducted interviews with the Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning; the Director of Academic Assessment and Strategic Planning; and the Department Chairs for Art and Architectural History and Historic Preservation, Hospitality and Tourism Management, Teacher Education, History, Spanish, Chemistry, and Studio Art in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

3.3.1.2 administrative support services

Based on numerous unit reports from the past three years provided by the institution, it is clear that the institution's administrative support service units have identified outcomes and results of assessment and have used those results to make improvements. As with the academic programs, the assessment model for administrative units includes development of outcomes, multiple measures for each outcome, performance targets, and results from the assessment methodologies associated with each outcome. The model also includes review by Administrative Assessment Committees and the Institutional Assessment Committee to help units in their planning, implementation, and reporting of assessment. Administrative units encompass administrative support

services, centers and institutes, and units with community/public service and/or research missions regardless of location.

3.3.1.3 academic and student support services

Academic and student support service units follow the same institutional effectiveness model as other administrative units. The institution identifies 16 academic support service units, 23 student support services units, and two units that provide both academic and student support services. The various services are housed in Academic Affairs, Business Affairs, Student Affairs, and the President's division.

A review of the numerous unit reports provided indicates that the assessment process enables the units to identify outcomes, implement assessment methodologies that yield assessment results, and use results to make improvements.

3.3.1.4 research within its mission, if appropriate

The mission of the institution indicates that it "encourages and supports research." The mission also states that the College of Charleston "incorporates the University of Charleston, South Carolina (UCSC) . . . which serves as a research institution where graduate and research programs associated with the College are housed." In addition, the mission indicates a commitment to providing students a personalized education "in which to engage in original inquiry and creative expression in an atmosphere of intellectual freedom." Research is defined as "any intellectual, inquiry-based endeavor that advances knowledge and leads to new scholarly insights or the creation of new works in support of the College's educational mission."

Assessment of research activities takes place within units that are part of the annual Institutional Effectiveness model as previously described for both academic programs and administrative units. There are 14 administrative units in academic affairs that support the research, scholarship, and creative activity mission of the institution including the offices of the academic deans. An examination of all fourteen administrative offices and samples of undergraduate and graduate programs indicated that all had research-related outcomes and results based on evaluations of the outcomes; however fewer than a third of the offices and programs used the results of the assessments to make improvements in processes, policies, programs, or services. For example, the School of Science and Mathematics had made improvements to undergraduate research recruitment practices, while the Center for Partnerships to Improve Education has not yet used results for improvements in its research efforts.

As a part of the Focused Report response, the College provided "Use of Results Summary Reports" for all six academic programs and 14 administrative units that support research, scholarship, and creative activity. These summaries provide evidence that each of these units and programs uses assessment results to make improvements in its processes, policies, programs, and/or services. For example, the M.S. in Historic Preservation program made several curricular changes, including extending the hours required for the degree from 54 to 60, based on the results of their assessment practices. The Dean's Office for the School of Education, Health, and Human Performance (EHHP) formed the Women's Health Research Team to encourage faculty research partnerships from across campus and as a way to increase sponsored grants, faculty publications, and student research experiences.

3.3.1.5 community/public service within its mission, if appropriate

Community/public service is defined as any program that engages in the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources with the community with a primary emphasis on the local community in a context of partnership and reciprocity. Prior to 2015-2016, community and public service activities were tracked through the academic Annual Reports submitted to the Provost by each school and through reports extracted from the Faculty Activity System. Beginning in 2015-2016, community/public service units were included in the annual Institutional Effectiveness process.

There are five administrative units, seven centers and institutes, six academic schools, and the Honors College that have a community/public service component. The units developed and assessed outcome statements and used the results of those assessments to improve the programs and services offered.

- 3.3.2 The institution has developed a Quality Enhancement Plan that (1) demonstrates institutional capability for the initiation, implementation, and completion of the QEP; (2) includes broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies in the development and proposed implementation of the QEP; and (3) identifies goals and a plan to assess their achievement. **(Quality Enhancement Plan)**

The institution satisfactorily addressed all components of this standard. See Part III for additional information.

- 3.4.1 The institution demonstrates that each educational program for which academic credit is awarded is approved by the faculty and the administration. **(Academic program approval)**

The faculty at the College of Charleston have primary responsibility for the curriculum. The Faculty/Administration Manual assigns responsibility for consideration of all courses, programs, and changes in the undergraduate

curriculum to the College Curriculum Committee. In addition to the Curriculum Committee, new academic program proposals are reviewed by standing committees of the Faculty Senate.

The Faculty/Administration Manual assigns the duty to receive or initiate recommendations concerning graduate education to the Committee on Graduate Education, Continuing Education and Special Programs. The Committee makes recommendations to the Graduate Council and reports to the Faculty Senate. The Committee also reviews and makes recommendations on the termination of programs brought to it by the Provost.

Approval for undergraduate and graduate programs begins with a proposal by the faculty, which is reviewed and approved by the faculty of the program or department and in some cases by faculty at the school level. Additional approval may be required from the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education. The institution provided examples of the approval process for an undergraduate program and a graduate program.

3.4.2 The institution's continuing education, outreach, and service programs are consistent with the institution's mission. (Continuing education/service programs)

The institution provided evidence that its continuing education and service programs are consistent with the institution's mission, which is to "provide an extensive credit and non-credit continuing education program and cultural activities for the Lowcountry of South Carolina." Because of the generality of this statement, the Provost issued a statement in August, 2016, in which the institution adopted the following definition: "To honor the College's commitment to social responsibilities, the College of Charleston defines community/public service as any program that engages in the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources with the community (primarily local, but not infrequently much more broadly defined) in a context of partnership and reciprocity." Its Center for Continuing and Professional Education (CCPE) supports both the general mission statement and the more specific definition with the English Language Institute, professional testing for LSAT, MCAT, and professional courts for the Certified Financial Planner certificate. CCPE also houses the Center for Creative Retirement, which integrates curricular and extracurricular activities, as evidenced in Goal 4 of the Strategic Plan and in a website page devoted to senior citizens. Additionally, JobBridge provides non-credit courses for workforce demands, including those on digital marketing and social media, sales and negotiation, and sustainable agriculture. The institution also provides numerous outreach and service activities, including Brain Awareness Week, National Chemistry Week, and the Literacy Outreach initiative, all sponsored from a grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI). Other outreach activities include the Joseph Riley Center for Livable Communities, Darwin Week, Community Outreach Research and Learning (CORAL), Astronomy Open Houses, and PhilosoFest.

***3.4.3 The institution publishes admissions policies that are consistent with its mission. (Admissions policies)**

The institution has clearly published admissions policies for undergraduate and graduate students, as well as for other specific student populations such as freshmen, transfers, international students, and conditionally admitted and readmitted students. Policies are published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs, and on the Admissions website and other websites such as the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Information Management.

The institution uses admissions criteria to ensure that it recruits and admits students who can meet degree requirements and excel personally and academically. An annual review of student profiles and retention statistics is used to ensure that admissions policies are consistent with the mission of the institution and the requirements of the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education.

As evidence that published admissions policies are consistent with its mission, the institution provided numerous documents such as the 2016 Admission Review Agenda, an Admissions Retention Analysis, the Admitted Student Profile, Application Checklists, Retention data, Admissions Standards, and numerous other admission-related policies. The institution also provided copies of the admissions policies and specific page numbers in the Graduate and Undergraduate Catalogs.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed such documents as the Undergraduate Catalog, Graduate Catalog, Admissions website, Honor's College academic requirements, and transfer admissions policies and conducted interviews with the Assistant Vice President for Admissions and Financial Aid; the Executive Director for Information and Operations; the Director of Graduate Admissions; Director of Financial Aid; the Director of Recruitment, Marketing and Communications; and the Provost/Dean of the Graduate School in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

3.4.4 The institution publishes policies that include criteria for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit for transfer, experiential learning, credit by examination, advanced placement, and professional certificates that are consistent with its mission and ensures that course work and learning outcomes are at the collegiate level and comparable to the institution's own degree programs. The institution assumes responsibility for the academic quality of any course work or credit recorded on the institution's transcript. (See Commission policy "Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards: Policy and Procedures.") (Acceptance of academic credit)

The institution has defined and published policies for undergraduate and graduate students regarding the evaluation, awarding, and accepting of credit for transfer, including Advanced Placement (AP); International Baccalaureate (IB), Cambridge International Exams, and College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams, as documented in the Graduate Catalog, Undergraduate

Catalog, and Office of the Registrar website. A transfer credit evaluation of post-secondary official transcripts is completed by the Registrar's Office. A course from another institution is evaluated for transfer credit when the course is from a regionally accredited United States institution or an equivalent institution located outside of the US; has a grade of a "C" for undergraduate credit; has a grade of a "B" for graduate credit; and is not a duplication of credits already earned. Transfer coursework earned ten or more years prior to enrollment is subject to additional review. Credits awarded at another institution for placement are not accepted. Transfer credits for life experience, work experience gained prior to admission, military training, and/or non-credit bearing coursework completed for a professional certificate are not accepted. Pass/Fail grades are only accepted if the Pass is noted by the institution where the courses were completed as a minimum equivalent of a "C." Only credit hours are transferred, not grades.

The Undergraduate Catalog presents the above policies, as well as policies concerning the maximum number of transfer hours allowed toward a degree. Also noted as supported evidence are: SCCHE Revisited Transfer Policy 2009; Coursework Elsewhere Form Final 6-12-2016; Request for Evaluation of Transfer Course samples; and the Transfer Equivalency Database from the Registrar. There is a Statewide Articulation Agreement of 86 courses from two-year public institutions in South Carolina approved for transfer among and between the public colleges and universities in the state (SC Articulation Agreement Transferable Courses and Alpha list).

The Graduate Catalog 2016 -2017 presents the specific admissions criteria for each graduate program. A maximum of 12 credit hours may be transferred into the Graduate School. A maximum of 6 credit hours may be transferred into a graduate certificate program. However, not all graduate programs accept transfer credit; the Graduate Catalog 2016-2017 and the Graduate Program Guidelines for Transfer Credit 2016-2017 note transfer requirements for individual programs. For programs that accept transfer credits, the course must come from a regionally accredited institution or comparable international institution; earned a grade of "B" or higher; and have taken the course within the time limit requirements published for each graduate program in the Graduate Catalog 2016-2017. Graduate programs from other institutions must note the grade equivalency for Pass/Fail courses as "B" or higher for the course to be transferable. Only credit hours are transferable; grades from other institutions do not transfer (Graduate Catalog 2016-2017 and Graduate Program Guidelines for Transfer Credit 2016-2017).

Credits earned at The Citadel, Charleston Southern University, or the Medical University of South Carolina using the former or any approved future graduate cross-over-registration procedures are considered transfer credits, as noted in the Graduate Catalog 2016-2017. Students who complete coursework outside of the US, regardless of citizenship, must submit official transcripts and a course-by-course evaluation from a recognized credential evaluation agency for verification and course-by-course evaluation prior to admission to the Graduate program (as specified in Graduate Catalog 2016-2017). Undergraduate students who take graduate coursework at the College of Charleston that meets the degree requirement for an undergraduate degree cannot apply those credits towards a graduate degree; the exception is if the student is enrolled in a

combined Bachelor's and Master's program at the College of Charleston (see CR 2.7.1).

The college has student exchange agreements with more than two dozen academic institutions around the world, allowing students to gain academic credit at international institutions. Courses abroad must be pre-approved before departure. The evidence includes a Study Abroad Course Approval Form. Procedures for applying for transfer of credit courses are also presented in the Undergraduate Catalog 2016-2017 and the Study Abroad Course Approval Form.

- 3.4.5** The institution publishes academic policies that adhere to principles of good educational practice. These policies are disseminated to students, faculty, and other interested parties through publications that accurately represent the programs and services of the institution. **(Academic policies)**

The College of Charleston publishes academic policies that accurately represent the programs and services of the institution in its catalogs and on the College's policy website where they are available to students, faculty, and other interested parties. Academic policies concerning students are also published in the Student Handbook. Policies are also available on the websites of appropriate offices, such as academic affairs, student affairs, and the Graduate School.

The Provost and the faculty assure that academic policies adhere to principles of good educational practice through established approval processes. Students, faculty, and administrators may propose new academic policies or changes to existing policies. Such proposals are considered by the appropriate faculty committees which report their recommendations to the Faculty Senate. Procedures for the approval and publication of academic policies are described in the Campus Wide Policy Procedures Formation document which is published on the College's policy website. The institution provided an example of the process of academic policy change.

The Faculty Senate maintains a record of changes to academic policies in its minutes. The Faculty Secretariat and the Office of the Provost collect all changes to academic policy approved by the Faculty Senate. The Provost, Speaker of the Faculty, and Registrar assure that new policies and changes to existing policies are incorporated into the Graduate Catalog, Undergraduate Catalog, and Faculty/Administration Manual. The Dean of Students assures that new policies or changes to existing policies are incorporated into the Student Handbook.

- 3.4.6** The institution employs sound and acceptable practices for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for courses, regardless of format or mode of delivery. **(Practices for awarding credit)**

Faculty develop new courses for academic programs and submit a course proposal for consideration by the department, school, Curriculum Committee (graduate or undergraduate), Graduate Council (graduate), and Faculty Senate as evidenced in the Curriculum Proposal Flow Chart. The faculty member

responsible for the course makes a determination of the course credit to be awarded for the course (note Assignment of Credit Hours Policy 12.1.5). The vast majority of courses at the college are assigned three credits. Three-credit courses meet for 150 minutes per week for 14 weeks; courses may meet twice a week for 75 minutes or three times a week for 50 minutes. Maymester and summer terms have approved meeting times that are adjusted to include the required minutes. Each credit hour requires 700 minutes of instructional time and application. Courses that require sustained time, such as labs or studio art classes, may have the time adjusted, but the number of minutes are still required for each credit hour awarded. Accordingly, courses that are designed to include significant out-of-class experiences such as student teaching, research labs, field study, or internships follow guidelines set by the academic programs for how the instructional time frame meets credit guidelines. Individual-enrollment courses may carry variable credit (one to three credits); individual-enrollment contracts which include the outline of course credit and contact/application hours are signed by the student, the supervising faculty member, and the department chair, prior to submission to the Office of the Registrar. Credit hour assignment does not change with mode of delivery, whether face-to-face, on-line, or hybrid. Evidence is provided in such documents as Approved Meeting Pattern Times, Assignment of Credit Hours Policy 12.1.5, URST 250 251 Discussion of Assignment of Credit Senate Minutes 2015-03-10, Page 2, and EGST 381 Women's and Gender Studies Internship Variable Credit.

Courses are numbered, based on the progression that make up the beginning, middle, and end of a program of study. The Faculty Curriculum Committee website under Proposing a New Major Questions to Consider outlines directions regarding the appropriate level of credit to be awarded (evidenced in College Policy 7.6.9 Course Numbering). Beginning undergraduate course numbers that signal the beginning of a program are 100-299; courses in the middle of a program are numbered 300-399; and courses at the end of the program are numbered 400-499. Graduate course numbers similarly signal the level of credit for graduate courses – 500-599, 600-699. Individual departments apply the course-numbering policy when assigning number designations to new courses.

