

Spring 4-1-2018

REFERRAL REPORT for SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS COMMISSION ON COLLEGES (SACSCOC)

University of South Florida St. Petersburg

Michelle Madden

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA ST. PETERSBURG (USFSP)

REFERRAL REPORT

for

SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS COMMISSION
ON COLLEGES (SACSCOC)

University of South Florida St. Petersburg (USFSP)
140 7th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Prepared by:

Dr. Michelle Madden

Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment & SACSCOC Institutional Liaison

Office: (727) 873 - 4197

CS 3.3.1.1 (Institutional Effectiveness: Educational Programs)

This standard expects an institution to identify expected outcomes, assess the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provide evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in its educational programs, including student learning outcomes.

SACSCOC Response:

“The institution assesses its programs through Academic Learning Compacts required by the State of Florida. Most programs have student learning outcomes and measures. In its report, the institution should provide evidence that assessment results are used for program improvement.”

The University of South Florida St. Petersburg (USFSP) affirms its compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1. (Institutional effectiveness - educational programs).

CS 3.3.1.1 - Institutional Effectiveness: Educational Programs

The University of South Florida St. Petersburg (USFSP) is committed to providing quality educational experiences for students, regardless of delivery method. All USFSP courses, in each of USFSP’s three colleges - College of Arts & Sciences (CAS), College of Education (COE), and the Kate Tiedemann College of Business (KTCOB) - whether delivered Face-to-Face (F2F), Distance Education (DE), or a hybrid of the two methods (commonly referred to as “blended”)

adhere to University of South Florida (USF) System policies that guide academic program quality and assessment procedures. [USF System Policy 10-065](#) is the guiding document that anchors and mandates the comparability review between distance and traditional modalities of teaching and learning. Section IV: F1-4 of the policy specifies:

1. Comparability of student learning outcomes to the traditional delivery of course/program, or an identified, comparable course/program.
2. Comparability of academically engaged time of students to the traditional delivery of the course/program, or an identified, comparable course/program.
3. A methodology for assessing and reporting on comparability of student learning outcomes for the online course/program and the traditional course/program, or a comparable traditional course/program.
4. A plan for use of assessment results as the basis for ongoing design of the online course/program to ensure comparability with the traditional delivery of the course/program.

Adhering to this policy, every academic course at USFSP, regardless of delivery modality (i.e. face-to-face, hybrid/blended or fully online), identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, recommends, and implements improvements based on analysis of the results.

Examples (screenshots from attached syllabi) of expected outcomes and assessment measures from USFSP courses:

Figures 1 & 2 from (Face-to-Face Course) [ACG 2021 - Financial Accounting](#)

Course Description:

Study of basic accounting principles including the recording and reporting of financial activity. The preparation and interpretation of financial statements.

Course Themes:

Financial accounting, classification and reporting of financial transactions and preparation of financial statements.

Learning Outcomes:

After successfully completing this course, the student should be able to recognize, analyze, evaluate and journalize business transactions that are part of the financial accounting process. The student should be able to prepare, understand, and analyze the four key financial statements: the income statement, balance sheet, statement of cash flows, and statement of changes in owners' equity/retained earnings. The student will demonstrate this knowledge through the completion of class exercises, homework exercises, homework problems, practice set and formal evaluations of progress.

Assessment Tasks: |

Principles of Financial Accounting is the first in a series of courses that are part of the accounting curriculum. The primary emphasis of this course is on the structure of financial statements for corporations and the process for creating them using the tools of financial accounting. This course provides students with an exposure to the accounting process and the manner in which transactions are classified and recorded ultimately leading to the preparation of financial statements.

At the conclusion of the course, you should be able to use the Problem-Solving Skills developed in this course to:

1. Describe financial accounting measurement and theory concepts.
2. Formulate methodology employed by the professional accountant in applying generally accepted accounting principles to business transactions and events.
3. Illustrate the theory and methodology underlying income measurement, reporting of financial position and the preparation of financial reports.
4. Utilize the basic principles of accounting to analyze transactions, interpret and classify them and prepare corporate financial statements.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the financial closing process through the completion of a practice set that incorporates adjusting entries, closing entries and the preparation of financial statements

Course Content:

Concepts

Balance Sheet	10%
Income Statement	10%
Adjusting Entries	10%
Revenue; Receivables; Cash	10%
Cost of Goods Sold; Inventory	10%
Property Plant & Equipment; Natural Resources; Intangibles	10%
Liabilities	10%
Investments and Bonds	10%
Owner's/Stockholders' Equity	10%
Analyzing Financial Statements	10%

Figures 3 & 4 from (Online Course) [ACG 4931 IRS VITA Tax Practicum](#)

Course Description:

A practicum is an academic course of study that requires the immediate practical application of academic training in a supervised manner, with a professor being the primary supervisor. It differs from an internship in that the latter is generally a full-time experience for a short period of time with a professional firm, with supervision done by practicing CPAs. Unlike a practicum the internships usually do not require academic preparation in the same semester as the internship. This practicum provides an opportunity for students to gain valuable experience in preparing tax returns and to apply their knowledge of classroom learning. The practicum consists of two principal parts: (1) online training tutorials and exams from the IRS {Link and Learn program} plus the Tax-Wise software training; and (2) a minimum of 80 hours of tax preparation work at IRS VITA sites.

Course Objective(s):

1. To create and attain individual short-term goals based on long-term career objectives and a personal mission statement.
2. To apply tax knowledge acquired through USF St Petersburg in a real business environment.
3. To increase the student's ability to secure a meaningful career through a better understanding of career options.
4. To increase the student's skill sets through a variety of experiential tasks.

Key leadership skills and perspectives addressed in this course: the numbers, ranging from 1 – 5, indicates the amount of emphasis placed on this particular goal or objective. A description of how these goals and objectives are applied follows the table.

Written and Oral Communication	Information Technology	Innovation and Critical Thinking	Ethics & Sustainability	Global and Multicultural Competence
4 (a)	5 (b)	4 (c)	3 (d)	3 (e)

Written and Oral Communication Skills: Students will be interacting with taxpayers in the community and with business professionals in their respective organizations.

