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ACAP
9/10/2015
Agenda Item 6

September 10, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Advisory Committee on Academic Programs

FROM: John Lane, DMA, Interim Director of Academic Affairs

More Robust Metrics to Monitor Academic Degree Programs Offered by Public Institutions

Background

At its November 6, 2014, CHE meeting, Commissioners asked the Academic Affairs staff to prepare information that would assist the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing (CAAL) members in determining future recommendations to the Commission regarding the development of more robust metrics for program monitoring. At the CAAL meeting in January 2015, CHE staff presented current practices for program evaluation and demonstrated how modifying some of the current criteria, specifically, changing enrollment and completion benchmarks, might affect the outcome of biennial program productivity review. Since the January CAAL meeting, Academic Affairs staff then consulted with higher education agency counterparts in at least seven other states, met with the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP) to discuss possible review options (February 2015), and met with CHE's data management staff. These discussions have helped confirm the variety of data collected already; the criteria and means most helpful for reporting program productivity; and the benefits both other states and in-state institutions have reaped as a result of such reporting.

As a result of these findings, Academic Affairs staff suggested several revisions to improve its monitoring of program productivity for public institutions at the CAAL meeting on April 8, 2015. Based on discussions at the April 8th CAAL meeting, Academic Affairs staff presented the following recommendations at the June 11, 2015, ACAP meeting:

1. improvements to the biennial productivity review criteria, including the following:
 - a. An increase to the "satisfactory" threshold for program completers for degree programs from five (5) to eight (8).
 - b. A change of the criterion for satisfactory program productivity from meeting **either** enrollment **or** completion thresholds to the new standard of meeting **both** enrollment **and** completion benchmarks.

- c. The addition of monitoring of licensure and/or certification pass rates for applicable programs (e.g., nursing, education, engineering, etc.).
2. implementation of a new program-specific evaluation beginning with programs approved in Fall 2015 to assess programs three years after implementation for master's degree programs and five years after implementation for all other programs, with final specific review criteria to be agreed upon prior to the first reviews to be conducted in Fall 2018.

ACAP members and Academic Affairs staff discussed the recommendations, which resulted in an amended motion that refined the recommendations for the biennial productivity review and a postponement to vote to adopt the new program-specific evaluation so that its criteria could continue to be reviewed. The refinements members suggested for the biennial productivity review include the following:

1. applying the increase for satisfactory thresholds to baccalaureate programs only, and not master's, first professional, specialist, or doctoral degree programs.
2. allowing exemptions to the productivity standards (i.e., enrollment and completion thresholds) on a program-by-program basis for those programs considered essential to the basic mission of the American university (i.e., the arts and sciences) or deemed so unique in their subject matter and value to the higher education community in South Carolina as to make them essential.
3. encouraging Commission consideration of specialized accreditation status for those programs that may not satisfy the enrollment and completion thresholds in determining whether the programs are granted an exemption, placed on probation, or recommended for termination.

In addition, ACAP members suggested revisions to the evaluation criteria and Academic Affairs staff revised the program-specific evaluation form (Attachment) based on this feedback. ACAP members also suggested allowing more time to conduct the program-specific evaluation. As a result, Academic Affairs staff propose making the program-specific evaluation a part of the biennial program productivity review so that institutions complete the evaluation form the first time a program is eligible for review during the biennial program productivity review (i.e., in the sixth year of operation for baccalaureate, first professional, and doctoral programs and in the fourth year of operation for master's and specialist programs).

Next Steps

Academic Affairs staff will continue to work with ACAP to revise the *Policies and Procedures for Academic Degree Program Productivity* by updating the policy document to:

1. reflect the revised standards;
2. add the program-specific evaluation for programs being reviewed for the first time and finalize the program-specific evaluation form (see Attachment).
3. develop a comprehensive list of licensure/certification exams and establish appropriate standards/benchmarks for each licensure/certification exam
4. establish criteria for granting exemptions to the program productivity standards.