- 3.4.7** The institution ensures the quality of educational programs and courses offered through consortia relationships or contractual agreements, ensures ongoing compliance with the *Principles* and periodically evaluates the consortial relationship and/or agreement against the mission of the institution. (See the Commission policy “Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards: Policy and Procedures.”) **(Consortia relationships/contractual agreements)**

The College has consortial relationships and contractual agreements with many parties. For students to receive academic programs through the College's collaborative relationships with outside institutions domestically and internationally, guidelines must be met to ensure the quality of the program; ensure compliance to the program with accreditation requirements; and ensure a periodic review of the program. The College uses SACSCOC definitions to define these relationships (Dual Education Programs, Joint Education Programs, and Contractual Agreements).

Responsibility for graduate programs resides in the Graduate School of the University of Charleston at the College of Charleston (a component of the institution). The Graduate School has five joint degree programs and one dual degree program with other institutions in the state. Each program has a defined residency for students in one school or the other. A joint steering committee manages the program with faculty representatives from each program. The institution presented appropriate supporting evidence for the following programs:

- Joint Master of Science in Historic Preservation with Clemson University
- Joint Master of Arts in History with The Citadel
- Joint Master of Arts in English with The Citadel
- Joint Master of Science in Computer and Information Sciences with The Citadel (the MOU was amended to include the Cybersecurity Certificate in 2014)
- Joint Master of Education in Middle Grades Education with The Citadel
- Dual Master of Business Administration and Juris Doctor with the Charleston School of Law

All programs share the same curricular review process, graduate admissions policy, faculty credentialing policy, transfer credit policy, transcript policy, assessment criteria, and external review process as other institutional graduate programs. Admissions standards are noted in the MOUs; these standards meet or exceed standards set forth in the policy for Applicants for Graduate Admission: Degree and Non-Degree. Faculty who teach in these programs are required to hold an earned doctorate or terminal degree and must be certified as graduate faculty, as noted in the Faculty/Administration Manual. A minimum of 12 credit hours may be transferred into the graduate program, although not all graduate degree or certificate programs accept transfer course credit. In joint programs, credits earned at one institute or the other are not considered transfer credits. Each graduate program undergoes an external review every seven years unless the interval required by a specific program's accrediting body is shorter. The institution provided evidence of that such review processes occur.

In addition, international contractual agreements are supported as part of the college's mission to "provide students the global and interdisciplinary perspectives to address the major issues of the 21st Century" (specifically stated in Strategic Plan, Strategy 8, Priority 2). The College offers six study abroad programs during the fall and spring semesters. There are also summer abroad programs organized and taught by the college's faculty members. While maintaining full academic responsibility for its semester abroad program, the College has entered in contractual agreements with organizations abroad to support services to students on the semester programs. All such programs are evaluated like other courses on campus: the student course evaluations are administered; the Center for International Education conducts a survey annually on the quality of services; and faculty, department chairs, and/or other senior leaders complete on-site evaluation visits.

There are also international exchange agreements whereby students study abroad under reciprocal student exchange agreements, in which the student

pays tuition to the College, then registers for courses and resides at the partner university abroad. Evidence outlining procedures are noted in the following documents: Argentina-PUBA-2014, Cuba-GALFISA-Institut0-2013, International Student Exchange Programs, and Transcript – Spring 2016- Chile1. Affiliate programs (third-party providers) also offer students an opportunity to study abroad, by paying a program fee directly to the study-abroad organization and receiving transfer credit upon successful completion of the program subject to transfer requirements of the institution. Supporting evidence is provided in the Affiliate Program Providers document.

- 3.4.8** The institution awards academic credit for course work taken on a noncredit basis only when there is documentation that the noncredit course work is equivalent to a designated credit experience. **(Noncredit to credit)**

The College does not award academic credit for non-credit course work. In addition, the College does not accept non-credit coursework, certificates, or continuing education units for credit. The Undergraduate Catalog 2016-2017, Transfer Credit section, notes that the College “does not award transfer credit for life experience and/or work experience gained prior to admission. Transfer credit is also not awarded for military training or for non-credit bearing coursework completed toward a professional certificate.” At the graduate level, transfer credit is only considered for credit-bearing coursework from regionally accredited institutions, as noted in the Graduate Catalog 2016-2017.

- 3.4.9** The institution provides appropriate academic support services. **(Academic support services)**

Numerous academic support services exist across the institution through established Centers: The Academic Advising and Planning Center, the Center for Excellence in Peer Education, the Center for Disability Services, the Center for International Education, and the Center for Student Learning. Specific services within the Centers include individual advising, exploration of student interests and academic majors, career exploration, tutoring, workshops, library and learning resources, opportunities for learning communities, and First-Year-Seminar, among others. Other academic support services include “certificate program for students with mild intellectual and/or developmental disabilities,” instruction and guidance in use of technology, and opportunities for personal growth through study abroad and civic engagement.

Academic support services are available to graduate and undergraduate students, campus and commuter students, and online students (with use of technology, social media, Skype, and departmental blogs). The institution provided substantial documentation of these services in program/service descriptions and in two examples of usage data (academic advising retention rates and tutoring/workshop attendance).

Student academic support services are publicized on the institutional website, in the Student Handbook and Student-Athlete Handbook & Planner, and through

email communications as well as on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

Academic support services for faculty include the Teaching, Learning, and Technology (TLT) Department, the Faculty Technology Institute, Distance Education Courses, training workshops each semester, and Professional Learning Clubs, which allow faculty members to examine "teaching and student outcomes and apply the evaluation to current students."

According to the Compliance Report narrative, academic support services are evaluated "on an ongoing basis by the faculty and staff within their respective units through Institutional Effectiveness assessment" and by the application of CAS Standards.

3.4.10 The institution places primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of its curriculum with its faculty. (Responsibility for curriculum)

The faculty has primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of the curriculum. The Faculty/Administration Manual, Article IV, states that the Faculty Senate (elected by and from the ranks of the faculty "shall be concerned with all matters relating to academic programs, the curriculum...degree and certificate requirements, and the utilization of the intellectual resources of the College." All academic programs and courses are initiated by the faculty, approved through the faculty governance process, and approved by the administration in compliance with policies, procedures, and practices outlined in the Manual and described in detail on the Curriculum Committee's website (for undergraduate courses and programs). The Curriculum Committee offers faculty general principles and questions to consider when developing curricula. The committee reviews and evaluates course and program proposals.

Undergraduate courses and programs begin with a proposal developed by faculty, which is reviewed and approved by the faculty of the program or department (or the school). Documents such as the New Academic Approval Process, July 15, 2016, and the Program Modification Workflow 1-19-16 demonstrate the faculty role in initiating, reviewing, and approving of each educational program. A similar process exists for faculty oversight of graduate course and programs. The Faculty Senate's Committee on Graduate Education, Continuing Education, and Program Modification Process provides evidence of the graduate faculty's role in developing courses and programs. The Graduate Council also contributes to the development of the curriculum, as demonstrated in the Faculty/Administration Manual, Faculty Senate Minutes of March 2016, and Graduate Council Minutes of March 2016.

While the faculty governance process fully manages the development of and revision of courses and academic programs, the faculty are also responsible for the quality of the curriculum and for the initiation of new curricula and review of existing curricula. The faculty and academic departments or programs are responsible for ensuring that the curriculum is current and relevant in the academic discipline or field of inquiry, has the appropriate level of rigor, and that there is a coherent plan of study for programs. The effectiveness of academic

programs is evaluated systematically through the ongoing assessments of student learning outcomes, the Program Review Process (at both the graduate and undergraduate level), and specialized accreditations, which ensure that data about student learning are collected, evaluated, and used by faculty responsible for the program content and quality to inform program improvement. Faculty also assure that student learning is assessed through use of nationally normed exams, final exams, and assignments evaluated with rubrics (See CS 3.3.1.1).

- *3.4.11** For each major in a degree program, the institution assigns responsibility for program coordination, as well as for curriculum development and review, to persons academically qualified in the field. In those degree programs for which the institution does not identify a major, this requirement applies to a curricular area or concentration. **(Academic program coordination)**

The institution ties its managerial qualifications for academic programs to program CIP codes, as approved by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education. The Division of Academic Affairs aligns the manager's academic credentials, at the master's and doctoral levels, to the appropriate CIP code, most often to six digits, although the institution notes that four is sufficient in certain cases. In still other cases, department chairs have designated that equivalent CIP codes substitute for the published degree code, such as that between zoology/animal biology and biology. In other cases, the institution provides other documentation for appropriate qualification to lead or manage a program, such as a listing of graduate courses that cover the field's curriculum.

The institution certifies the academic credentials of its program directors through a form entitled "Certification of Qualifications for Faculty Appointment as Program Director," which is completed by the dean, chair, or other designated administrator and includes information on credentialing and academic qualification. The notification letter sent to program directors, as evidenced by the sample provided, notes that the appointment is contingent upon approval of qualifications through the published process. The Program Director Roster confirms the outcome of their process, with all cited program directors conforming to the alignment of CIP codes and/or other equivalent managerial credentials.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed documents including CVs for program directors, the Program Director roster, and the College of Charleston Certification of Qualifications for Faculty Appointment as Program Director and conducted interviews with the Dean of the School of Sciences and Mathematics and the Dean of the School of Education, Health, and Human Performance in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

- 3.4.12** The institution's use of technology enhances student learning and is appropriate for meeting the objectives of its programs. Students have access to and training in the use of technology. **(Technology use)**

The College of Charleston has provided a detailed narrative and more than 50 supporting documents with usage statistics, assessments, service descriptions, and policies. In so doing, it has provided detailed information documenting how the use of technology enhances student learning through the description of technology resources, access to electronic library collections, technology-enhanced classrooms, student access to technology across campus, and training and support in the use of technology.

Technology and support for the effective use of it is embedded throughout the institution's infrastructure, services, and curriculum, with access to technology and training provided through partnerships between the Division of Information Technology (IT), the Libraries, the Center for Student Learning, the Office of Disability Services, and other support units. Technology services and support are provided to the College of Charleston's main campus, the North Campus, and the Grice Marine Laboratory.

The IT Strategic Plan, developed by the IT Strategic Advisory Committee, a committee comprised of faculty, staff, and students, and the Faculty Educational Technology Committee, guides IT budget and planning and documents that the institution's primary focus in the use of technology is to develop innovative approaches to utilize technology to support teaching, learning and research.

To ensure that the plan is meeting its objectives, the institution has utilized the Techqual+ survey which identifies service strengths and gaps and also compares the results to those of peer institutions. The 2014 survey with 779 respondents, 40% of whom were students and 22% of whom were faculty, showed that the College scored better on 12 of 13 questions than its peers. However, survey results also documented the need for improvement in a number of key areas, such as a more reliable wireless network that is available throughout the campuses. The institution provided documentation of a multi-year project to enhance wireless access, and now has over 693 access points with more planned to keep pace as new facilities are added. Another service gap in technology identified in the 2014 survey was in classroom technology, which the College has been addressing through its Classroom Technology Upgrade Project which has so far upgraded 86 classrooms. Of the 281 classrooms available, 251 currently have embedded technology to enhance the student learning experience, with 246 of them being smart classrooms and 29 being computer labs.

The network infrastructure (with wired gigabit [1000Mbps]) and more than 99% mean up time on network equipment, with 24/7 monitoring by technicians, is robust and well supported. IT currently provides 2Gbps commodity internet access as well as a 1Gbps connection to Internet2. The remote campus facilities have almost the same service level as the main campus, with 1Gbps to the desktop with the same connectivity to the internet as the main campus.

The College provides access not only to a standard suite of software across the institution, it also has institutional licenses for a number of more focused applications such as Google Apps, Voice Thread (which allows users to post media for community feedback, utilized by students who post visual media to receive faculty and peer comment and which is used extensively in distance

education courses, as well as face-to-face courses), Poll Everywhere (which allows users to respond to questions and polls through SMS text messaging, twitter, or web interface with their own mobile device and which was used in the 2014-2015 academic year by 86 faculty who created a total of 2,678 polls for their courses and received 103,134 responses).

A significant subset of library resources and services are available electronically 24/7 through the library's website (e.g., 110,032 electronic serials, 388,290 ebooks, 22,996 streaming media titles), and supporting documentation shows a high degree of satisfaction with the library's navigation tools and access to resources. The library also maintains an extensive collection of technology for checkout in the main and the branch campuses, including MacBook Air laptops, iPod Touches, Kindles, Digital Cameras, Projectors, Calculators (Scientific and Graphing), and Cell Phone Chargers. In addition, there are 60 iPads that the faculty may reserve for their classes. Students also have access to multimedia production spaces and tools through the libraries, along with scanners and printers.

Extensive training is provided to students and faculty in the effective use of technology, whether through the information desk in the main library that is collaboratively staffed by the library and IT's student computing support team, through 30+ courses throughout the curriculum that provide training in the use of specific technologies as part of the course, through the Center for Student Learning's 7 labs (Math Lab, Foreign Languages Tutoring Lab, Writing Lab, Accounting Lab, Speaking Lab, and Science Lab), or through the Teaching, Learning and Technology Department's set of tutorials and apps blog that provide online and written tutorial resources to faculty and students for the more commonly used technology applications on campus. Tutorials are available for the Learning Management System (OAKS), Poll Everywhere, VoiceThread, and other academic applications. During the 2014-2015 academic year, more than 1100 faculty and more than 15,100 students accessed the learning management system, making it the most widely used academic application at the College.

Students and faculty thus have a rich array of resources and training available. Technology resources are accessed through the MyCharleston portal, a single sign-on Web interface that provides access to many resources and allows students to manage their own information, such as OAKS (the College's LMS), email, and Google Apps, as well as gain access to financial aid, housing, dining, and academic services accounts information. Students can also create and maintain their own personal and course-related websites through IT's web page server (a service which currently has 733 active student web page accounts). The institution has provided evidence that it assesses the adequacy and effectiveness of these resources regularly and takes steps to ensure that they are continually improving to meet user needs.

- 3.5.1** The institution identifies college-level general education competencies and the extent to which students have attained them. **(General education competencies)**

The College's general education curriculum is a set of college-level course requirements distributed across seven areas: history, humanities, foreign language, natural science, social science, math/logic and writing. The institution provided a table listing the student learning outcomes for each distribution area, as defined by the faculty. New and revised courses must be approved by departments, the General Education Committee, the Curriculum Committee, and the Faculty Senate.

Each department must specify how the course satisfies the criteria for the distribution area. The course syllabus must display the general education student learning outcomes, include a statement of where the outcomes are demonstrated in the course, and assign a percentage of the course grade to the specified assignment(s). The General Education Committee evaluates each proposal and determines whether the opportunity for students to achieve the student learning outcomes exists.

The institution uses two direct methods to assess the extent to which students attain the identified college-level general education competencies: course-embedded assignments and the ETS proficiency profile. The assignments are assessed by faculty members in the assessment reading groups (ARGs) every year. A figure is provided showing the data collection process for course-embedded assignments. A graph and a table are provided which summarize the percentage of students achieving the general education competencies in all seven areas from 2013-2015. The graph shows that the percentages of students achieving the general education competence has increased in all but two areas (history and foreign languages) over the three-year period. Results from the table show that performance in some areas remained low in 2015-2016: history (41.9 %), natural science (47.7 %), and writing (33.0 %).