Information Technology Skill: Students must complete three IRS online tutorial courses, plus exams, at the IRS website, irs.gov. In addition, all students will be trained in the IRS tax preparation program. This is used at all the VITA sites.

Innovation and Critical Thinking Skills: All IRS tutorials and exams emphasize problem solving and data analysis skills. In addition there is a need to think in analytical terms in recognizing tax issues. In addition students will be required to do research as to the proper tax treatment of individual problem issues while in the field.

Ethical and Sustainability: Ethical issues in tax compliance will be covered in the IRS online tutorials. In addition the students will be expected to comply with all existing tax laws at the VITA sites. The VITA Tax Practicum also concentrates on helping low and moderate income taxpayers in the community.

Global and Multicultural Competence: Students will be interacting and working with individuals from various races, cultures, nationalities, genders, and those with physical or mental disabilities.

USFSP faculty and administration are fully committed to supporting student success and program excellence through a culture of assessment and continuous curriculum improvement. Each of USFSP's academic programs ([Undergraduate](#) & [Graduate](#)) identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results, thus supporting continuous improvement efforts.

USFSP Continuous Improvement Process

One of the most important aspects of the assessment cycle is the analysis of assessment results and application of strategies for the continuous improvement of academic programs. Each program continuously assesses the extent to which it has achieved its academic standards, and each program uses these results to initiate and justify program improvements. Ongoing and systematic assessment is vital to USFSP's continuous improvement initiatives and is critical in demonstrating the quality of the institution to the community and to external accrediting agents.

USFSP follows a structured format for curriculum changes to academic programs. Once identified through the annual Academic Learning Compact (ALC) review process, or through other data based means, faculty may propose changes to academic programs through the curriculum review process which is initiated in each college. Changes are proposed using the appropriate [Curriculum Change Request Form \(Undergraduate Programs & Graduate Programs\)](#).

Each request is reviewed by

- a) the applicable department / program committee and (where applicable) chairperson
- b) the appropriate college specific curriculum committee

- c) college Dean
- d) the Undergraduate or Graduate Curriculum Committee of the Faculty Senate
- e) the Regional Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs.

At each stage of the process, appropriate documentation and justification for curriculum change is required for thorough review and approval. Once the proposed changes have successfully been approved, the changes are made and implemented within the program. The curricular management process requires that all proposals for changes undergo a significant amount of review, feedback, and input from stakeholders at the program, college, and institutional level. The result of this review process is a high quality, continually improved curriculum.

While each college at USFSP adheres to [USF System Policy 3-038](#) for implementing curriculum changes to academic programs, each college strives to adhere to industry specific and educational best practices for maximum impact within their content areas.

Currently there are three simultaneous methods employed by the University that drive the institutional effectiveness process of academic programs. These include annual [Academic Learning Compacts and Student Learning Outcomes](#) completion and review, periodic [external academic program reviews](#) (seven year cycle), and industry specific accreditation review and certification (optional, for select programs). In all three methods, the assessment and feedback process is rigorous and continuous. In addition to the above mentioned processes, a growing number of distance learning courses offered at USFSP are [Quality Matters \(QM\) Certified](#) (www.qualitymatters.org), offering further evidence of rigor of course quality. Currently, USFSP

leads the USF System with the number of QM certified courses and is 2nd in the state of Florida for the number of QM certified courses.

Annual Academic Learning Compact (ALC) Reviews

Academic Learning Compacts (ALCs) are required for each academic program delivered at USFSP. As stated in the [USF System Policy 10-060](#) -- *“Every academic program must have an active assessment plan...must meet the requirements of [Board of Governors Regulation 8.016, Academic Learning Compacts](#). This Regulation requires the ongoing assessment of critical thinking skills, communication skills, and content/discipline knowledge and skills.”* [USF System Statement of Policy on Academic Learning Compacts](#) establishes standard procedures for Academic Learning Compacts for the University of South Florida System.

Although the [State of Florida Board of Governor’s Regulation 8.016](#) mandates ALCs for only undergraduate programs, USFSP requires every Master’s degree program to submit an annual report as well. Faculty in each program are responsible for the curriculum and, as such, drive construction of the academic assessment plan each year. In collaboration with program / department chairpersons, the Assistant Dean, and the Dean of each college, assessment and continuous improvement processes are employed throughout the academic year. The approach to institutional effectiveness within each academic program essentially “begins with the end in mind” -- that is, the foundational knowledge in each program, the requisite skills, abilities for the application of that knowledge, and the complementary engagement experiences offered to

reinforce both knowledge and skills, are all guided by measurable Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).

[Florida FLBOG regulation 8.016](#) further mandates that “*program evaluation and improvement shall occur on a continuous basis.*” With data analytic support from the USFSP Office of Institutional Research (OIR), the USFSP faculty, support staff, and administrators in each unit/program meet at least once annually, [[CAS](#), [COE](#), [KTCOB](#)] to review SLO assessment data and discuss strategies for continuous improvement collectively, then make recommendations for improving their respective programs.

While each academic Dean is ultimately responsible for making sure assessments are completed and submitted to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness for USF System reporting purposes, the Dean delegates part of this authority to the [Department Chairs](#) and to the [Undergraduate and Graduate Program Coordinators](#). The department chairs and coordinators handle the responsibility of collating ALC material from faculty peers and assembling the faculty to review the findings and make recommendations for program improvement.

ALC Process

Prior to the start of each semester, faculty submit a copy of all course syllabi to the relevant Department Chair and Dean to verify incorporation of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in each course and program. During the academic year, faculty capture SLO assessment data for inclusion in the annual [USF ALC Status Report](#) (aka Student Learning Outcomes Status Report)

and collaborate with other faculty and administration to address instructional priorities and needs in an ongoing and as needed basis. ALC reports are completed at the end of the academic year and are reviewed by the Dean and other applicable administrators. Plans for program improvement are noted in each ALC and implemented as plausible during the next academic year. Upon completion, ALCs are sent to the Dean of the Library for storage in the [USFSP Digital Archive](#).