Academic Affairs staff suggest creating a task force to complete the next steps identified above in order to prepare a final recommendation for ACAP consideration in Spring 2016.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC EVALUATION

SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Program Productivity

Name of Institution / Degree Name and Level

Program-Specific Evaluation

This *Program Review* is an assessment that compares a new, approved program's proposed productivity at the time of its application to its outcomes by the end of year five of implementation for master's degree programs and end of year eight for all other degree programs. The assessment requests data about program **personnel**, student **performance**, **finances**, and **accreditation** and **licensure** information (if applicable) to better assess and assure quality programmatic delivery to students.

General Instructions to Institutions

Please provide institutional data about the following program features:

1. **Personnel** (Faculty Qualifications and FTE)
2. **Student Performance** (Graduation, Placement, and Retention)
3. **Finances** (Actual Costs, Sources of Financing, and Debt Load)
4. **Programmatic Accreditation** (if applicable)
5. **Licensure/Certification Exam Passage Rates** (if applicable)

Specific instructions accompany each section.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC EVALUATION

I. Personnel: B. Faculty and Staff FTE

State the total annual FTE needed to support the proposed program (i.e., the total FTE devoted just to the program for all faculty, staff, and program administrators):

Category	FTE
Faculty	
Staff	
Administration	

II. Student Performance: A. Graduation and Placement

Provide available information/data for graduate placement rates, including matriculation to graduate school, employment related to discipline, and employment not related to discipline.

Year	Total Number of Graduates	Graduates Employed in Positions Related to Discipline	Graduates Employed in Positions Not Related to Discipline	Graduates Matriculating to Graduate School
FY 2015-16				
FY 2016-17				
FY 2017-18				
FY 2018-19				
FY 2019-20				

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC EVALUATION

Provide any additional information about graduate placement rates, if applicable, including an explanation of efforts to collect this information.

II. Student Performance: B. Graduation Rates

Provide information/data about four- and six-year graduation rates for the program.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC EVALUATION

III. Finances: A.1 Actual Costs and Sources of Finances

Provide information about program costs and sources of financing. *Specify costs and sources of financing on the next page.

Financial Support					
Actual Costs by Year					
Category	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20
Program Administration					
Faculty and Staff Salaries					
Graduate Assistants					
Equipment					
Facilities					
Supplies and Materials					
Library Resources					
Other*					
Total					
Sources of Financing					
Category	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20
Tuition Funding					
Program-Specific Fees					
State Funding (i.e., Special State Appropriation)*					
Reallocation of Existing Funds*					
Federal Funding*					
Other Funding*					
Total					
Net Total (i.e., Sources of Financing Minus Actual Costs)					

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC EVALUATION

III. Finances: A. 2. Explanation of Other Costs and Sources of Financing

Provide an explanation for other costs, state funding, any reallocation of existing funds, federal funding, and other funding identified in the Financial Support table.

III. Finances: B. Student Debt Load

If available, state the average debt load of graduates of the program.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC EVALUATION

III. Finances: C. Fiscal Impact to Institution

Please explain whether the program has a negative or positive fiscal impact on the institution overall (i.e., is the program supported by the revenue of other programs or does the revenue generated by the program support other programs at the institution?).

IV. Accreditation (if applicable)

Describe the program’s accreditation status, including an explanation of delays in seeking or earning programmatic accreditation. Attach any reports and recommendations received from the accrediting body regarding the program.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC EVALUATION**V. Licensure/Certification Exam Passage Rates** (if applicable)

List the Licensure/Certification Exams Applicable to the Program*:

* Academic Affairs staff will coordinate data collection with Institutional Effectiveness reporting.

Year	Passage Rate
FY 2015-16	
FY 2016-17	
FY 2017-18	
FY 2018-19	
FY 2019-20	
FY 2020-21	
FY 2021-22	
FY 2022-23	

If necessary, provide additional information about Licensure/Certification Exam Passage Rates

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