The second direct measure is the ETS proficiency profile, which is completed every three years by seniors and freshmen. The exam aligns with the institution's general education distribution model. The ETS exam allows the College to compare senior-level and freshman-level scores and to benchmark against national averages. Graphs are provided that demonstrate that seniors score higher than freshmen in all areas and that the College's students score above national averages.

- 3.5.2** At least 25 percent of the credit hours required for the degree are earned through instruction offered by the institution awarding the degree. *(See the Commission policy "Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards: Policy and Procedures.")* **(Institutional credits for a degree).**

The College of Charleston's Policy for Applicants for Undergraduate Admissions establishes that a maximum of 90 transfer credit hours may be applied to the requirements for a 122-credit-hour bachelor's degree. This ensures that 32 credit hours (or 26 percent) must be earned through instruction offered by the institution.

The institution's online degree audit system, Degree Works, is programmed to allow a maximum of 90 transfer credit hours to be used to meet undergraduate

degree requirements. The Office of the Registrar is responsible for certifying that all undergraduate degree requirements have been met. A weekly report from the Office of the Registrar identifies any student who exceeds the transfer credit limit, and action is taken immediately to adjust the transfer credit. The official academic transcript lists transfer credit separately by institution and distinguishes it from institutional credit. To support its submission, the institution provided a sample official academic transcript.

- 3.5.3** The institution publishes requirements for its undergraduate programs, including its general education components. These requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs. (*See the Commission policy "The Quality and Integrity of Undergraduate Degrees."*) **(Undergraduate program requirements)**

The institution provides documentation from the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education and its Undergraduate Catalog to demonstrate that it properly defines and publishes requirements for its undergraduate programs, which conform to commonly accepted standards and practices. The catalog outlines the required coursework for degree program requirements, and the submitted documentation provides clear, complete, and consistent information about each program's requirements.

Specifically, the general education requirements are clearly published in the Undergraduate Catalog, as are the requirements for the institution's four baccalaureate degrees (the A.B., the B.A., the B.S., and the B.P.S.). In its submission, the institution also provided detailed examples of all four degrees—Classics (A.B.), Communication and Spanish (B.A.), International Business and Physics (B.S.), and Professional Studies (B.P.S.), including degree audits and UG Catalog entries.

Finally, to demonstrate that the institution has taken steps to ensure that its degree requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices, it provided an Undergraduate Program Review Report, which, in its nine criteria, analyzes how the degree program align with the institution's mission, how the data from the Learning Outcomes support program goals, how the program uses assessment tools evaluating program effectiveness, how the resulting data reflects or acts on student learning, how the program has implemented curricular changes, how the program has engaged faculty scholarship, how the program provides faculty with development in teaching and research, how the faculty members are engaged in service, and how the program's alumni are able to launch successful careers.

- 3.5.4** At least 25 percent of the course hours in each major at the baccalaureate level are taught by faculty members holding an appropriate terminal degree—usually the earned doctorate or the equivalent of the terminal degree. **(Terminal degrees of faculty)**

The institution provides ample evidence in its approved credential memoranda, its links to its catalog system and advising system (DegreeWorks), its List of

Terminally Degreed Faculty, and its List for Instructors of Record and Faculty Credentials that at least 25% of the course hours in each major at the baccalaureate level are taught by faculty members holding the appropriate terminal degree. While excluding courses at the 100-level, which are not required courses for the program of study, the institution provides a formula for determining the inclusion of specific faculty and courses in its Program of Study Worksheets (samples from astronomy, physics, and communication are included). The Table titled Percentage of Student Credit Hours Taught by Terminally-Degreed Faculty, 2015-2016, demonstrates the aggregate totals for each discipline. Tables are also provided which disaggregated data by instructional location and by instructional modality. In some exceptional cases—African-American Studies, Dance, and Jewish Studies—the institution provided additional program level reviews to determine faculty members' qualifications so that their inclusion would clearly and justifiably reach the 25% criterion.

- 3.6.1** The institution's post-baccalaureate professional degree programs, and its master's and doctoral degree programs, are progressively more advanced in academic content than its undergraduate programs. **(Post-baccalaureate program rigor)**

The institution offers 21 master's degrees, five of which are offered jointly with other state institutions. It also offers a dual enrollment program (MBA/JD).

All programs of study are developed, approved, and implemented by the faculty through a structured process of review that ensures that the institution's post-baccalaureate programs are progressively more advanced in content than its undergraduate programs.. The process begins with faculty, proceeds through faculty committees at the department, school, and college levels, culminating in approval by the Faculty Senate. New or substantially modified programs require final review and approval by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education. There is a structured process for monitoring academic content and progressively advanced rigor of graduate programs. An example of such a process, which includes faculty, Graduate Council, and Faculty Senate input, as well as review by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, is noted in Table 4: Approval Process Leading to the Creation of the M.F.A. in Creative Writing. Supporting evidence includes Graduate Program Review Process 2016 and Senate Minutes 2014-11-11 MFA Approval.

Graduate courses are numbered at the 500 level and above to indicate additional rigor beyond the undergraduate numbering of 400 and below. Courses may be cross-listed with undergraduate courses at the 400-499 level; graduate courses that are cross-listed hold numbers of 500-599. Graduate courses at the 600-900 levels are not permitted to be cross-listed. The Course Numbering Policy notes that "cross-listing of undergraduate and graduate courses shall be permitted only when those involved in the approval process are provided with satisfactory evidence that the student learning outcomes, learning experiences, and assignments will be different and more advanced for students at the 500-level than students in the 400-level course." Cross-listing of courses requires approval by the Committee on Graduate Education, Continuing Education, and Special Programs; Graduate Council; and the Faculty Senate. Certain documents must

be submitted for approval, including syllabi that show that the graduate course requires additional work and rigor, with an identified difference in student learning outcomes. The Committee on Graduate Education, Continuing Education, and Special Programs publishes a "Meets-with" Course Syllabus Differentiation Guide to inform programs and departments of the ways in which advanced academic content can be developed and implemented. Confirming documentation provided included Course Number Policy, 400-500 Differentiation Guide August 2016, Graduate Permission to Cross-List Form, and Graduate Curriculum Governance Guidelines.

Specific research and advanced training requirements further demonstrate the rigor of the graduate coursework. All graduate programs require students to take courses which focus on research and/or professional application. All programs require either a research project in the form of graduate thesis, a capstone course, and/or intern/externships. Non-thesis master's degrees require an independent project or other means to demonstrate mastery beyond coursework and a bachelor's degree.

The Graduate School requires periodic program reviews to assess the quality and rigor of all graduate programs. Several programs are reviewed by specialized accrediting agencies. Those programs that are not reviewed by accrediting agencies are subject to a periodic self-study and external review. Reviews are led by faculty who are subject-matter experts employed by other universities. The reviewers examine the program's curriculum, syllabi, and other curricular documentation to determine "whether courses demonstrate the rigor expected of graduate education." Supporting documentation of this process included External Review Schedule 2015, Graduate Curriculum Governance Guidelines, and Graduate Program Review Process 2016.

All academic programs establish and evaluate student learning and program outcomes. At the graduate level, the outcomes emphasize higher-order synthesis and application of content to designing research and analyzing problems to derive and evaluate solutions, as opposed to undergraduate outcomes that focus on acquisition of content knowledge. As an example of this difference the institution provided a table contrasting the learning outcomes in the baccalaureate and graduate programs in accounting.

3.6.2 The institution structures its graduate curricula (1) to include knowledge of the literature of the discipline and (2) to ensure ongoing student engagement in research and/or appropriate professional practice and training experiences. **(Graduate curriculum)**

The institution offers 21 graduate programs, and in its Graduate Catalog and its Course Syllabus Differentiation Guide, the institution distinguishes clearly between undergraduate and graduate courses. For graduate instruction, faculty members are required to assign work that forces students "to analyze, synthesize, or critically review or evaluate information," as well as to more concretely define the deeper levels of critical judgments required by graduate programs. An M.Ed assessment report, a research poster, and the requirements and assignments from graduate courses in Education, Spanish, Historic

Preservation, and Communication provide evidence of the institution's commitment to support independent research and professional practice, even as graduate students must also master required disciplinary knowledge. Additional examples include course descriptions from Principles of Revenue Management, Communication Theory, and Topics in Spanish Culture and Civilization. Further, the documents entitled Master's Degree Disciplinary Literature Research Requirements and Professional Practice Course Coverage describe the centrality of disciplinary knowledge, research and professional practice in the graduate curriculum. The institution promotes graduate rigor through a "culminating experience" of the program, which may include a thesis, a thesis defense, an internship, and/or comprehensive examinations.

- 3.6.3** At least one-third of credits toward a graduate or a post-baccalaureate professional degree are earned through instruction offered by the institution awarding the degree. *(See the Commission policy "Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards: Policy and Procedures.")* **(Institutional credits for a degree)**

As specified by the College of Charleston Residency Policy, students seeking a graduate degree from the institution must earn a minimum of one-third of the credits required for the degree through instruction delivered by the institution. In practice, though, students must earn considerably more than one-third of required credits, based on specific degree requirements as published in the Graduate Catalog, which specify that a maximum of 12 credit hours may be transferred into a graduate degree program, and all graduate degrees require a minimum of 30 graduate credit hours of coursework. Graduate transfer credit hours are tracked in Degree Works, the institution's online degree audit system, to ensure that the maximum allowed number of transfer hours is not exceeded. No student has ever been identified by the Degree Works software as violating this maximum. A sample degree plan and accompanying Degree Works audit were provided. Credit awarded by the institution is clearly distinguished from transfer credit on student academic transcripts, an example of which was provided.

- 3.6.4** The institution defines and publishes requirements for its graduate and post-graduate professional programs. These requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs. **(Post-baccalaureate program requirements)**

The institution follows best practices as outlined by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education as outlined in SCCHE 2014 Policies and Procedures for Academic Programs document. All graduate programs are offered under the auspices of the Graduate School, which offers 21 Master's degrees 10 graduate certificate programs, two accelerated bachelor-to-master's programs, and a dual-degree program offered with the Charleston School of Law. Graduate School requirements are defined, updated and published annually in the Graduate Catalog. The Registrar's Office and the program directors develop, revise, and monitor the catalog, which is also published online. Individual programs also publish their graduate program requirements on individual

program websites. Students can monitor their academic progress through Degree Works, a process documented by the presentation of both complete and partial sample degree audits.

All master's degree programs require a minimum of 30 credit hours of graduate-level work, excluding continuous research enrollment hours. Certificate programs are defined as "a focused collection of courses, that, when completed, affords the student some record of coherent academic accomplishment in a given discipline or set of related disciplines." If a student is formally admitted into a master's degree program, credits earned in a certificate program may be applied to the degree program.

All course proposals and requests for revision of courses originate from the faculty and are advanced in a clearly published process. The Graduate School maintains the guidelines describing the governance structure, proper forms, and a structured workflow that requires defined deadlines (see Table 2: Graduate Course and Program Change Forms). The Committee on Graduate Education, Continuing Education, and Special Programs reviews course and program proposals; the Graduate Council and Faculty Senate provide additional review. The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education oversees concordance with best practices in higher education; the Commission and the College work closely to support new and revised course proposals. Evidence of the process is also provided in Table 3: MFA in Creative Writing, Annual Assessment Cycle with Deadlines and New Grad Degree Program Form.

To ensure that programs conform to commonly accepted standards and practices, all programs are required to undergo a peer external review every seven years unless the interval required by an outside accrediting agency is shorter. The Graduate School's guidelines require the self-study to address the program's purpose and goals; its organizational chart; the size of the supporting unit(s); program faculty; students; curriculum; programmatic climate; facilities and equipment; and program assessment. The guidelines also describe the third-party peer review process, as well as timelines for completing the review process.

- 3.7.1** The institution employs competent faculty members qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. When determining acceptable qualifications of its faculty, an institution gives primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline. The institution also considers competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. For all cases, the institution is responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty. (*See Commission guidelines "Faculty Credentials."*) **(Faculty competence)**

In accordance with its policy on Instructors of Record and Faculty Credentials, the College of Charleston gives primary consideration to the highest degree(s) earned in the teaching discipline in determining faculty qualifications. The

College also considers competence, effectiveness, relevant undergraduate degrees, additional graduate degrees, work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications, documented excellence in teaching in the discipline, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements.

By institutional policy, faculty teaching baccalaureate courses should hold a doctorate or other terminal degree in the teaching discipline, a master's degree in the teaching discipline, or a master's degree or higher with a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline. Faculty teaching graduate and post-baccalaureate coursework should have an earned doctorate or terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a closely related discipline. Some departments require that all instructors have terminal degrees.

For all roster faculty ranks and adjunct faculty, the initial determination of competence is made in the hiring process. Department chairs and program directors initiate the credentialing process for faculty in their department or program by completing a Certification of Credentials Form. All credentials are reviewed by the school dean and an associate provost. Each semester, the associate provost for faculty affairs and SACSCOC liaison review an "audit faculty roster" which lists course assignments and faculty credentials.

This systematic approach to confirming faculty credentials enabled the institution to demonstrate that almost all of its faculty are appropriately qualified for their instructional assignments. However, the Off-Site Committee determined that insufficient documentation was provided to verify the credentials of a few faculty members. These individuals are listed in the Request for Justifying and Documenting Qualifications of Faculty (at the end of this report).

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed additional documentation supplied in the Focused Report and found information sufficient to verify the qualifications of instructors still teaching at the institution whose credentials were questioned by the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee. One instructor whose credentials were questioned is no longer employed by the institution and was replaced by an instructor with appropriate qualifications as presented in the Focused Report.

The On-Site Committee spent significant time reviewing the qualifications and accompanying justification for one specific faculty member who holds two master's degrees and has extensive professional experience and teaches professional development courses at the graduate level. The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee ultimately determined that her qualifications are appropriate for several reasons: courses taught are credit bearing but do not apply toward any degree or certificate, enrollment in these courses is made available only through the College's Office for Professional Development in Education (OPDE), and the instructors and the syllabi for these courses must be approved by the OPDE.

- 3.7.2** The institution regularly evaluates the effectiveness of each faculty member in accord with published criteria, regardless of contractual or tenured status. **(Faculty evaluation)**

As indicated by appropriate sections of the Faculty/Administration Manual, the Annual Merit Evaluation forms for permanent Faculty (and a sample of a faculty member in Health and Human Performance), a completed sample evaluation for adjunct and visiting faculty, course-instructor evaluation forms, departmental standards for promotion and tenure and third-year reviews, and sample documents from promotion and tenure and post-tenure reviews, the institution conducts regular evaluation of faculty effectiveness at all levels of instruction and at all instructor ranks. For tenured and tenure-track faculty, there are additional professional responsibilities, and those requirements differ from discipline to discipline. The institution included the tenure, promotion, and post-tenure "specific departmental expectations" for Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Political Science. The institution also publishes a calendar entitled Annual and Merit Evaluation Calendar for Regular Faculty, which is equally applicable to instructors, senior instructors, and tenure-track and tenured faculty.