Through this structured format, university faculty meet at least once per year by program / department to reflect on the entire continuous improvement process. This includes collectively reaffirming and/or updating Student Learning Objectives and consideration of each respective program within the context of the mission and goals of the institution as articulated in the [USFSP Strategic Plan](#). Faculty also meet to discuss and identify thresholds for student success; corresponding assessment strategies, rubrics and other methodologies; and to review course and program assessment results. During this time, faculty and administrators develop strategies to enhance academic programs and the student learning experience.

The common ALC template has the following core elements:

1. Alignment of Program with University and College Goals
2. Summary of current year ALC data analysis
3. Observation of Improvements made in prior year
4. Mission of Academic Program
5. ALC Goals and Objectives for Current Review Cycle w/:
 - a. Means of Assessment and Corroborating Evidence
 - b. Measurable Criteria for Success

- c. Findings
 - d. Plan for Program Improvement based on Findings
6. ALC Goals and Objectives for Following Year Review Cycle w/:
- a. Means of Assessment and Corroborating Evidence
 - b. Measurable Criteria for Success

Provided is a link to USFSP completed ALC reports over the past five years:

https://digital.usfsp.edu/institutional_research_acl/].

Seven Year Program Reviews

[Florida Board of Governors \(FLBOG\) Policy 8.015](#) requires the periodic review of all academic degree programs in State Universities at least once every seven years from the date of the preceding review or from the implementation date of new academic programs. Program reviews must document how individual academic programs are achieving stated student learning and program objectives within the context of the university's mission, as illustrated in the academic learning compacts for baccalaureate programs. The results of the program reviews are expected to inform strategic planning, program development, and budgeting decisions at the university level and, when appropriate, at the state level.

The [USF Program Review Procedures](#) provide a description of the Academic Program Review process and guidelines for the reports that are required for the review. Each Academic Program Review must include the following:

1. A review of the mission(s) and purpose(s) of the program within the context of the university mission and the Board of Governors' Strategic Plan;

2. The establishment of teaching, research, service, and other program goals and objectives, including expected outcomes, particularly in the area of student learning;

3. An assessment of:

a. how well program goals/objectives are being met;

b. how well students are achieving expected learning outcomes;

c. how the results of these assessments are used for continuous program improvement;

d. the sufficiency of resources and support services to achieve the program goals/objectives.

4. For baccalaureate programs, a review of lower level prerequisite courses to ensure that the program is in compliance with State approved common prerequisites and (if appropriate) a review of the limited access status of the program to determine if such status is still warranted;

5. a description of major changes made to the program since the previous review;

6. an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the program;

7. recommendations and/or proposed action plans developed as a result of the review.

Summaries of program reviews (ex. [Psychology](#), [Political Science](#), [Environmental Science](#)) are submitted to the USF System Office of Institutional Effectiveness and subsequently to the Florida Board of Governors in accordance with the established schedule.

External Accreditation Acquisition

Each college at USFSP (College of Arts and Sciences, College of Education, and Kate Tiedemann College of Business) has programs that have achieved and maintain industry accreditation. While optional, the efforts employed by faculty and staff in each program to achieve such recognition asserts the commitment to academic excellence. The College of Arts and Sciences' programs in [Digital Journalism and Design](#) are accredited by the [Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication \(AEJMC\)](#). All of the College of Education's 13 programs are accredited by the [Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation \(CAEP\)](#) and through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The KTCOB's eight undergraduate and two graduate programs are accredited by the [Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business \(AACSB\)](#).

Presented below is a summary of some recent changes within each college that have resulted from program assessments.

College of Arts and Sciences

The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) faculty assess all academic programs. Upon review, faculty suggest and implement program changes to courses and programs as a result of the systematic reviews. [Provided is a link to reports of curriculum changes \(F2F and online\) made from 2015-2016](#) as a result of the Academic Learning Compact process within the College. The department chairs and coordinators manage the process of assembling the faculty, who assess the SLOs, review the findings, and make recommendations for program improvement. This process

is captured in annual ALC reports that are collected by the dean's office and consolidated into a single report. Provided is a summary of curriculum changes in College of Arts and Sciences programs between fall 2014 - spring 2016: https://digital.usfsp.edu/alc_supplemental/ that is stored in the USFSP Digital Archive. These reports specify for each year indicated:

- a) curriculum changes made;
- b) data sources that support changes;
- c) the review process used to synthesize data that resulted in the changes.

Also provided is curriculum and assessment documentation for Journalism programs, which serves as an example of the assessment cycle in which programs vary in instructional modality but not in program content or quality. The department of Journalism and Media Studies (JMS) offers the only fully online program (MA in Digital Journalism and Design) in the College of Arts and Sciences, while simultaneously offering a face-to-face Masters and also a face-to-face BA in Communications. All three programs in the JMS department are accredited by the AEJMC.

1. [Journalism Program ALC](#)
2. [Journalism Assessment Plan](#)
3. [Journalism Self-Study AEJMC Standard #9 Assessment of Learning Outcomes](#)

Program objectives, student learning outcomes, and assessment processes are comparable, regardless of instructional modality.

The College of Arts and Sciences makes every effort to ensure that students who take online courses have comparable learning objectives and the same high quality experience as our traditional face-to-face students through our Students Learning Outcomes and assessment process. All students, regardless of instructional modality, have access to the same student support services, the same learning management system (CANVAS), and the same high quality faculty and access to faculty office hours, same student evaluation (discussed further in section CS 3.13.1).