3.7.3 The institution provides evidence of ongoing professional development of faculty as teachers, scholars, and practitioners. (Faculty development)

The College of Charleston provides a variety of professional development opportunities for all categories of faculty, including adjunct and visiting faculty members. These opportunities are communicated to faculty through email, websites, blogs, and in-person sessions.

The College provides an array of faculty development opportunities in support of teaching, including, among others:

The First-Year Experience New Faculty Workshop which prepares faculty who are teaching for the first time in the College's First Year Experience (FYE); The Teaching, Learning, and Technology (TLT) Department which provides a Distance Education Readiness Course that prepares faculty to teach in an online environment; The Faculty Liberal Arts and Sciences Colloquium which is designed to foster the development of courses that actively engage students with faculty members; The Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program which is aimed at developing a campus culture of reflection on writing pedagogy; and The Innovative Teaching and Learning in the Liberal Arts and Sciences small grants program which supports faculty members in their independent development initiatives.

The College also provides support for faculty research and research-related professional development. The Office of Research and Grants Administration (ORGA) assists faculty members seeking external funding for research, scholarly activities, instruction, and service. To support faculty members in their research efforts, the College offers Writers' Retreats during times when classes are not in session. Most tenure-track faculty members receive a one-course release during their first year and a modest summer research stipend prior to their third year.

Finally, the College provides a variety of opportunities to support faculty development in professional service and leadership. The College Colloquium engages faculty and staff in the ongoing national dialogue about the evolution of higher education. Faculty assessment of student learning outcomes is enhanced

by ongoing faculty development to ensure and enhance faculty expertise in assessment. The College provides chair and program director orientation sessions and professional development funds to chairs as they return to full-time faculty positions. The Administrative Faculty Fellows program provides the opportunity for faculty to develop administrative and leadership skills.

Data was provided to confirm that the College provides a substantial budget to support faculty development activities and that faculty members have availed themselves of these faculty development opportunities.

3.7.4 The institution ensures adequate procedures for safeguarding and protecting academic freedom. (Academic freedom)

The Statement of Academic Freedom and associated policies and procedures are included in the Faculty/Administration Manual published annually and distributed at the yearly September meeting of the Faculty Senate. The Statement of Academic Freedom states that each faculty member is "entitled to full intellectual freedom in research...as well as freedom in the classroom in discussing his or her subject ... and freedom to address any matter of institutional policy or action." Policies within the Manual are noted as safeguarding academic freedom. There are also processes to assure that academic freedom is promoted. The Faculty Hearing Committee is made up of five tenured faculty members elected by the regular faculty who are responsible for hearing "cases involving alleged violation of academic freedom," as stated in Article V of the Manual. Article VI lists alleged violations of academic freedom as one of the grounds under which a faculty member may request a hearing. Article X describes the Faculty Hearing procedures. Recent challenges to academic freedom have included an issue involving a violation of academic freedom grievance that was dismissed on the grounds of insufficient evidence. Another issue focused on the choice of a book for The College Reads! Program. In the case of the College Reads! book choice, faculty, staff, and students interpreted the questioning of the book choice by some members of the Board of Trustees to be a challenge of academic freedom on campus. On April 1, 2014, the Faculty Senate cited concerns for the protection of academic freedom in its resolution of "no confidence" in the Board of Trustees who originally challenged the use of the book. The issue was resolved, with no action taken beyond the "no confidence" resolution.

3.7.5 The institution publishes policies on the responsibility and authority of faculty in academic and governance matters. (Faculty role in governance)

The institution has provided evidence of the faculty's role in institutional governance from relevant sections in the Faculty/Administration Manual, Departmental Bylaws (which outline additional responsibilities and duties for Senate representatives), School Bylaws (for School of Education, Health and Human Performance), and a screen shot of policy lists, which include links to the issues of faculty and shared governance. Agendas from the Faculty Senate meetings demonstrate the shared role that faculty play in the development of the Quality Enhancement Plan, academic standards, educational technology,

graduate education, program curricula, and the University's budgetary processes. All information related to the Faculty Senate, including agendas, minutes, and committee assignments are posted on the webpage devoted to Faculty Senate matters. To further demonstrate the faculty role in governance, the institution also provided a complete (and published) list of Standing College Committees, their membership, both voting and *ex officio*.

3.8.1 The institution provides facilities and learning/information resources that are appropriate to support its teaching, research, and service mission. (Learning/information resources)

The College of Charleston has four library facilities to serve its academic programs. The main Marlene and Nathan Addlestone Library is an ADA-compliant three-story facility of 140,000 square feet with seating for 1600 users. It has 20 group study rooms, 239 computer workstations, wireless connectivity throughout, 4 classrooms (open for general computing use when not in use as classrooms), and is open 112.5 hours a week. It stays open 24/7 starting one week before finals until the end of finals. An average of 3,142 patrons visit the facility every day. The 2012 Libraries Survey of the National Center for Educational Statistics showed that only one peer institution was open more hours in a typical week. It also has a graduate study room with 28 seats used by graduate students, a faculty room with 12 seats and a Scantron machine, a projector, a screen, and a printer for writing and research, reviewing student papers, and other individual or collaborative scholarly pursuits. This space was deemed to be adequate to meet institutional needs in that it was only booked for use 7% of the library's open hours, as documented in an accompanying Circulation Report.

The branch libraries serve specialized clientele. The Marine Resources Library is a 4160 square foot facility serving the Grice Marine Laboratory with seating for 18, 5 computer workstations, and one classroom. Open to the public Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m., the facility is available 24 hours a day to faculty, staff, and students in the College's marine biology graduate program. The Lowcountry Graduate Center Library at the North Campus is 1064 square feet, with 16 computer workstations and 6 study rooms. The Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture includes over 15,000 square feet with a classroom, an auditorium, and a reading room with combined seating for approximately 170.

All facilities serve students, faculty, the community at large and a wide array of community research and business partners. In addition to comprehensive collections, students are able to check out a variety of technology including MacBook Airs, Digital Cameras, projectors, iPads, and microscopes. Circulation statistics indicate that this technology is very heavily used in support of individual and classroom learning. The institution evaluates the adequacy of the facilities by adhering to the ACRL Standards for Libraries in Higher Education and by reviewing door counts and circulation and booking statistics for specialized areas. For example, the 4 classrooms in the main library, while used extensively by librarians for information-literacy sessions, were only scheduled for instruction

9.85% of the available time, leaving them available for general computing use 90.15% of the available time.

The extensive general print collections supporting all the academic programs (documented thoroughly in CR 2.9) are also supplemented by Special Collections, with strengths in 18th and 19th century natural history, civil war, Charleston and South Carolina history and southern Jewish heritage. Usage statistics provided for FY 2014-2015 show that the department received over 1,200 research visits and answered over 4,000 research inquiries online and over the phone.

Access to the electronic resources are available through the library's website 24/7, using a password-protected proxy server. In addition to the licensed electronic collections, the College has also developed several unique digital collections, such as the Lowcountry Digital Library, a repository of digitized archival content focused on the South Carolina Lowcountry, a collaborative project with more than 15 contributing organizations that also feeds into the Digital Public Library of America.

The institution has well designed facilities and learning/information resources that are widely accessible and appropriate to support its teaching, research, and service mission.

3.8.2 The institution ensures that users have access to regular and timely instruction in the use of the library and other learning/information resources. (Instruction of library use)

The College of Charleston libraries have a comprehensive program of library instruction, described in the provided documentation on the Libraries Instruction Program and on documentation for specific segments of the program. Taking place at all locations and remotely, the program of formal instruction occurs in several formats (the following statistics are from 2015-16): 1) sessions scheduled in conjunction with teaching faculty in support of individual classes (393 course-specific information-literacy sessions covering all disciplines for 7,061 participants), 2) 9 sessions of a one-credit Library 105 Resources for Research course (serving a total of 143 students), 3) embedded librarian instruction in First-Year Experience, English 110, and other courses, 4) online guides and tutorials, and 5) library and computing orientations and tours (2,457 orientations and tours for 6,975 participants) for new students. Statistics and documentation of services were also provided for each of the branch locations. One-on-one instruction occurs in person at the service desks, through the Ask Us live chat and knowledge-base (over 17,000 views of the FAQs were recorded in 2014-2015). Students needing in-depth assistance can schedule appointments with librarians and with the student computing support service; the libraries and student computing support provided on-demand research and computing instruction by answering 30,903 desk questions and conducting 1,155 consultations. Both assistance and instruction are available face-to-face and online. The libraries have developed a comprehensive suite of services specifically for distance-education students, documented through the online

toolkit and Research Guide provided by the institution. Librarians also provide course-specific instruction for online courses using Kultura and VoiceThread. Like face-to-face students, distance-education students and faculty are able to use the Ask Us chat service through a widget that is found on the library's webpages and embedded in many databases. Documentation provided showed that library services were accessed 2,254 times from within the campus learning management system during 2014-2015.

The libraries also provide extensive services for faculty, including meeting with new faculty during new faculty orientation each year and utilizing the library liaison program to provide individual instruction for faculty members regarding instructional support, collection development, ILL, research resources, media, and technology services available for faculty. These library services are supplemented by IT's Teaching, Learning, and Technology online tutorials, face-to-face training sessions and one-on-one and small group consultations for educational technology applications.

The development and enhancement of the library instruction program is guided by a Library Instruction Advisory Committee, and regular assessments are carried out to ensure continuous modification and improvement, as detailed in the Libraries Instruction Assessment Guide. One of the sample assessments provided was for the Library 105 course where the samples were evaluated against the learning outcomes for the course and found that they exceeded the measure of having at least 70% of the samples achieving a score of 3 or better in that 100% of the samples achieved that rating. An assessment of the embedded librarian program for English 110 showed students in fall 2014 meeting the benchmark of 70% or more of students being successful in meeting the Student Learning Outcomes, while the results for spring 2015 classes showed that students were slightly under the benchmark. The library noted the need to revise the instruction to ensure greater success. Other assessments were also provided in supporting documentation, showing a commitment to reviewing and improving library services for faculty and students. Using the most current National Center for Education Statistics available (2012) for peer comparison, College of Charleston librarians gave 40.81 presentations per 1,000 FTE students, placing the institution third among 8 in its peer group and above the 33.83 peer group average.

- 3.8.3** The institution provides a sufficient number of qualified staff—with appropriate education or experiences in library and/or other learning/information resources—to accomplish the mission of the institution. **(Qualified staff)**

The institution employs 110 full- and part-time faculty, staff, and student assistants in its libraries. It has 27 faculty librarians, all but one of whom have advanced degrees, as outlined in the chart of their credentials and experience and documented through their resumes. Most have a master's in library science from an institution accredited by the American Library Association. Several, including the Dean of the Libraries, have a Ph.D. in various fields, which is also accepted by many academic institutions in lieu of a library science degree. The one library faculty member who has only a bachelor's degree has 40 years of professional library experience, including 3 years as an adjunct professor in the

School of Library and Information Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Library faculty are recruited nationally according to university policies and processes, as described in accompanying documentation, and they are hired into tenure-track positions which are judged by the same tenure and promotion process as the teaching faculty, as outlined in the Faculty/Administration Manual. A chart of the credentials of the other 28 full-time and 5 part-time staff shows that the majority of them have a bachelor's degree or higher. The library faculty are active professionally with presentations, publications, exhibitions and successful grant-writing as evidenced by the faculty activity report 2013-2015. In addition, the institution's narrative outlines a program of annual reviews for all staff (five-year reviews for faculty after they have achieved tenure) and sample evaluations of library staff and library faculty document a regular process of assessing all levels of staff to ensure satisfactory performance and ongoing professional development.

The libraries employ 25 students at the main library and 5 students at the Avery Research Center. Student employees attend a four-to-five hour orientation program, which includes a review of policies and procedures and provides an overview of all library departments and services, and which is described in accompanying documentation. In addition, student employees who staff the Information Desk complete an additional four-hour training module, as also documented in accompanying materials.

A table provided from National Center for Education Statistics - Library Staffing Levels by Institution (2012) compares the College of Charleston's staffing levels with 7 peer institutions and shows that the College is in the middle for staffing and has a better student-to-library-staff ratio than 4 of the institutions. The library has also provided another table from the National Center for Education Statistics - Hours of Operation by Institution (2012) that shows that the main library has the third highest number of hours of operation (112 hours a week) of 7 peer institutions. In addition, the Avery Research Center is open to the public 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday through Friday, the Marine Resources Library is staffed 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and the North Campus and Lowcountry Graduate Center Library is open from 8 a.m.–10 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

The institution has provided survey data from 2013, 2014, and 2015 showing a high degree of satisfaction with the services provided. In the 2015 survey, 92 percent of users indicated that the library staff were "helpful, knowledgeable and courteous," and 87 percent of respondents said that the library offered "plenty" or "enough" assistance on how to use its resources and databases. Further demonstrating the adequate staffing of the libraries is information provided in relation to CR 2.9 which further verifies the effectiveness of the delivery of library services across the institution.

- 3.9.1** The institution publishes a clear and appropriate statement of student rights and responsibilities and disseminates the statement to the campus community. **(Student rights)**

The institution publishes a Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities that outlines expected behaviors of students. The Statement also includes the student conduct process and the rights of students. Policies related to student rights and responsibilities are appropriately based on field-accepted models and on CAS Standards. The Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities is published in the Student Handbook and on the institution webpage.

The institution provided copies of other policies related to student rights that are also published in the Student Handbook, such as the Honor System, academic integrity, FERPA, Residence Life policies, and Student Grievance/Complaint Policy and Procedures. The institution also publishes Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment, including a Sexual Harassment and Abuse policy (Policy #9.1.10). As further evidence of appropriate statements of student rights and responsibilities, the institution provided an electronic copy of the Guide to Residence Living, which is distributed to all campus residents, and the Student's Guide to SNAP (Student Needing Access Parity), which addresses the rights of students with a certified disability "according to the regulations established by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 and its 2008 Amendments."

These policies are disseminated to new students through student orientation sessions and an email notice that includes the policies (copy provided by institution) that is sent to students. The statements and policies are also available in the Graduate and Undergraduate Catalogs, the Student Handbook, and on institutional websites.

3.9.2 The institution protects the security, confidentiality, and integrity of its student records and maintains security measures to protect and back up data. **(Student records).**

The institution provided a copy of its Privacy Policy and Procedure on the Security of Protected Information (Policy #11.1), which guides the security and confidentiality of personal information. Current student academic records are stored in electric format by the Registrar's Office. Academic records earlier than 1976 are housed in fire-resistant cabinets, locked and stored by the Registrar's Office.

Other offices such as the Career Center, Dean of Students (Conduct), Residence Life, Title IX, and Victim Services also maintain non-academic records, which are stored electronically with office-appropriate software, which is permission-driven and password protected. The Career Center uses the Banner Document Management System, the CougarJobLink, and an off-site company, Interfolio, while information related to Conduct, Title IX, and Victim's Services is stored in the Maxient software.

Guidelines and regulations, including the Privacy Policy and Procedure on the Security of Protected Information and FERPA, are posted annually on the Office of the Registrar website, the Undergraduate (p. 73) and Graduate (p. 42) Catalogs, and in the Student Handbook (p. 69). Additionally, the institution

provided copies of its Annual FERPA Notification, the Notice of Health Information Practices, and information on the Jeanne Clery Act.

The Registrar's Office has a position focused on records retention (the Institutional Records Officer), and a website with information of the "General Records Retention Schedule for State Colleges and Universities and the General Records Retention Schedule for Data Processing and Electronic Records." The institution submitted as evidence of these procedures its General Records Retention Schedule, General Records Retention Schedules for Data Processing, and examples of records retention schedules for contract release, the Cougar card, insurance claims, placement tests, and student exams.

As evidence of appropriate data back-up measures, and disaster retrieval, the institution provided copies of its Cyber Liability Insurance Policy, its Data Loss Prevention Policy (identifying and responding to unauthorized disclosure of information), and a Disaster Recovery Plan (ability to resume operation). Data is backed up daily on campus servers and retained for 30 days, and is transmitted through a 'point-to-point VPN connection' to an off-campus storage site.

3.9.3 The institution provides a sufficient number of qualified staff—with appropriate education or experience in the student affairs area—to accomplish the mission of the institution. **(Qualified staff)**

The Student Affairs Division of the institution is organized under an Executive Vice President, an Assistant and an Associate Vice President, and 14 others who hold at least Director-level positions. The Division is well staffed with each area supervised by a Director, with Associate or Assistant Directors and sufficient administrative support staff, coordinators, interns, and graduate assistants. The institution uses Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) in Higher Education Human Resources recommendations to guide its staffing levels and structures. As evidence of adequate number and quality of staff, the institution provided copies of the CAS Human Resource recommendations, CVs of each employee and job descriptions for each position. A comparison of the CVs with the job descriptions shows that all staff members either hold required or preferred degrees and/or progressive experience within their fields.

Areas within the Division include Civic Engagement, Counseling and Substance Abuse, Student Conduct, Disability Services, Student Life, Pre-College Programs, Victim Services, the Career Center, Residence Life, Student Health Services, Fraternity and Sorority Life, the Leadership Center, and Multicultural Programs. Programs and services within these areas align with the institutional mission "to facilitate the cultural, social, emotional, physical, ethical, and intellectual development of all students.... so that they may be responsible, respectful and effective individuals."

Employees are evaluated annually according to the institution's Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) Policy; and the institution provided a redacted copy of an evaluation as evidence of use of the evaluation system. Student Affairs professionals at the institution are given opportunities for professional development through various avenues such as monthly events and

publications facilitated by the Student Affairs Staff Development Committee, service on subcommittees (i.e. New Professionals Education and Communications, and Special Events), and encouragement toward involvement in college-wide professional development and connection with state, regional, and national professional associations. The institution provided minutes to committee meetings and a list of 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 programs and events as evidence of professional development opportunities.

3.10.1 The institution's recent financial history demonstrates financial stability. (Financial stability)

Information and evidence provided for fiscal years 2011-2015 indicate the financial stability of the institution. Total operating and non-operating revenues have been steadily rising across all categories except federal and other grants. Revenues have consistently exceeded expenditures in each year presented.

Net Position data presented also indicates stability. Except for FY2015, this has been increasing steadily each year. The institution attributes the decline in Net Position in FY2015 to the implementation of GASB 68 which requires the college to record its share of beginning net pension liability. A Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position is found in the FY2015 audited financial statements. This statement reflects an increase in net position of 5.1% following the restatement of FY2014 for the implementation of GASB 68. The independent auditor's report acknowledges the implementation of this new accounting statement and indicates that the unqualified audit opinion is not modified by this change.

Enrollment data presented also indicates stability as headcount has ranged from 11,531 to 11,649 over this 5-year period. Charitable gifts to the College over the five-year period grew from new commitments in FY2009 of \$6.1M to \$16.4M in FY2016.

Debt history provided by the College shows an increase in debt from \$169M in FY2011 to \$231M in FY2015. Of this total, \$55M was issued in FY2015 to be used to renovate the Rita L. Hollings Science Center. This renovation is scheduled to be completed in June 2017.

***3.10.2 The institution audits financial aid programs as required by federal and state regulations. (Financial aid audits)**

The institution contracts with Elliott Davis Decosimo LLC, an independent auditor, to conduct the annual audit of federal aid programs as required by the Single Audit Act and by OMB Circular A-133. In addition, this firm also performs the annual audit of financial statements. Audit reports for 2013, 2014, and 2015 were presented and reviewed (and the report for 2016 was provided later and included in the review in relation to CR 2.11.1). The Auditor delivered an unqualified opinion for each of these years. The Auditor also presented his report on compliance for each major federal program, a report on internal control over compliance, and a report on the schedule of federal expenditures as required by

OMB Circular A-133. For 2013, the auditors identified a deficiency in internal control over compliance whereby the College communicated incorrect separation dates for a number of students who separated during the 2012-2013 fiscal year resulting in the students' loans being converted to repayment later than required. The 2014 report indicates that this issue was addressed and no further discrepancies were identified. No issues were presented in the 2014 and 2015 reports.

According to the College, audits of state programs are the responsibility of the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education. For the 2015 year, the programs were reviewed by Elliott Davis Decosimo, LLC in accordance with procedures established by the College and the SCCHE. No findings were reported in this review report.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Team reviewed the most recent 2016 audit report and interviewed the Assistant Vice President for Admissions and Financial Aid and the Director of Financial Aid in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

3.10.3 The institution exercises appropriate control over all its financial resources. (Control of finances)

The Office of the Vice President for Business Affairs is headed by an Executive Vice President who holds an MPA and an MBA and has 27 years of experience in the state and 9 years of higher education experience. This division is charged with the primary responsibility for control of the College's financial resources. The organizational structure of this division provides adequate segregation of functions and duties, an indicator of strong internal controls. Each of the directors of the different departments appears well qualified according to information provided by the College. The institution provided examples of comprehensive policies relating to cash receipts, non-payroll disbursements, debit cards, change funds, travel, inventory control, and contracting.

Audit reports were presented for the years 2013-2015 conducted by Elliot Davis Decosimo LLC, an independent auditor. In each of these years, the College received unqualified opinions on its financial statements. While the auditors will not present an opinion on internal control in their report, they did state that "we noted no deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses."

According to the Board of Trustees website, the Board utilizes an Audit and Governance Committee. The role of the Audit and Governance Committee is one of oversight and it serves as the Board of Trustees' overall guardian of the College's financial integrity. With respect to such matters, the committee serves as the focal point of communications between the Board of Trustees, the Internal Auditor, and external auditors. The Internal Auditor reports directly to the president/president's designee for day-to-day operations and has an open and unrestricted reporting relationship with the Audit Committee of the Board. Examples of internal audit reports were provided and reviewed.

3.10.4 The institution maintains financial control over externally funded or sponsored research and programs. (Control of sponsored research/external funds)

The Office of Research and Grants Administration is responsible for the operation of pre-award and non-accounting post-award administration of sponsored awards. The Controller's Office is responsible for the operation of post-award accounting administration of sponsored programs. A review of organizational charts and other information provided about the Controller's Office and the Office of Research and Grants Administration indicates that individuals responsible for these duties are well qualified.

The Research and Grants Administration webpage provides information on how sponsored programs are administered. The webpage provides links to established university forms and other information indicating that these programs are accounted for in a manner consistent with the College's financial policies and procedures. Sponsored program specific policies are also provided on this website.

An example of an electronically processed SF-425 is provided by the College, which indicates that appropriate reports are filed in a timely manner. In addition, the College obtains an annual audit of federal award programs in accordance with OMB Circular A-133. Internal controls are assessed as a part of this report. No material issues or deficiencies have been noted by the auditor.

3.11.1 The institution exercises appropriate control over all its physical resources. (Control of physical resources)

The institution utilizes AiM, an integrated workplace management system to manage its inventory of real property. This software tracks financial, logistical, and usage information for each facility. A property inventory report lists each building, its primary use, year built, gross SF, and ownership data. The Office of Campus Planning is responsible for space management.

Deferred maintenance is managed by engineering staff in the Physical Plant. Every facility is assigned to an engineering staff liaison who is tasked with ensuring that buildings are properly maintained. These liaisons maintain a prioritized list of maintenance needs that exceed what is considered to be routine. Biweekly, a team consisting of staff from engineering, management, planning, and finance reviews the status of these needs as well as ongoing capital projects. The physical plant manages routine maintenance utilizing an online work order system. Capital planning is managed utilizing the Campus Master Plan and the five-year Comprehensive Permanent Improvement Plan.

The Code of Laws of South Carolina, Section 10-1-140 states "The head of each department, agency, or institution of this State is responsible for all personal property under his supervision and each fiscal year shall make an inventory of all property under his supervision, except expendables." Accordingly, the institution adopts policies governing these procedures such as Policy 2.6.1 Inventory Control Procedures for Accounting of College Property. These procedures

document approved processes for inventory control and for removal of property from inventory. Comprehensive procedures are also provided on the Procurement and Supply Service's webpage.

The institution utilizes an inventory control tag system for all equipment qualifying as a capital asset. Property inventory specialists conduct annual physical inventories. The institution provided a letter from the State Fiscal Accountability Authority listing the various insurance policies in effect for the College and the covered assets.

3.11.2 The institution takes reasonable steps to provide a healthy, safe, and secure environment for all members of the campus community. (Institutional environment)

The primary responsibility for maintaining the physical and environmental safety and security of the campus is vested in the departments of Public Safety and the Office of Environmental Health and Safety. Led by the chief of police and the director of environmental health and safety, these two units investigate various criminal and environmental health incidents and manage crisis response and communication.

The Department of Public Safety reports as a division of the Office of the President. The department has 38 sworn officers and 20 non-sworn officers and holds accreditation from both the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies and the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators Accreditation Commission.

In addition to standard law enforcement practices, the department also provides safety programs and services such as bicycle registration, project identification, computer registration, security surveys, rape aggression defense systems, residence hall safety meetings, new employee orientation, yearly campus safety walk, and monthly building/lighting checks. Emergency call boxes (52) are in operation at various locations across the campus, and the College utilizes a video surveillance system consisting of 610 cameras.

The Office of Environmental Health and Safety responsibilities are divided among incident response and prevention/safety education. Inspections of the campus buildings and grounds are conducted annually and in response to incidents. This office also provides prevention and safety education for a broad range of activities from automobile operation to capital project site safety, to handling hazardous materials. Examples of several programs were provided. This department also places Emergency Procedure Guidelines placards in designated areas across campus to provide information on procedures in case of emergencies.

The institution uses an Emergency Preparedness and Management Plan for responding to crises. This plan is routinely tested by the Emergency Operations Team. Communication in crisis situations is managed through the CougarAlert System. This is a multi-mode communication system which has phone, text, social media, and email capabilities.

***3.11.3** The institution operates and maintains physical facilities, both on and off campus, that appropriately serve the needs of the institution's educational programs, support services, and other mission-related activities. **(Physical facilities)**

The institution manages and maintains 157 facilities consisting of 3,845,465 gross square feet (GSF) across six locations. 62% of the main campus facilities are over 100 years old. In addition to the main campus, the College utilizes three off-campus instructional locations (the North Campus, the Grice Marine Laboratory, and 701 East Bay Street) and two off-campus ancillary locations (the Dixie Plantation and the Patriots Point Athletics Complex).

The institution's academic facilities are maintained by the College's Physical Plant department, which routinely assesses facilities and prescribes and executes preventative and corrective actions when needed utilizing a maintenance and repair projects report. This process is managed through a campus work order system which allows any campus constituent to submit requests for needed repairs. Each building is assigned a liaison to routinely assess the overall condition of buildings and maintain a prioritized list of maintenance needs. In addition, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education utilizes a formula to quantify the maintenance needs of colleges.

The institution has a Campus Master Plan adopted in 2012 which seeks to achieve goals provided in the strategic plan. The institution engaged a master planning firm to lead the development of the plan through the use of committees which provided opportunities to students, faculty, staff, City of Charleston staff, and local neighborhoods to provide input.

Major capital improvements are governed by the South Carolina Code of Laws, which includes review and approval by the S.C. Commission on Higher Education, Joint Bond Review Committee, and the State Fiscal Accountability Authority. The institution maintains a five-year Comprehensive Permanent Improvement Plan (CPIP). The CPIP document contains all major capital improvements the College intends to initiate within a five-year time period. Detailed information of projects that will be initiated within the first two years of the plan is provided. The CPIP is reviewed and updated annually by a capital planning committee.

The institution provides several examples of recent projects which indicate that the College's program of capital improvements to support its programs is ongoing. The institution recognizes that it has a space deficit and is actively working to solve this issue by projects such as the lease of the North Campus, the Harbor Walk lease, and the renovation/expansion of the School of Sciences and Mathematics Building.

The institution presents its Classroom Technology Upgrade Project which focuses on upgrading classrooms currently without technology and classrooms with troublesome technology. The upgrades project began in FY 2013, and according to the institution, approximately 20 classrooms are upgraded each year. To date, 86 classrooms have been upgraded. Classrooms are designed in collaboration with the end users, but a survey is also administered to the users to determine if their needs are being met. The institution indicates that it delivered

185 course sections fully online in 2015-16. These courses are facilitated using the College's self-hosted Learning Management System (LMS), OAKS.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee participated in an extended campus tour conducted by the Executive Vice President of Business Affairs and the Campus Planning Manager. Additionally, committee members visited three off-campus instructional sites (North Campus, Grice Marine Laboratory, and East Bay Street) in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

- 3.12.1** The institution notifies the Commission of changes in accordance with the Commission's substantive change policy and, when required, seeks approval prior to the initiation of changes. *(See the Commission policy "Substantive Changes for Accredited Institutions.")* **(Substantive change)**

The institution has a clear and comprehensive Substantive Change Policy which is in alignment with SACSCOC substantive change policy. The policy can be found on the Office for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning (OIEP) website along with forms for notification, prospectus, and teach-out plans. The policy is also distributed annually to administrators, department chairs, program directors, and faculty, and there is a tutorial on the OIEP website for self-instruction on substantive change policy and decision-making. The New Academic Program Approval Process and the Program Modification Process provide flow charts for faculty and administrators which reinforce the Substantive Change Policy. Finally, OIEP maintains logs of substantive changes since the last reaffirmation, and these are available on the website. A review of these changes, including a new Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing, new off-campus sites such as the Grice Marine Laboratory, and a new BA in Meteorology demonstrate that the institution notifies the Commission of changes in accordance with the SACSCOC substantive change policy and seeks approval prior to the initiation of changes when required.

- 3.13.1** The institution complies with the policies of the Commission on Colleges. **(Policy compliance)**

***3.13.1. "Accrediting Decisions of Other Agencies"**

Applicable Policy Statement. Any institution seeking or holding accreditation from more than one U.S. Department of Education recognized accrediting body must describe itself in identical terms to each recognized accrediting body with regard to purpose, governance, programs, degrees, diplomas, certificates, personnel, finances, and constituencies, and must keep each institutional accrediting body apprised of any change in its status with one or another accrediting body.

Documentation: The institution should (1) list federally recognized agencies that currently accredit the institution or any of its programs, (2) provide the date of the most recent review by each agency and indicate if negative action was taken by the agency and the reason for such action, (3) provide copies of statements used to describe itself for each of the accrediting bodies, (4) indicate any agency that has terminated

accreditation, the date, and the reason for termination, and (5) indicate the date and reason for the institution voluntarily withdrawing accreditation with any of the agencies.