College of Education

Within the University of South Florida College of Education (COE) review of the data occurs and findings from the data are used for the purposes of program improvement. Using the [FolioData](#) system, data are collected and shared with college and university stakeholders (i.e. candidates, faculty, administrators, internship office, internship supervisors, cooperating teachers, academic advising office, and assessment committee). The external body of community members is called the *School Partnership Committee* and opportunities are presented for them to provide feedback to the assessment system. More specifically, the COE assessment committee, which is largely composed of department faculty, reviews data twice a year and presents its findings to the COE administration and advisory boards. The committee meets to examine different parts of the assessment system, provide data analyses, and offer recommendations for unit and/or program changes. Recommended changes are decided upon by program faculty each semester and then submitted to the College Council for approval and then made public (i.e. unit website, student handbooks). At the program level, standardized processes are in place to ensure

fairness, accuracy, and consistency of evaluation measures. Programs integrate the use of [curriculum matrices](#) and require [portfolios \(sample\)](#). Assessment information is included in each [internship manual](#), assessors are trained on [evaluation tools](#), opportunities are provided for candidate remediation, and candidates have the right to file [grievances](#). Program data such as [state test exams results](#), [internship evaluations](#), and [completer](#) and [employer satisfaction](#) reports are also collected and reported to the the USFSP Office of Institutional Effectiveness for inclusion with various institutional effectiveness reports. The COE's [assessment of program indicators](#) is part of a cycle of data collection, analysis, reporting, and planning for improvement. The assessment system focuses on the collection of data on primary unit or program assessments. Data-based decisions occur according to the review of the unit data that occurs each semester through the program coordinators during faculty meetings. Data from shared unit assessments are disseminated biannually during college faculty meetings. Additional data used recently for program improvements include [2015-2016 FTCE and FELE Number of Takers Report](#), and [FTCE and FELE by Competencies Report](#).

The following is a list of recommendations and examples of improvements based on assessment results that were made as documented in the COE Assessment Committee and Faculty Meeting Reports.

- **Assessment System Updated**

The development and implementation of FolioData have allowed data to be retrieved from one location and candidate data (i.e. portfolio assessments, internship evaluations, candidate disposition data, internship placements, etc.) can be entered directly into the system. External data (i.e. state licensure exams, employer satisfaction and graduate surveys, etc.) are

provided and can be accessed by the COE Assessment Committee or others who have been approved. All the assessment data and reports may be accessed by the users of the assessment system (candidates, faculty, supervisors, cooperating teachers, etc.) with appropriate access level. Programs are required to submit [assessment data summaries](#) that are reviewed by the unit's leadership team, assessment committee, and other coordinating committees. Any significant trends in data are highlighted and recommendations are made to the unit, departments and programs.

- **Portfolio Course Updated**

Within the portfolio courses (EDG 4012 for undergraduates & EDG 5014 for graduates), candidates are apprised of the expectations of their initial teacher education programs, updated standards, timelines and feedback loops, and related course module updates. Both the initial level course (EDG 4012) and the advanced course (EDG 5014) have been modified to provide clear insights into the demands of the teacher education and/or leadership programs.

- **Internship Placement Data Updated**

Another focus has been placed on the creation of an [internship placement diversity database](#). The database monitors the field experiences and analyzes data regarding the diversity of placements. The database is inclusive of school demographics from [Florida Department of Education](#) and [school state exam grades](#) (i.e. FTCE subset results). The FolioData allows for the identification of problems with the internship placement diversity and allows the opportunity for steps to be taken to remedy the issue, ensuring candidates experience a

variety of placements (i.e., racial diversity, special need and ELL students, economically deprived community schools, urban settings).

- **Master Course Syllabi Updated**

Master syllabi exist for all courses taught at COE and contain course learning outcomes.

Each faculty member uses the master syllabus for their course as a template when customizing parts for their own section. Faculty cannot change the course learning outcomes and critical assignments without approval through faculty governance. The syllabi also contain the major topics/skills to be covered during the course. These syllabi ensure consistency in opportunity to learn major concepts and skills.

- **Updated Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Requirement**

In the past, passing all of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) exams was required before the final internship. This was causing delays for students who failed exams. Students were forced to wait another semester for an internship which delayed graduation and also delayed employment opportunities. In Spring 2017, the COE program decided to move the passing all of the FTCE exams requirement to “before graduation.”

- **New Instructor Training Program**

In order to ensure consistency with course and internship experiences, a training program for new adjunct instructors and university supervisors is provided. Instructors are trained by the USFSP Human Resources department which provides an online orientation module.

University supervisors receive training on clinical practices and coaching techniques to ensure consistency in observing, coaching, and mentoring teacher candidates during field based internships. This training is provided by colleagues within the USFSP COE.

- **Focus on State Tests Competencies**

The COE Assessment committee now thoroughly examines student FTCE results on the Professional and Subject Area exams to identify which competencies present the most challenges for students. The results are shared with program faculty for curriculum changes.

- **Teacher Work Sample Scores**

It has been decided by the COE that teacher work sample assignment scores will be entered digitally into FolioData rather than collecting paper-based scores, saving time and providing a centrally located and accessible repository for all faculty and staff to access.

Kate Tiedemann College of Business

Kate Tiedemann College of Business (KTCOB) faculty regularly review and enhance the undergraduate and graduate curricula. The goal of this ongoing process is to maintain relevant curricula that align with the mission of the KTCOB and focus on student's needs for successful professional careers. At the beginning of each academic year, the KTCOB faculty committees--Undergraduate Curriculum and Assessment Committee (UCAC) / Graduate Curriculum and Assessment Committee (GCAC)--analyze data gathered from the previous year to determine if any curricular changes are needed and if any changes should be made to the learning goals and objectives based on previous year's assessments. Changes are then reviewed for effectiveness in the next assessment cycle. The KTCOB collects data regularly during each assessment cycle that are compiled into the [KTCOB Assurance of Learning \(AOL\) report](#). This report includes all assessment activities performed within the College.

Since 2015, the KTCOB introduced a new degree program--the [Master of Accountancy \(MAcc\)](#), two new graduate certificate programs and several changes to the undergraduate curriculum (discussed below). KTCOB faculty led the charge to develop the programs based on programmatic assessments and student / industry needs.

[Master of Accountancy Program](#)--The KTCOB developed and implemented a Master of Accountancy program during the AACSB review period. This program, which began in Fall 2015, provides a professional level graduate degree program in accounting and was designed to help address the shortage of accounting professionals at the local, regional, and state levels. The program offers thirty hours of graduate accounting and business courses preparing students for public and private accounting practice. The program also fulfills the [Florida “5-year” educational requirements for certification as a Certified Public Accountant \(CPA\)](#).