The institution has programmatic accreditation from two federally-recognized (USDOE) agencies: the National Association of Schools of Music, which most recently reviewed the BA and MAT in music in 2011, and the National Association of Schools of Theater which most recently reviewed the BA and MAT in Theatre in 2014. The institution also presented information about its accreditation from NCATE, which is no longer a USDOE-recognized accrediting agency. The institution provided a table listing the agencies, date of most recent review, and date of next review. A review of the institution's submissions to these agencies confirms that it presents itself in identical terms with regard to purpose, governance, programs, and degrees and that no negative actions had been taken by any of the agencies

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed documents including accreditation reports for NASM, NAST, and NCATE and conducted an interview with the Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

3.13.2 "Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards: Policy and Procedures"

Applicable Policy Statement. Member institutions are responsible for notifying and providing SACSCOC with signed final copies of agreements governing their joint and dual academic awards (as defined in this policy). These awards must address the requirements set forth in the SACSCOC policy and procedures. For all such arrangements, SACSCOC-accredited institutions assume responsibility for (1) the integrity of the awards, (2) the quality of credits recorded on their transcripts, and (3) compliance with accreditation requirements

Documentation: The institution should provide evidence that it has reported to the Commission all dual and joint awards (as defined in this policy) that included signed final copies of the agreements outlining the awards. In addition, the institution should integrate into the Compliance Certification a discussion and determination of compliance with all standards applicable to the provisions of the agreements.

The institution has provided evidence that it has reported to SACSCOC two joint/dual degrees. However, in its submission for 3.4.7, it lists four other such degrees and has not provided evidence that it has reported these degrees to SACSCOC.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed the College response and additional information provided in the Focused Report to clarify exact numbers of joint/dual programs supported by the College and interviewed the Associate Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning and the Associate Dean of the Graduate School. The institution provided evidence that it has reported all degrees to SACSCOC.

***3.13.3 “Complaint Procedures Against the Commission or Its Accredited Institutions”**

Applicable Policy Statement. Each institution is required to have in place student complaint policies and procedures that are reasonable, fairly administered, and well-publicized. (See FR 4.5). The Commission also requires, in accord with federal regulations, that each institution maintains a record of complaints received by the institution. This record is made available to the Commission upon request. This record will be reviewed and evaluated by the Commission as part of the institution's decennial evaluation.

Documentation: When addressing this policy statement, the institution should provide information to the Commission describing how the institution maintains its record and also include the following: (1) individuals/offices responsible for the maintenance of the record(s), (2) elements of a complaint review that are included in the record, and (3) where the record(s) is located (centralized or decentralized). The record itself will be reviewed during the on-site evaluation of the institution.

The institution has clearly published its Student Grievance/Complaint Policy and Procedures (See FR 4.5) and uses a decentralized record-keeping process. The institution provided a table designating the types of student complaints that are maintained by specific offices. Records are retained according to the institution's record retention guidelines and state or federal guidelines.

Department Chairs and Directors are responsible for reviewing the number and types of complaints and the actions taken to resolve the complaints. The online complaint software logs the written complaints electronically. The Deans and the Executive VPs for Academic Affairs & Provost and Student Affairs, as well as others on the executive leadership team, are responsible for recognizing patterns among complaints.

The institution provided as evidence a log of the Appeal Outcomes from the Office of the Dean of Students and Residence Life for the years 2013 to 2016 and web links to complaint-related information and/or processes such as the Student Complaint Form, Student Complaint Application, Operating Procedures for Processing Complaints Against Faculty and Staff Administrators, FERPA Overview, Student Grievances Complaint Policy and Procedures (#12.6.1), Student Formal Complaint Flow Chart Grievance Policy, Office of Institutional Effectiveness, and policies for SCCHE and SACSCOC Complaints.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed documents such as the Student Handbook, campus policy websites, operating procedures for processing complaints against faculty and staff administrators, and the student grievance complaint policy and procedures and conducted interviews with the Executive Vice President for Student Affairs, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, Assistant Vice President for Educational Programs and Services, and Student Government Association President in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

3.13.4 “Reaffirmation of Accreditation and Subsequent Reports”

***3.13.4.a. Applicable Policy Statement.** An institution includes a review of its distance and correspondence education programs in the Compliance Certification. An institution includes a review of all its branch campuses and its off-campus instructional sites.

Documentation: In order to be in compliance with this policy, the institution must have incorporated an assessment of its compliance with standards that apply to (1) its distance and correspondence education programs and courses, (2) its branch campuses, and (3) its off-campus instructional sites. The institution should describe its process for incorporating the review and analysis of these programs.

The Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee determined that the institution had addressed other instructional modalities appropriately throughout its Compliance Certification.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed documents such as the Academic Affairs Policy on Distance Education and evidence of implementation of the policy, interviewed the Distance Education Coordinator and the Dean of the School of Professional Studies, and visited the off-campus instructional sites at North Campus, Grice Marine Lab, and East Bay Street in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

3.13.4.b. Applicable Policy Statement. If an institution is part of a system or corporate structure, a description of the system operation (or corporate structure) is submitted as part of the Compliance Certification for the decennial review. The description should be designed to help members of the peer review committees understand the mission, governance, and operating procedures of the system and the individual institution's role with in that system.

Documentation: The institution should provide a description of the system operation and structure or the corporate structure if this applies.

The College of Charleston is not a part of a system or corporate structure as evidenced by Chapter 101, Article 1 of the South Carolina Code of Laws.

3.13.5 "Separate Accreditation for Units of a Member Institution"

***3.13.5.a. Applicable Policy Statement.** All branch campuses related to the parent campus through corporate or administrative control (1) include the name of the parent campus and make it clear that its accreditation is dependent on the continued accreditation of the parent campus and (2) are evaluated during reviews for institutions seeking candidacy, initial membership, or reaffirmation of accreditation. All other extended units under the accreditation of the parent campus are also evaluated during such reviews.

Documentation: For institutions with branch campuses: (1) The name of each branch campus must include the name of the parent campus—the SACSCOC accredited entity. The institution should provide evidence of this for each of its branch campuses. (2) The institution should incorporate the review of its branch campuses, as well as other extended units under the parent campus, into its comprehensive self-assessment and its determination of compliance with the standards, and indicate the procedure for doing so.

The institution does not have any branch campuses.

3.13.5.b. Applicable Policy Statement. If the Commission on Colleges determines that an extended unit is autonomous to the extent that the control over that unit by the parent or its board is significantly impaired, the Commission may direct that the extended unit seek to become a separately accredited institution. A unit which seeks separate accreditation should bear a different name from that of the parent. A unit which is located in a state or country outside the geographic jurisdiction of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and which the Commission determines should be separately accredited or the institution requests to be separately accredited, applies for separate accreditation from the regional accrediting association that accredits colleges in that state or country

Implementation: If, during its review of the institution, the Commission determines that an extended unit is sufficiently autonomous to the extent that the parent campus has little or no control, the Commission will use this policy to recommend separate accreditation of the extended unit. ***No response required by the institution.***

The institution does not have any autonomous extended units.

- 3.14.1** A member or candidate institution represents its accredited status accurately and publishes the name, address, and telephone number of the Commission in accordance with Commission requirements and federal policy. **(Publication of accreditation status)**

The institution publishes its accreditation status and the name, address, and telephone number of SACSCOC in the Undergraduate Catalog, Graduate Catalog, and the institution's website, and on official student transcripts in accordance with Commission requirements and federal policy. The Office for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning communicates with the catalog manager and the Division of Marketing and Communications to ensure accurate language is published on the website and in catalogs.

D. Assessment of Compliance with Section 4: Federal Requirements

- *4.1** The institution evaluates success with respect to student achievement consistent with its mission. Criteria may include: enrollment data; retention, graduation, course completion, and job placement rates; state licensing examinations, student portfolios; or other means of demonstrating achievement of goals. **(Student achievement)**

The institution's mission statement indicates that it is a public comprehensive university that provides a high quality education; that it seeks to enroll students capable of completing degree requirements, and that it pays particular attention to admitting students who excel academically. The ten student achievement goals discussed in the institution's submission are consistent with the mission. The goals include four- and six-year graduation rates; employment rates for graduates; number of graduates who pursue further education; employer feedback on graduates; scores of graduates on post-undergraduate examinations; credit hours earned at graduation; undergraduate retention rates; degrees awarded; time-to-degree completion; and course completion rates. Six of the ten indicators are designated in state law and goals are set by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, while the remaining four indicators are evaluated against internal goals. The institution evaluated the performance of students against all of the student success goals and demonstrated a commitment to accountability and student achievement.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed the data for the ten student achievement goals and conducted interviews with the Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning and the Director of Academic Assessment and Strategic Planning in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

- *4.2** The institution's curriculum is directly related and appropriate to the mission and goals of the institution and the diplomas, certificates, or degrees awarded. **(Program curriculum)**

The institution offers bachelors and master's degrees and programs that are compatible with its mission emphasizing the arts, sciences, education, and business. Academic programs are housed in one of six academic schools, each of which is led by a dean who is responsible for ensuring that academic programs developed in the school are compatible with the institutional mission.

The processes of curriculum review and program review and assessment ensure that program goals and student learning outcomes are consistent with the institutional mission. Faculty members with expertise in the disciplines develop the curriculum, courses, and requirements that are appropriate to the degrees. Faculty review and approve the curriculum according to the procedures in the review process.

With respect to program review and ongoing assessment, the Faculty Senate Committee on Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness conducts the undergraduate program review process. The Graduate School conducts the

graduate program review process. As a part of the self-study, programs supply a statement of purpose that is related to the mission of the institution.

The institution has 30 baccalaureate degree programs and 13 master's programs that are accredited by specialized accrediting agencies. These accrediting agencies require coherent and consistent curriculum and program review, which further ensures that program curricula conform to commonly accepted standards and practices.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed documents such as the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs, curricula for specific programs such as the Bachelor of Science in Professional Studies, and programs at the off-campus instructional sites in addition to meeting minutes and position papers from faculty on the academic mission of the institution as a liberal arts-focused university and the new work flow process depicting faculty involvement in curriculum development. The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee also interviewed several academic deans and department chairs as well as the Associate Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Resources in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

***4.3 The institution makes available to students and the public current academic calendars, grading policies, and refund policies. (Publication of policies)**

The institution provided evidence of current web links to its academic calendar, financial information (including the Refund Policy), and the current grading policies. Financial/Refund policy and grading system information and policies are also published in the Graduate and Undergraduate Catalogs (pp. 24 and 35; and 34 and 59, respectively).

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed documents such as the College of Charleston Site Index and Registrar's Office website, Undergraduate Catalog, Graduate Catalog, and refund policy and conducted interviews with the Assistant Vice President for Admissions and Financial Aid, the Executive Director for Information and Operations; the Director of Recruitment, Marketing, and Communications; and the Student Government Association President in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

***4.4 Program length is appropriate for each of the institution's educational programs. (Program length)**

The institution awards the Artium Baccalaureatus (A.B.), Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Bachelor of Science (B.S.), Bachelor of Professional Studies (B.P.S.), Master of Arts (M.A.), Master of Science (M.S.), Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.), Master of Education (M.Ed.), Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.), Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) and Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T). There are two accelerated master's programs: a five-year BS/MS in Mathematics and a 5-year BS/MS in Computer and Information Systems. Two programs, the Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.) and the Master of Science in Environmental

Sciences (M.E.S.), may be completed concurrently by students enrolled in both graduate programs. A detailed justification of the length of these programs is provided (see CR 2.7.1).

The institution also awards graduate-level certificates. Requirements for all degrees and certificates are described in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. The institution uses credit hours for calculating minimum credit hours required for all degrees. All baccalaureate degrees require the completion of a minimum of 122 credit hours, and all graduate degrees require completion of a minimum of 30 credit hours.

Faculty monitor the appropriateness of program length through established curriculum review and approval processes. For new degree programs or major program modifications, the curricula, including program length, are also reviewed by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed the Undergraduate Catalog, Graduate Catalog, and minutes from the Faculty Committee on Graduate Education, Continuing Education, and Special Programs and also interviewed the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Graduate Dean in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

- *4.5** The institution has adequate procedures for addressing written student complaints and is responsible for demonstrating that it follows those procedures when resolving student complaints. (*See the Commission policy "Complaint Procedures against the Commission or its Accredited Institutions."*) **(Student complaints)**

The institution has a published Student Grievance/Complaint Policy and Procedures (#12.6.1) for both formal and informal complaints. The policy is posted on the website and in the Student Handbook. In addition to the policies and procedures being published online with clearly designated forms and contacts for each type of complaint and/or appeal, the institution uses a web-based software system that directs students step-by-step through the process and ensures consistency of complaint documentation and response. The online form (Student Complaint Webpage and Application) denotes whether a complaint is academic or non-academic and then allows students to indicate the specific type of complaint such as a conduct complaint, parking appeal, grade appeal, or other category. The software system directs each complaint to the appropriate office.

Academic and non-academic complaints can be handled informally or formally. Informal complaints are resolved through a layered process, with students attempting to resolve the complaint directly with other persons involved and then reporting "up the chain," or moving to the formal process if the complaint is not resolved informally.

Formal complaints are handled by various offices depending on the type of complaint, but the complaint process follows common practices such as

“acknowledgement of receipt of complaint; exchange with the complainant; investigation; written summary of findings; communication of resolution or other forms of outcome by decisional authority to all parties; and notice of opportunity for appeal or further review if applicable.”

Additional avenues of complaints include those handled by the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, who handles complaints related to Title IX and ADA such as barriers to access and harassment complaints.

The institution provided as evidence of use of the process a Student Formal Complaint/Grievance Procedures Flow Chart as well as examples of complaint response letters, forms and letters of appeals that were approved, forms and letters of appeals that were denied, a parking appeal, an admissions appeal list with outcomes, and an online appeal response.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed documents such as the Student Handbook, Faculty/Administration Manual, Graduate Catalog, and Undergraduate Catalog and conducted interviews with the Executive Vice President for Student Affairs, Dean of Students, Student Government Association President, and Director of Multicultural Student Programs and Services in support of the institution’s case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

***4.6 Recruitment materials and presentations accurately represent the institution’s practices and policies. (Recruitment materials)**

The institution provided its Advertising, Student Recruitment and Representation of Accreditation Status (Policy #12.1.8), which provides guidance on the integrity and responsibility of promoting the institution accurately. Additionally, the institution provided copies of recruiting materials including the Fact Book, the Graduate School Booklet, degree programs lists for undergraduate and graduate degrees, flyers, freshman profile, graduate school information sheets, and presentations for undergraduates, graduates, and visitors.

A comparison between the recruitment materials and current institutional practices and policies (See CS 3.4.3) reveals that the recruiting materials accurately represent institutional policies and practice. Recruitment materials are produced and reviewed for consistency through a joint effort between numerous departments; the institution provided copies of emails between the participating departments as evidence of collaboration.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed documents such as printed recruitment materials, academic information sheets, Admissions and Visitor’s Center presentations, and graduate program sheets and conducted interviews with the Assistant Vice President for Admissions and Financial Aid, Student Government Association President, and the Director of Recruitment, Marketing, and Communications in support of the institution’s case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

- *4.7 The institution is in compliance with its program responsibilities under Title IV of the most recent Higher Education Act as amended. (In reviewing the institution's compliance with these program responsibilities, the Commission relies on documentation forwarded to it by the U.S. Department of Education.) **(Title IV program responsibilities)**

The institution presented a letter from the US Department of Education indicating institutional approval to participate in Federal Student Financial Aid Programs. The most recent Program Participation Agreement indicates that the institution is approved to participate in Title IV student financial assistance programs through March 31, 2021.

The institution has been audited annually by Elliott Davis Decosimo, LLC. An OMB Circular A-133 review and report is also conducted and prepared by this firm. A significant deficiency was identified in 2013 which was not considered a material weakness. This deficiency indicated that the institution communicated incorrect separation dates for a number of students who separated from the College during the 2012-2013 fiscal year resulting in the students' loans being converted to repayment later than required. A review of the 2014 and 2015 reports indicated that this deficiency was addressed and corrected and that no further deficiencies were presented.

No evidence of issues regarding outstanding liabilities, litigation, reimbursement requirements, need for letter of credit, complaints, or audits has been presented by the College.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed the 2016 audit and the most recent Program Participation Agreement from the U S Department of Education and interviewed the Director of Financial Aid in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

- *4.8 An institution that offers distance or correspondence education documents each of the following: **(Distance and correspondence education)**

4.8.1 demonstrates that the student who registers in a distance or correspondence education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the credit by verifying the identity of a student who participates in class or coursework by using, at the option of the institution, methods such as (a) a secure login and pass code, (b) proctored examinations, or (c) new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification.

The institution verifies the identity of a student who registers in a distance education course through verification of lawful presence and a secure login created for the student upon application to the institution. The institution verifies the lawful presence and thus the identity of each accepted student prior to registration using the criteria established by the federal government to determine immigration status.

The institution also verifies the identity of a student who participates in a distance education course by using a secure login and pass code. All students are assigned a login name and password when they apply to the institution. Upon acceptance, the student is assigned a unique identifier, which is associated with all aspects of that student's records, including login information. All online courses require that students utilize this user name and password to access the course through the institution's learning management system. Passwords for the system/network are changed every 120 days. Some faculty require proctored examinations where students provide identification to the proctor before taking an examination.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed documents such as the Distance Education Readiness Training fall 2016 syllabus, screenshot log on for MyCharleston, and summary of online courses and interviewed the Assistant Vice President for Admissions and Financial Aid in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

- 4.8.2 has a written procedure for protecting the privacy of students enrolled in distance and correspondence education courses or programs.

The institution protects the privacy of students enrolled in distance education courses or programs through its written policy dealing with the security of protected information and an additional notice to students of policies and procedures related to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

The Privacy Policy and Procedure on the Security of Protected Information provides general direction for the security and confidentiality of personal and sensitive information held by the institution. The institution provides an annual notification to enrolled students through e-mail of their rights under FERPA as well as an explanation of the exceptions that allow the College to disclose information without the student's consent. New faculty members are informed about student rights under FERPA during new faculty orientation.

The Academic Affairs Division's Policy on Distance Education states that all policies addressing student privacy and institutional security apply to distance education courses. Faculty teaching distance education courses are expected to use the institution's learning management system to ensure security of student work and grades; use the email system for all confidential communications; keep student work and grades confidential; keep passwords secure; and follow all applicable FERPA policies and procedures.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed documents such as the policy on distance education, OAKS (the college's learning management system), privacy policy, and FERPA policy and conducted interviews with the Assistant Vice President for the Academic Experience and the

Assistant Vice President for Admissions and Financial Aid in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

- 4.8.3 has a written procedure distributed at the time of registration or enrollment that notifies students of any projected additional student charges associated with verification of student identity.

The institution does not impose any additional student charges associated with the verification of student identity for distance education courses.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed documents such as the Undergraduate Catalog and Graduate Catalog and interviewed the Assistant Vice President for Admissions and Financial Aid, the Distance Education Coordinator, and the Director of Recruitment, Marketing, and Communications in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

- *4.9 The institution has policies and procedures for determining the credit hours awarded for courses and programs that conform to commonly accepted practices in higher education and to Commission policy. (*See the Commission policy "Credit Hours."*) **(Definition of credit hours)**

The semester credit hour is the primary academic measure by which the institution determines student progress toward a degree. Policy #12.1.55 (Assignment of Credit Hours Policy) outlines the principles by which credit hours are assigned to individual courses, including courses that are designed to include significant out-of-class experiences (e.g. student teaching, field work, research labs, or internships) and on-line classes, and the Policy is consistent with federal, state, and SACSCOC policies that promote commonly accepted practices in higher education. Basically, for every one hour of instruction in class or academic engagement in online classes, students will have an additional two hours of work beyond class time. Therefore, it is required that, for every semester credit hour given, a total of at least three hours per week must be expected and/or scheduled for each week of the term.

Fall and spring semester courses are scheduled for 15 weeks, resulting in about 14 weeks of scheduled instructional time plus exams. The majority of courses at the college are assigned three credit hours. Courses are scheduled to meet three times per week (50 minutes each meeting) or twice a week (75 minutes each meeting). Table 1 in the report provides evidence of Class Time Instruction Credit Levels. Variations of the three-credit model must still demonstrate the minimum equivalent of 700 minutes per credit hour assigned. One to three credits may be awarded, allowing faculty to assign credit based on the work represented in the learning contract. Credit-hour assignment does not change with mode of delivery. When determining credit hours for online or hybrid courses, faculty think in terms of student engagement with academic material as the equivalent for class time.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviewed the policy on the Assignment of Credit Hours as well as the Undergraduate and Graduate Course Forms and conducted interviews with Department Chairs from Communication, Management and Marketing, Psychology, Sociology, and Mathematics; the Distance Education Coordinator; and the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Graduate Dean in support of the institution's case for compliance and affirms the findings of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

E. Additional observations regarding strengths and weaknesses of the institution. (optional).

Part III. Assessment of the Quality Enhancement Plan

A. Brief description of the institution's Quality Enhancement Plan

The institution's QEP focuses on Sustainability Literacy as a Bridge to Addressing 21st-Century Problems. The initiative seeks to provide students with the tools and knowledge needed to address 21st-century challenges such as climate change, social injustice, and economic inequality.

Based on the QEP Report and interviews with the President, members of the Board of Trustees, the QEP Director, the Director of Sustainability, the QEP Steering Committee, the QEP Curricular and Co-Curricular Subcommittee, the QEP Student Subcommittee, the QEP Assessment Subcommittee, the QEP Implementation Subcommittee, the QEP External Advisory Committee, academic administrators, and student support staff, the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee has determined that the institution submitted an acceptable Quality Enhancement Plan.

B. Analysis of the Acceptability of the Quality Enhancement Plan

1. ***An Institutional Process.*** *The institution uses an institutional process for identifying key issues emerging from institutional assessment.*

The topic of the QEP, *Sustainability Literacy as a Bridge to Addressing 21st Century Problems*, is appropriate for higher education. The selected topic emerged from a wide array of inputs from across the institution.

The process to select a QEP topic began when the President sent a request for proposals to faculty, staff, and students. Six proposals were received and evaluated by the QEP Steering Committee through the use of a rubric, through presentations by proposal authors, and through a review of all materials. After topics were narrowed to two proposals and additional information was provided, the institution's Reaffirmation Leadership Team selected Sustainability Literacy.

The institution defines sustainability literacy broadly to encompass what it terms the Triple Bottom Line (social, economic, and environmental).

Data from recent campus surveys corroborated the appropriateness of the topic. For example, the 2013 Freshman Survey demonstrated strong student support for protecting the environment; and NSSE data provided by the institution suggest that more improvement is needed in "thinking critically and analytically" and "combining ideas from different courses when completing assignments" (pg. 19), skills that the Sustainability Literacy project will promote.

The 2016 NSSE data related to sustainability for the institution are used in comparison to data from 18 schools in the Sustainability Education Consortium. This data, which was submitted after the QEP topic selection process was

complete, notes some gaps at the College of Charleston relative to the other member institutions of the consortium.

2. **Focus of the Plan.** *The institution identifies a significant issue that (1) focuses on learning outcomes and/or the environment supporting student learning and (2) accomplishes the mission of the institution.*

Justification for the QEP focus is supported by a literature review that provides a synopsis of key concepts that show the need for sustainability literacy. It focuses on the concepts of sustainability, resiliency, systems thinking, creative problem solving and interdisciplinary synthesis to enhance student learning. Further justification for the QEP was derived from the results of a myriad of surveys (e.g., institutional survey, sustainability survey, freshman survey, and faculty & staff survey), NSSE data, student focus groups, employer feedback, and institutional assessment data.

Given the gap in students' ability to use the three domains (social, economic and environmental) of sustainability to solve complex problems, the institution has developed five goals—each with associated student learning outcomes that will help measure and assess student learning related to sustainability literacy.

The five goals are: Build Awareness, Synthesize and Integrate Knowledge, Skill Building and Competency Learning, Experiential and Learning Practice, and Change Agents for Resiliency. The five goals and corresponding learning outcomes address the current gap at the institution in regard to sustainability literacy.

These goals and learning outcomes all align with the mission of the institution to provide "...students the opportunity to realize their intellectual and personal potential and to become responsible, productive members of society." Furthermore, these goals and learning outcomes align with the core purpose of the college: "To pursue and share knowledge through study, inquiry and creation in order to empower the individual and enrich society" as well as with the third goal of the College's Strategic Plan, "Provide students the global and interdisciplinary perspectives necessary to address the social, economic, environmental, ethical, scientific and political issues of the 21st century."

3. **Institutional Capability for the Initiation, Implementation, and Completion of the Plan.** *The institution provides evidence that it has sufficient resources to initiate, implement, sustain, and complete the QEP.*

The College has demonstrated that it has the capability to initiate, sustain, and complete the QEP based on its creation of a robust oversight structure: assignment of a qualified faculty leader to direct the plan; thorough analysis of the key constructs and essential student learning outcomes involved; allocation of sufficient financial and physical resources necessary; and support from academic and administrative resources that are integral to the plan's success. The College has also established a plan for determining and maintaining

progress toward quality improvement with its clear timeline of implementation and refined assessment structure, including administration and analysis of relevant survey instruments such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Sustainability module, the Student Organization Leadership Summit survey, Sustainability Literacy Institute events satisfaction feedback, Campus-wide QEP Topic Feedback Survey, employer feedback survey, and the United Nations Sustainability test.

The College has taken several specific steps to ensure that the QEP is successfully implemented institutionally over the next five years. Administering a pilot baseline sustainability literacy survey previously documented the need to educate students on the three legs of sustainability. Creating the Sustainability Literacy Institute under the leadership of a director (who is also the QEP chair and possesses a background in environmental and sustainability studies) will offer appropriate, funded, and timely programs for faculty, staff, and students. Establishing the Sustainability Literacy Scholars (students) and the Sustainability Literacy Institute's four Faculty Fellows will embed knowledgeable, committed peers within the respective populations. Activating an external employer advisory board with membership from local and regional industries, non-profits, and businesses that are experts in sustainability will provide guidance and support to the Institute, particularly in developing its leadership role in this area. Capitalizing on the College's rich history and practice of service learning and community engagement affords the QEP a way to connect with existing successful pedagogical practices that are complementary to the field of sustainability. Undergraduate certificates and incentives for creating and offering sustainability-focused and sustainability-related courses will be attractive opportunities for students to self-select. Finally, the availability of faculty and staff professional development through the life of the initiative will continue to drive the integration of the QEP into the fabric of the institution.

4. **Broad-based Involvement of Institutional Constituencies.** *The institution demonstrates the involvement of its constituencies in the development and proposed implementation of the Plan.*

The broad-based, inclusive process used to develop the QEP began with senior leadership determining the best method to solicit input for the topic of the College's next QEP.

The President invited all campus constituents to submit proposals for the QEP. Six QEP proposals were submitted. Following the submission of the proposals the President appointed a 14-member QEP Steering Committee to review the proposals and make recommendations on the proposals. The QEP Steering committee members were hand-selected by the President to represent various academic schools, staff divisions and the student body from a variety of different disciplines and areas of expertise resulting in a QEP Steering Committee consisting of six faculty, seven staff, and one student. Using the QEP Steering Committee Recommendations Report as a guide, the Reaffirmation Leadership Team narrowed the topics down to two. Selecting from a broad base of campus constituents, proposal development committees were created for each topic, and

the committees were charged with helping the authors to further refine the individual proposals. Membership and affiliations of these two proposal development committees consisted of faculty and staff representing each of the academic schools as well as division-level and student representation. The final topic was selected by the Reaffirmation Leadership Team after further evaluation and discussion with the two proposal development committees.

Once the final topic was chosen, subcommittees were formed from a broad base of the institution's community. Altogether more than 40 sub-committee (Assessment Sub-Committee, Awareness and Marketing Sub-Committee, Budget Advisory Sub-Committee, Curricular and Co-curricular Sub-Committee, Research, Literature Review, Best Practices and Writing Sub-Committee, Student Advisory Sub-Committee) and QEP Steering Committee members were involved in developing the plan and acting as liaisons back to their respective units.

The QEP Sub-Committees met at least monthly. An Implementation Committee was formed consisting of faculty, staff and students representing the academic and administrative divisions of the institution with the appropriate experience to make constructive contributions to the implementation and assessment of the project.

5. **Assessment of the Plan.** *The institution identifies goals and a plan to assess the achievement of those goals.*

The institution has developed two parallel assessment plans that address both process outcomes and student learning outcomes. The effectiveness of the Sustainability Literacy Institute (SLI) will be assessed with a plan that addresses "research", "outreach", and "educational and professional development". Examples of how these outcomes will be measured include: 1) faculty-student research evaluated by a panel of judges; 2) tracking the number of partners collaborating with the institute; and 3) tracking the number and quality of professional opportunities offered each year.

The student learning assessment plan includes seven student learning outcomes (SLOs) that align to the five QEP goals and are addressed with both direct and indirect measures. Some of the direct measures are applied in the First Year Experience course and include the United Nations Sustainability Literacy Test and the First Year Experience Sustainability Module Pre- and Post-test. Other direct measures include portfolio reviews of students in the Sustainability Literacy Scholars Program and course embedded assignments such as the signature assignments in sustainability-related (SR) and sustainability-focused (SF) courses. Rubrics modeled on the AAC&U Integrative Learning Rubric for Civic Engagement will be used to assess the course embedded assignments. Indirect measures used to assess the SLOs include the

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), focus groups, and several special-purpose surveys. Data will be collected for most of the direct and indirect measures each year during the five-year implementation period.

The oversight for the QEP assessment plans will be the responsibility of the QEP Implementation Committee and the QEP Assessment Team with assistance from the SLI Director and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning (OIEP) in coordination with the Director of the QEP.

C. Analysis and Comments for Strengthening the QEP

Strengths of the QEP –

The strengths of the QEP include the use of an interdisciplinary QEP development team, a holistic approach to sustainability literacy, and an integrated implementation plan. It is clear that the development process included broad-based involvement and continues to have strong and enthusiastic support. This demonstrated support by students, faculty, staff, senior leadership, members of the Board of Trustees, and representatives from community organizations will provide the catalyst needed for the long term sustainability and success of the QEP.