[New Graduate Certificate Programs](#)--The KTCOB developed two graduate certificate programs in [Business Analytics](#) and [Sustainable Entrepreneurship](#) in the past five years. Faculty proposed the [Business Analytics](#) certificate program during academic year 2015-16 to alleviate the shortage of professionals with business analytics skills at the local and regional levels. Similarly, the [Sustainable Entrepreneurship](#) certificate program was developed as a response to local and national interest in sustainable business practices (and a strategic priority for USFSP). Both certificate programs were implemented in Fall 2017.

[Changes to Undergraduate Majors](#)--Recent changes in [Florida’s state-mandated General Education requirements](#) reduced the number of required non-business hours for business majors from 54 to 48 credit hours. The change in the State requirements allowed the opportunity for faculty to make curriculum changes, and also allowed students the flexibility to take

additional business courses if they desire. Finally, faculty in some majors revised their curriculum (i.e., new Finance tracks were added and required courses for Marketing were changed) to increase the relevancy of the programs in today's marketplace.

USFSP Faculty Professional Development through Online Learning and Instructional Technology Services (OLITS)

The Online Learning and Instructional Technology Services (OLITS) unit at USFSP has developed a faculty professional development platform that is designed to provide comprehensive training to meet the needs of faculty and staff to foster excellence in curriculum planning, teaching and learning. The goals are to enhance effective online teaching methods and practices, promote collaboration, develop technological competences, encourage innovation, and enrich student learning and success.

Professional Development Platform Construction

Several professional development platforms were developed based on faculty feedback from surveys completed in fall 2013 and spring 2014. Faculty data illustrated two distinct categories of learning: technology instruction and pedagogical instruction. Technical instruction was identified as software-based training for desktop and mobile platforms which included the USF system Learning Management System (LMS), Canvas. Pedagogical instruction was requested by faculty to improve student-to-student and student-to-teacher engagement. Currently, [training workshops offered by OLITS](#) are available to all faculty to schedule on-demand during normal business hours (https://sites.google.com/a/mail.usf.edu/olits_pd/home).

Professional development training at OLITS is subdivided into three distinct categories of focus: technology, pedagogy, and Canvas Learning Management System (LMS).

- **Technology Training**--OLITS technology training focuses on education technologies as well as social and productivity platforms. All of the various trainings offered by OLITS aid in the development and delivery of the educational goals faculty wish to achieve with their students.
- **Pedagogy Training**--The focus of OLITS pedagogy trainings are rooted in existing adult learning theories and best practices. The theories and practices used in OLITS workshops are also presented through the Quality Matters (QM) framework and rubric which aligns with department, university, and board of governors goals for quality online education. Currently, the OLITS staff are certified to facilitate three of the major QM workshops in both online and face-to-face delivery modalities.
- **Canvas LMS Training**--OLITS is committed to supporting faculty with ongoing training for the Canvas LMS. Training workshops are offered to faculty on-demand, including onboarding for new faculty. OLITS also provides two weeks of Canvas open labs at the beginning and end of each semester. Open labs are scheduled in blocks of time with walk-in service for faculty training and troubleshooting.

Here is a brief summary of OLITS activities:

Number of OLITS Classes Offered

Courses Offered	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016/2017
Technology	22	24	24
Pedagogy	14	18	18
Canvas LMS	8	10	10

Faculty Headcount in OLITS Courses

	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017
Total Faculty Headcount	165	69	58

Attached are faculty [participant satisfaction surveys](#) from June 2014 and January 2016 in response to OLITS courses offered at USFSP. USFSP faculty are applying skills learned during OLITS training as evidenced by the number of courses nationally certified through Quality Matters. [Twenty-five courses have received QM Certification](#) from June 2014 through July 2017 see attached. During this same time, faculty [attended 143 training sessions](#) that directly lead to [individual QM certifications](#).

CS 3.13.1 (Policy compliance - “Reaffirmation of Accreditation and Subsequent Reports”)

This standard expects an institution to comply with the policies of the Commission on Colleges.

SACSCOC Response:

The institution did not provide evidence that a review of distance and correspondence education program and courses is incorporated in its response to the following standards: CS 3.3.1.1 (Institutional Effectiveness: Educational Programs); FR 4.1 (Student Achievement); and FR 4.2 (Program Curriculum). In its report, the institution should demonstrate that a review of distance and correspondence education programs and courses is incorporated for areas cited.

The University of South Florida St. Petersburg (USFSP) affirms its compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.13.13 - Policy Compliance with respect to the following standards: CS 3.3.1.1 (Institutional Effectiveness: Educational Programs); FR 4.1 (Student Achievement); and FR 4.2 (Program Curriculum), and provides a review of distance education programs and courses for the areas cited. USFSP does not have any correspondence courses or programs.

[Undergraduate and graduate distance education courses at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg \(USFSP\)](#) are structured, implemented, and supported with expertise from the University’s [Online Learning and Instructional Technology Services \(OLITS\)](#) support unit. OLITS at Nelson Poynter Memorial Library (NPML) provides instructional design and educational technology services. OLITS serves as a model of excellence in providing integrated support for pedagogy and technology that

supports university research, teaching, and learning in facilitation of USFSP's mission to "inspire scholars to lead lives of impact". The OLITS team of Instructional Designers serves as a resource for faculty members developing or renewing online and blended (online/face-to-face) courses. Instructional Designers work with instructors to transport current materials into digital format, develop new instructional materials and media, collaborate on course alignment and instructional design elements, structure the course within Canvas (The USFSP Learning Management System), and prepare for the Quality Matters review process. Through workshops, tutorials, and one-on-one support, Instructional Designers work with faculty through every stage of the process of developing or renewing online/blended courses.

- From July 2015 through June 2016, 87 online courses received instructional design, multimedia production, Quality Matters review preparation, and Canvas support through the OLITS unit. This figure does not take into account multiple semesters or sections of the same course.
- From July 2016 through June 2017, 76 online courses received instructional design, multimedia production, Quality Matters review preparation, and extensive Canvas support through the unit. This figure does not take into account multiple semesters or sections of the same courses that we support every semester.

Distance Education Programs at USFSP

The University of South Florida St. Petersburg (USFSP) has one fully "online only" program--the Digital Journalism Master of Arts degree offered through the College of Arts and Sciences. In this program, all students are required to complete all program requirements online and do not have the option to complete any portion of the course in a Face-to-Face (F2F) format. In addition, USFSP offers

the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree which can be completed fully online, however, students have the ability to take classes within the program either online or on campus. Similarly, the Master of Education--Educational Leadership degree has been designed to meet the needs of graduate students by offering both online and F2F courses. Some students elect to complete all coursework through distance education opportunities and thus receive the benefit of a totally online program which meets their varying needs. Multiple opportunities exist for students to take distance education courses throughout various programs within the University. Distance education courses provide flexibility in content delivery modality without sacrificing instructional quality or experiences.

CS 3.3.1.1 - Institutional Effectiveness: Educational Programs

The University of South Florida St. Petersburg (USFSP) is committed to providing quality educational experiences for students, regardless of instructional delivery method. All USFSP courses within the university's three colleges - College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), College of Education (COE), and the Kate Tiedemann College of Business (KTCOB) - whether delivered Face-to-Face (F2F), Distance Education (DE), or a hybrid of the two methods (commonly referred to as "blended") adhere to University of South Florida (USF) System policies that guide academic program quality and assessment procedures. [USF System Policy 10-065](#) is the guiding document that anchors and mandates the comparability review between distance and traditional modalities of teaching and learning. Section IV: F1-4 of the policy specifies:

1. Comparability of student learning outcomes to the traditional delivery of course/program, or an identified, comparable course/program.

2. Comparability of academically engaged time of students to the traditional delivery of the course/program, or an identified, comparable course/program.
3. A methodology for assessing and reporting on comparability of student learning outcomes for the online course/program and the traditional course/program, or a comparable traditional course/program.
4. A plan for use of assessment results as the basis for ongoing design of the online course/program to ensure comparability with the traditional delivery of the course/program.

Adhering to this policy, every academic course at USFSP, regardless of delivery modality (i.e. face-to-face, hybrid/blended or fully online), identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, recommends, and implements improvements based on analysis of the results.

Examples (screenshots from attached syllabi) of expected outcomes and assessment measures from USFSP courses:

Figures 1 & 2: (Face-to-Face Course) [ACG 2021 - Financial Accounting](#)

<p>Course Description: Study of basic accounting principles including the recording and reporting of financial activity. The preparation and interpretation of financial statements.</p> <p>Course Themes: Financial accounting, classification and reporting of financial transactions and preparation of financial statements.</p> <p>Learning Outcomes: After successfully completing this course, the student should be able to recognize, analyze, evaluate and journalize business transactions that are part of the financial accounting process. The student should be able to prepare, understand, and analyze the four key financial statements: the income statement, balance sheet, statement of cash flows, and statement of changes in owners' equity/retained earnings. The student will demonstrate this knowledge through the completion of class exercises, homework exercises, homework problems, practice set and formal evaluations of progress.</p>
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Assessment Tasks:

Principles of Financial Accounting is the first in a series of courses that are part of the accounting curriculum. The primary emphasis of this course is on the structure of financial statements for corporations and the process for creating them using the tools of financial accounting. This course provides students with an exposure to the accounting process and the manner in which transactions are classified and recorded ultimately leading to the preparation of financial statements.

At the conclusion of the course, you should be able to use the Problem-Solving Skills developed in this course to:

1. Describe financial accounting measurement and theory concepts.
2. Formulate methodology employed by the professional accountant in applying generally accepted accounting principles to business transactions and events.
3. Illustrate the theory and methodology underlying income measurement, reporting of financial position and the preparation of financial reports.
4. Utilize the basic principles of accounting to analyze transactions, interpret and classify them and prepare corporate financial statements.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the financial closing process through the completion of a practice set that incorporates adjusting entries, closing entries and the preparation of financial statements

Course Content:**Concepts**

Balance Sheet	10%
Income Statement	10%
Adjusting Entries	10%
Revenue; Receivables; Cash	10%
Cost of Goods Sold; Inventory	10%
Property Plant & Equipment; Natural Resources; Intangibles	10%
Liabilities	10%
Investments and Bonds	10%
Owner's/Stockholders' Equity	10%
Analyzing Financial Statements	10%

Figures 3 & 4: (Online Course) Example from [ACG 4931 IRS VITA Tax Practicum](#)

Course Description:

A practicum is an academic course of study that requires the immediate practical application of academic training in a supervised manner, with a professor being the primary supervisor. It differs from an internship in that the latter is generally a full-time experience for a short period of time with a professional firm, with supervision done by practicing CPAs. Unlike a practicum the internships usually do not require academic preparation in the same semester as the internship. This practicum provides an opportunity for students to gain valuable experience in preparing tax returns and to apply their knowledge of classroom learning. The practicum consists of two principal parts: (1) online training tutorials and exams from the IRS {Link and Learn program} plus the Tax-Wise software training; and (2) a minimum of 80 hours of tax preparation work at IRS VITA sites.

Course Objective(s):

1. To create and attain individual short-term goals based on long-term career objectives and a personal mission statement.
2. To apply tax knowledge acquired through USF St Petersburg in a real business environment.
3. To increase the student's ability to secure a meaningful career through a better understanding of career options.
4. To increase the student's skill sets through a variety of experiential tasks.

Key leadership skills and perspectives addressed in this course: the numbers, ranging from 1 – 5, indicates the amount of emphasis placed on this particular goal or objective. A description of how these goals and objectives are applied follows the table.

Written and Oral Communication	Information Technology	Innovation and Critical Thinking	Ethics & Sustainability	Global and Multicultural Competence
4 (a)	5 (b)	4 (c)	3 (d)	3 (e)

Written and Oral Communication Skills: Students will be interacting with taxpayers in the community and with business professionals in their respective organizations.

Information Technology Skill: Students must complete three IRS online tutorial courses, plus exams, at the IRS website, irs.gov. In addition, all students will be trained in the IRS tax preparation program. This is used at all the VITA sites.

Innovation and Critical Thinking Skills: All IRS tutorials and exams emphasize problem solving and data analysis skills. In addition there is a need to think in analytical terms in recognizing tax issues. In addition students will be required to do research as to the proper tax treatment of individual problem issues while in the field.