Other strengths include the creation of the Sustainability Literacy Institute (SLI) which has the potential to advance the QEP goals across campus and within the community through the development of systems thinking and capacity building.

The themes for years one through three are also a strength. The selection of Water Quality and Quantity (Year One), Social Justice and Fair Distribution (Year Two), and Food Security (Year Three) is a well-reasoned place-based approach that has the potential to appeal to communities both on and off campus.

The focus on resiliency is also a strength of this QEP and is a thoughtful addition during this time of great uncertainty. The entire College community will benefit from sustainability literacy focused on creating resilient individuals, communities and systems.

The QEP assessment plan is extremely thorough and will provide the College the benchmarks needed to gauge progress over time.

Finally, a strength that will serve the institution well is the plan to integrate communication and marketing of the QEP with existing communication

and marketing strategies. The creative use of the QEP branding is both attractive and recognizable.

Challenges for the Successful Implementation of the QEP –

Although the communication strategy is a strength, communication will continue to pose a challenge to the implementation team because of the difficulty of effectively disseminating information on college campuses. Consistent messaging by the Awareness and Marketing Subcommittee will benefit from frequent re-evaluation.

The development of consistent, balanced and relatively broad criteria used to identify Sustainability Related (SR) courses may pose a challenge to the SRI. The identification of SR courses can be difficult because of the broad interpretation of sustainability within disciplines. Several faculty members teaching the same course may infuse sustainability content in different ways or not at all.

Another potential challenge is in helping faculty understand how their disciplines connect to sustainability. Faculty entrenched in their narrow specialty areas often do not understand the holistic and interdisciplinary nature of sustainability and how it connects to their work. This QEP will attract interested faculty to engage as active participants; however, other faculty may feel left out or may not understand where they fit within the theme and goals for the College.

Other Comments –

Items for the institution to consider include the following:

- Develop a formal statement of support from the President and the Board of Trustees to strengthen and highlight institutional commitment.
- Create stronger ties between the Sustainability Literacy Institute and the Office of Sustainability through the identification of common goals.
- Include the Director of the Office of Sustainability as a formal member of the QEP Steering Committee.
- Identify and map all existing curricular and co-curricular sustainability activities at the College.
- Align all curricular and co-curricular goals of the QEP and SLI with AASHE STARS 2.1 credits (For example: Align the SF and SR courses with current AASHE STARS 2.1 requirements; identify all faculty conducting sustainability focused research aligned with AASHE STARS 2.1 credits).
- Narrow the scope of the assessment process and prioritize the assessments to be conducted.
- Include personal sustainability as an entry point for students during Orientation and the August Welcome Back.

- Strengthen educational opportunities related to health and wellness and cultural aspects of sustainability literacy.
- Create a detailed plan for continued sustainability-focused professional development for senior leadership.
- Communicate the importance of the QEP as a living, evolving process.
- Create a dynamic approach to recruiting faculty who find it difficult to connect to sustainability.
- Identify more opportunities to engage graduate students who are enrolled in SF or SR programs or participating in SF or SR research projects.
- Add more diversity to the Student Advisory Sub-committee.
- Stress the importance of faculty focus on the QEP student learning outcomes.
- Create dean-appointed sustainability representatives for each school.
- Institutionalize recognition in the promotion and tenure process for faculty engaged in the QEP.
- Support participation of the SLI Director in the South East Sustainability Network.
- Develop an all-inclusive “we over me” mindset among all campus community members as an additional QEP outcome.
- Use the term “First Year” instead of “Freshmen.”

Responses to Questions Posed to the On-Site Committee before the Visit

- Can you recommend experts/speakers to invite for co-curricular events to discuss world issues related to sustainability?
 - Majora Carter
 - Michael Crow (Arizona State University)
 - Robert Kennedy Jr.
 - Naomi Klein
 - Bill McKibben
 - Erin Meezan (Interface)
 - Debra Rowe for continued leadership development
 - Leith Sharp (Harvard)
 - Vandana Shiva

- How do we effectively convey to the campus the benefits to be derived from the QEP?

Appeal to student needs and interests. Create opportunities related to jobs and campus/community engagement. Use practical examples of sustainability related decision making to appeal to students, faculty, and staff. This QEP will touch every academic program on campus. Share successes with the entire community as a rallying point. For example, the QEP of 10 years ago is now part of the fabric/DNA of the College. Build on this by sharing testimonials, success stories and goals that show connections between the two QEPs. Continue to demonstrate and strengthen the alignment with the mission and Strategic Plan of the College.

- How can we effectively communicate these terms to all constituents to achieve buy-in?
Appeal to the individual personal and professional connections to sustainability.
- What resources/training materials support faculty in developing sustainability literacy pedagogy?

Share AASHE membership log-in information with faculty and provide additional faculty development opportunities above and beyond the QEP.

Part IV. Third-Party Comments

If an institution receives Third-Party Comments, the institution has an opportunity to respond to those comments and the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviews the response as part of its comprehensive evaluation of the institution.

The Committee should check one of the following:

No Third-Party Comments submitted.

Third-Party Comments submitted. (**Address the items below.**)

1. Describe the nature of the Comments and any allegations of non-compliance that may have been part of the formal Third-Party Comments;

2. Indicate whether the Committee found evidence in support of any allegations of non-compliance.

If found to be out of compliance, the Committee should write a recommendation and include it in Part II under the standard cited with a full narrative that describes why the institution was found to be out of compliance and the documentation that supports that determination. In this space, reference the number of the Core Requirement, Comprehensive Standard, or Federal Requirement and the recommendation number cited in Part II.

If determined to be in compliance, explain in this space the reasons and refer to the documentation in support of this finding.

APPENDIX A

Roster of the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee

Dr. Jessica Stowell - **CHAIR**
 Director of Institutional Effectiveness
 University of North Carolina - Asheville
 Asheville, North Carolina

Dr. Jeffrey Dean Cass
 Professor of English
 University of Houston - Victoria
 Victoria, Texas

Dr. Kimberly A. Greenway
 Director, Student Affairs Assessment
 University of North Alabama
 Florence, Alabama

Dean Carol G. Hixson
 Dean of University Libraries
 Florida Atlantic University
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Dr. Elizabeth L. Normandy
 Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Planning
 and Accreditation
 University of North Carolina at Pembroke
 Pembroke, North Carolina

Dr. Patricia A. Smith
 Professor of English/English Education
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Dr. Denise C. Watts
 Director of Institutional Research, Planning
 and Effectiveness
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 Odessa, Texas

Mr. Cesario E. Valenzuela*
 Vice President for Finance and Operations
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Dr. Phillip Williams
 President
 McNeese State University
 Lake Charles, Louisiana

SACSCOC Staff Coordinator
 Dr. John S. Hardt
 Vice President
 SACSCOC
 Decatur, GA

Roster of the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee

Dr. Suzanne Ozment - **CHAIR**
 Provost/Vice President Academic Affairs
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 President
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Dr. Carol Burton
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 Effectiveness/Assistant Professor of Education
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SACSCOC STAFF REPRESENTATIVE
 Dr. John S. Hardt
 Vice President
 SACSCOC
 Decatur, GA

APPENDIX B

Off-Campus Sites or Distance Learning Programs Reviewed

701 East Bay Street

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee toured the facility a short distance from the main campus where the College of Charleston offers a BA as well as a minor in Historic Preservation and Community Planning and, in collaboration with Clemson University, an MS in Historic Preservation. Interviews were conducted with the Director of the MS in Historic Preservation, the Administrative Coordinator of the program, the Dean of the School of the Arts, the Associate Dean of the Graduate School, the Dean of Students, the Executive Vice President of Student Affairs, three faculty members, and seven students.

The aim of the undergraduate degree is to introduce students to “the history, theory and practice of historical preservation.” While the graduate program offers areas of emphasis such as Conservation Science and Material Analysis and Documentation and Interpretation of Landscapes, Buildings, Interiors and Objects, the Program Director as well as the faculty who were interviewed stressed that the emphasis is on breadth of preparation, not technical specialization, with the goal of preparing students for a wide range of jobs in documentation, evaluation, interpretation, and conservation of historic structures and sites.

The two-year 60-credit-hour MS program admits 26 students in each cohort. The first semester focuses on analysis and documentation of historic sites and the development of preservation projects. Students participate in a summer internship and take advanced classes and complete a required thesis in the second year. Eight graduate students, supported by a generous stipend, will have the opportunity in summer 2017 to participate in a two-week field experience at a villa in Genoa. Faculty see training in documentation as a strong feature of the program and hope to expand preparation in digital documentation.

The program moved to the newly-renovated facility in downtown Charleston in summer 2016. Faculty and students interviewed were pleased with the spacious, well-appointed classroom, laboratory, and gathering spaces at the site. State-of-the-art equipment in the Conservation Laboratory includes high-capability microscopes.

Students expressed satisfaction with support services. These include a specialized library staffed part-time by a reference librarian. Students can also readily access the main libraries at both the College of Charleston and Clemson University electronically. While technology support is currently satisfactory, faculty and students are looking forward to the completion of smart classrooms in May 2017.

Two full-time faculty members and expert adjunct faculty recruited from organizations such as the Historic Charleston Foundation deliver the curriculum. Students complete forms from both the College of Charleston and Clemson to evaluate teaching.

Grice Marine Lab

On-Site Reaffirmation Committee members visited the Grice Marine Lab located a 30 minutes' drive away from the main campus on James Island at 205 Fort Johnson Drive in Charleston.

Established by the College of Charleston in 1973 and approved by SACSCOC in 2013, students enrolled in the master's program in Marine Biology take courses and conduct research with faculty from the College of Charleston and The Citadel at the off-campus site. Approximately 17 students graduated from the Marine Biology program in the 2014-15 academic year and between 45-50 graduate students are enrolled at any given time.

Undergraduate students can enroll in Biology, Environmental Science, and Marine Biology courses and participate in undergraduate research at Grice Marine Lab; however, undergraduate students who are earning degrees in Marine Biology complete their degrees at the main campus in downtown Charleston. Approximately ten students from other parts of the United States participate in the longstanding National Science Foundation REU (Research Experiences for Undergraduates) program each summer.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee met with the following individuals: the program director for the graduate program in Marine Biology, first and second year master's students in Marine Biology, the Operations Manager, the Administrative Coordinator, the Director of Environmental Health and Safety, the Dean and the Associate Dean of the School of Sciences and Mathematics, the Dean of Students, and the librarian for marine resources, as well as three faculty members who teach Biology and Marine Biology. There are 12 permanent Biology faculty and several adjunct faculty who teach exclusively at Grice Marine Lab.

The facilities at Grice Marine Lab are extensive and appropriate for the Biology, Environmental Science, and Marine Biology courses and research opportunities offered. Several large and well-equipped laboratories, extensive samples of specimens, and multiple classrooms, as well as a fully-equipped computer lab and well-appointed library are located on-site with a full-time lab manager responsible for building caretaking. While the facilities, with the exception of the library, are somewhat dated, faculty and staff at the site indicate that efforts to improve the physical conditions and make more timely repairs have increased. Technology infrastructure is scheduled for upgrades within the next few months. The library is staffed by a full-time librarian as well as two additional staff members on site. Faculty and students have access to the library 24/7. A small five-bedroom dormitory, equipped with a kitchen and laundry, is maintained on site for student use during the summer for the NSF-REU program as well as for occasional use by other students and researchers.

The graduate students interviewed were highly satisfied with the facilities and with the level of support and access to faculty they have at Grice Marine Lab. They indicated that orientation to the graduate program and to the use of the facilities at Grice was thorough and comprehensive and included safety instructions for lab work and advanced pedagogical techniques for those who serve as teaching assistants. Labs and other facilities are available to graduate students 24/7. Other types of student support, if not available electronically, are available to all students at the main campus.

Faculty at Grice Marine Lab are evaluated using the same process as faculty on the downtown Charleston campus, and student evaluations of teaching are conducted for all classes taught at the site, consistent with College of Charleston policy. Faculty were aware and supportive of the QEP, especially given the connection of marine biology and environmental science to the topic of sustainability. Processes for faculty to request funding for teaching and research are the same as for faculty at the downtown campus, and operating budgets appear adequate to support the mission of the instructional site.

Given the College of Charleston's prime coastal location, working with entities such as the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), offering academic programs, and facilitating faculty research in Marine Biology, Environmental Science, and Biology, support of Grice Marine Laboratory clearly aligns with the College's mission.

North Campus

The College of Charleston North Campus is located in a leased facility at 3800 Paramount Drive in North Charleston. The College began delivering courses at this location in August 2014. At present, the institution has a seven-year lease and foresees no issues with extending the lease into the future. The same facility is home to the Lowcountry Graduate Center which is a consortium of South Carolina higher education institutions established in 2001. The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee toured the site and met with three students, four faculty members, and the following administrators: The Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Executive Vice President for Student Affairs, the Director of Student Support Services, the Dean of Libraries, the librarian for the North Campus, the Dean of the School of Professional Studies, the Director of Teaching, Learning, and Technology, and the Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning.

The College offers four programs at the North Campus: the Bachelor of Professional Studies (122 hours); a certificate and the MS in Computer and Information Sciences—jointly with The Citadel (12 hours for the certificate, 33 hours for the degree); a certificate in Gifted and Talented Education (18 hours); and a certificate in Urban and Regional Planning (12 hours). The Bachelor of Professional Studies is offered only at the North Campus.

At present, most courses are offered in the evening, but some are available during the day on weekdays and on Saturdays.

Thirty-five faculty members taught courses at the North Campus during the fall 2016 term, and 37 faculty members taught there in spring 2017. During the fall 2015, the North Campus served 93 unduplicated students who took courses only at the North Campus and 474 students who took courses at multiple campuses including the North Campus. In spring 2016, the North Campus served 238 unduplicated students who took classes only at the North Campus and 432 students who took courses at multiple campuses including the North Campus.

The North Campus facility is 50,000 square feet with 25 classrooms and computer labs. The facility offers gathering space for students and ample office space for faculty—some dedicated to specific faculty and others available for shared use. Classroom technology matches that found on the main campus. Classrooms have lecture-capture capability, allowing professors to record lectures and post them on the learning management system to provide students with 24/7 access.

The North Campus has an on-site staff of 17, 14 of whom are full-time. Support staff include instructional technologists, librarians, academic advisors, financial aid counselors, security personnel, and administrators. Staff are on flex time to ensure adequate staff coverage for day, evening, and weekend course schedules. Library resources are available electronically. Through the interlibrary loan program, students may have books sent to the North Campus as needed.

Interviews with students indicated high levels of satisfaction. Students praised the North Campus staff for their professionalism, accessibility, and nurturing attitude. Students said they

felt connected to the main campus and were pleased that their College of Charleston student ID enabled them to participate in all student activities as well as utilize public transportation at no additional cost. When asked about the major "selling points" of the North Campus, students mentioned convenience and ease of access to the beautiful facility, parking, flexible schedules, and the friendliness and helpfulness of the staff and faculty.

APPENDIX C

**List of Recommendations
Cited in the Report of the Reaffirmation Committee**

None