Ethical and Sustainability: Ethical issues in tax compliance will be covered in the IRS online tutorials. In addition the students will be expected to comply with all existing tax laws at the VITA sites. The VITA Tax Practicum also concentrates on helping low and moderate income taxpayers in the community.

Global and Multicultural Competence: Students will be interacting and working with individuals from various races, cultures, nationalities, genders, and those with physical or mental disabilities.

As discussed in section CS 3.3.1.1 of the Referral Report, several simultaneous methods are used to assess institutional effectiveness of all academic programs at USFSP regardless of modality:

1. [Annual Academic Learning Compact \(ALC\) Review](#) (mandatory for all degree programs)
2. [Seven Year Academic Program Reviews](#) (mandatory for all degree programs)
3. Specialized Accreditation ([AACSB](#); [ACEJMC](#); [CAEP](#) optional, for select degree programs)

In addition, student evaluation of instruction is done in all courses that have a minimum number of students, regardless of mode. This feedback is provided to faculty and can be used to make course

improvements. The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) at USFSP collects and shares data regarding the Distance Education and F2F courses and programs with the deans of each college, faculty, and the Regional Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs (RVCAA). Data gathered includes enrollment rates, retention rates, course completion and graduation rates (when applicable), and overall course performance rates for [CAS](#), [COE](#) and [KTCOB](#). Data is harnessed by OIR and checked for accuracy, then shared with the applicable deans and colleges. College faculty and administration use the institutional data in conjunction with course data gathered from faculty and student evaluations and feedback forms, course assessment data, and [Academic Learning Compact](#) data to make decisions regarding course effectiveness and to determine course and program needs. Identified improvements / changes that result from the sharing of data and subsequent analysis are proposed as needed by faculty for the purpose of improving academic courses and programs.

Quality Matters Certification

[Quality Matters \(QM\)](#) is a faculty-centered, peer review process designed to certify the quality of online and blended courses. The primary focus of a QM review is providing a quality educational experience for the learner. The [QM research-based rubric](#) consists of eight general standards that focus on the components of an online course including: Overview and Introduction; Learning Objectives; Assessment and Measurement; Instructional Materials; Learner Engagement; Technology, Learner Support, and Accessibility. There are several specific review standards within these general standards that operationalize course components into observable elements. The primary goal of these standards is to ensure that students are able to navigate the course successfully without any barriers to achievement.

Specific review standards are classified as “Important”, “Very Important”, and “Essential”. All *Essential* standards must be met and focus on alignment, which means that critical course components must align in order for students to be able to achieve the stated learning objectives.

The QM process review team consists of three peer reviewers. Team members are faculty that teach online courses at other colleges and universities and have been certified to apply the standards of the rubric by The Quality Matters organization. These reviewers consult with the course developer/faculty member to gain an overview of the course and then conduct their review based on the standards. If the course “Meets” the criteria, it receives QM certification immediately. If the course “Does Not Meet” the criteria, a 16-week revision period is implemented during which the faculty member and Instructional Designer work together to implement updates based on the QM reviewers’ feedback. Following revision, the course may be eligible for re-submission for Quality Matters certification.

Quality Matters principles are integrated into several aspects of the online learning design and development process at USFSP and has helped to create a culture of quality for the courses and programs that are delivered in an online format. Our Instructional Design Team offers two QM Certified Workshops for faculty. [*Applying the QM Rubric \(APPQMR\)*](#) introduces faculty to the quality review process and provides practice in applying the rubric standards to a sample course. [*Improving Your Online Course*](#) (IYOC) provides faculty with the opportunity to apply the rubric standards to their own course and to come away with a plan for updates course improvement.

[The Quality Matters rubric](#) is integrated into the OLITS online course design process. The rubric is introduced to faculty in their first consultation with an Instructional Designer and subsequently is used as a guiding framework for course development in the curriculum design process. Once a course has been developed, it is recommended that the course be offered for at least two semesters to modify any aspects of the design that need refining. At that time, the course becomes eligible for the Quality Matters Review process. At USFSP, the course goes through a two week internal review prior to the external QM review. The internal review gives faculty members and Instructional Designers the opportunity to discuss any potential updates needed to meet the external QM standards that will be used to qualify the course for Quality Matters certification.

- In AY 2014-2015, four courses received Quality Matters Certification through the external peer review process. The Instructional Design Unit completed nine internal reviews. Additionally, one of our Instructional Designers received training and certification to offer the official “Applying the QM Rubric” and “Improving Your Online Course” workshops for the institution.
- In AY 2015-2016, four courses received Quality Matters Certification through the external peer review process. The Instructional Design Unit completed ten internal reviews.
- In AY 2016-2017, 12 courses received Quality Matters Certification through the external peer review process. The Instructional Design Unit completed 16 internal reviews.
- To date, our institution has 11 certified Peer Reviewers that have participated on 16 national course reviews.

The impact of participation in any aspect of Quality Matters (professional development, instructional design integration, or course review and certification) reaches well beyond the initial interaction. USFSP faculty have shared that participation in QM has influenced improvements in the teaching and design in their other courses, including face-to-face sections. Faculty have also seen increases in their ratings from the Student Assessment of Instruction after implementing QM within their course.

Quality Matters Research and Impact

[Research conducted on QM](#) by MarylandOnline has found that approximately 80% of faculty who have participated in a review process have reported planned changes to their other courses as a result of the experience.

[Research](#) on QM implementation at USFSP has focused primarily on accessibility and learner engagement. In a case study focusing on an Introduction to Information Systems course, it was found that the course became more accessible to students with a variety of disabilities through the implementation of closed captioning, distraction reduced visual design, and streamlined navigation.

Another [case study focusing on the development of an online course in Educational Supervision](#) found that incorporating QM as part of the design process allowed for increased focus on and enhanced opportunities for the three main types of learner engagement: student-to-instructor, student-to-content, and student-to-student.

FR 4.1 Student Achievement

Student success is the central focus of the University of South Florida St Petersburg as evidenced in its mission statement (“Inspire scholars to lead lives of impact”), and the priorities articulated in the USFSP [Vision 20/20 Strategic Plan](#), Goal 2: Student Success and Culture. Several of the Key Performance Indicators for USFSP’s Goal 2: Student Success and Culture are aligned to the State University System (SUS) of Florida’s [Board of Governors \(BOG\) Performance Based Funding \(PBF\) metrics](#). Institutional goals are developed based on [Florida SUS Board of Governor’s 2025 Strategic Plan Goals](#), [USF System goals](#), [USFSP Vision 20/20 Strategic Plan](#) and the [USFSP Annual Accountability Reports and Work Plans](#).

State Requirements for Assessment and Accountability

[Florida Statute 1008.31](#) Assessment and Accountability delineates the intent, scope and processes of the state’s K-20 education performance accountability system. Section 2a of this statute mandates the following:

The mission of Florida’s K-20 education system shall be to increase the proficiency of all students within one seamless, efficient system, by allowing them the opportunity to expand their knowledge and skills through learning opportunities and research valued by students, parents, and communities. The process for establishing state and sector-specific standards and measures must be: 1. Focused on student success; 2. Addressable through policy and program changes; 3. Efficient and of high quality; 4. Measurable over time; 5. Simple to explain and display to the public; and 6. Aligned with other measures and other sectors to support a coordinated K-20 education system.

To meet the mandate, the Florida Board of Governors (BOG) established [BOG Regulation 2.002](#), University Work Plans and Annual Reports, to provide mechanisms through which the State Universities would plan, monitor, and report assessment and accountability efforts. In accordance with the regulation, USFSP submits annually its [Accountability Report and a Work Plan](#) to the BOG. The Accountability Report includes the institution's performance on metrics specified by the BOG that are consistent with the criteria listed in [USFSP's Vision 20/20 Strategic Plan](#) . USFSP is awarded [performance-based funding based on the BOG model](#), which includes the following metrics as well as additional Key Performance Indicators (KPI).

Metric 1 – Percent of Bachelor's Graduates Employed and/or Continuing their Education Further 1 Yr after Graduation

Metric 2 – Median Average Wages of Undergraduates Employed in Florida 1 Yr after Graduation

Metric 3 – Average Cost per Undergraduate Degree to the Institution

Metric 4 – Six Year Graduation Rates (Full-time and Part-time FTIC)

Metric 5 – Academic Progress Rate (2nd Year Retention with GPA above 2.0)

Metric 6 – Bachelor's Degrees Awarded in Areas of Strategic Emphasis (includes STEM)

Metric 7 – University Access Rate (Percent of Undergraduates with a Pell Grant)

Metric 8a – Graduate Degrees Awarded in Areas of Strategic Emphasis (includes STEM)

Metric 8b – Freshmen in Top 10% of Graduating High School Class

Metric 9 – Percent of Bachelor’s Degrees without Excess Hours

USFSP receives performance funding as part of the [USF System allocation](#) from the BOG. Funding is distributed within the USF System based on individual institutional contributions (USF Tampa, USF St. Petersburg, USF Sarasota-Manatee) to the metrics.

Distance Education Programs at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg

As mentioned above, USFSP offers one exclusively online program - the Master of Arts in Digital Journalism and Design (DJD). Two additional programs can be completed through Distance Education methods, in a Face-to-Face (F2F) format, or a combination of both methods: the Master of Education--Educational Leadership and Master of Business Administration. Many students elect to complete the programs using a combination of F2F and online methods. A comprehensive review of each program with respect to student achievement within those programs is presented below.

College of Arts and Sciences: Master of Arts--Digital Journalism and Design & Journalism & Media Studies (JMS) vs. Digital Journalism & Design (DJD)

The College of Arts and Sciences offers one fully online degree--MA in Digital Journalism and Design (DJD), launched in 2012. The online program is offered in addition to the traditional face-to-face Master of Arts in Journalism offered by the department of Journalism and Digital Communication. Provided is an [overview of key indicators of the success of the DJD master’s program](#) in relation and comparison to the traditional (F2F) Masters in Journalism.

The Digital Journalism & Design M.A. (Online) was designed in 2012 to provide a practical, “hands on” approach to incorporating technology as a means of communication and storytelling. [Online and face-to-face coursework offered by the Department of Journalism and Digital Communication are comparably effective.](#) For example, as seen on page 4 of the attached summary, Dr. Monica Ancu taught two courses in social media in fall 2016: MMC 6936.794 (online) and MMC 6936.691 (face-to-face, dual listed with an undergraduate section). Here follows the quantitative and qualitative reviews received for each course:

MMC 6936.794: Social Media (online), Fall 2016, Dr. Monica Ancu

ITEM ID	ITEM	Excellent		Very Good		Good		Fair		Poor		No Response		Mean
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
E1	Description of Course Objectives & Assignments	7	87.50	0	0.00	1	12.50	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	4.75
E2	Communication of Ideas and Information	7	87.50	1	12.50	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	4.88
E3	Expression of Expectations for Performance	6	75.00	2	25.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	4.75
E4	Availability to Assist Students In or Out of Class	7	87.50	0	0.00	1	12.50	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	4.75
E5	Respect and Concern for the Students	7	87.50	1	12.50	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	4.88
E6	Stimulation of Interest in the Course	6	75.00	1	12.50	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	12.50	4.86
E7	Facilitation of Learning	7	87.50	0	0.00	1	12.50	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	4.75
E8	Overall Rating of the Instructor	7	87.50	1	12.50	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	4.88

College of Education: Master of Education--Educational Leadership

The University of South Florida St. Petersburg (USFSP) College of Education (COE) insures that all courses, face to face and online, are aligned to national and state standards. Online courses are designed using the platform of Canvas and the design framework of Quality Matters (QM). The College of Education has twenty-eight courses online, and five have achieved the optional Quality Matters

certification. Faculty who wish to place courses online work internally with an OLITS Distance Learning (DL) designer. This has allowed faculty to insure students are gaining academically in an online setting.

Face-to-face and online courses are evaluated for effectiveness in several ways. The Dean and Associate Dean observe instruction of faculty both full and part-time by attending face to face and online courses. Faculty provide the Dean with access to online courses for the purpose of reviewing and providing feedback. Students are encouraged to submit an evaluation on all courses whether the course was taught face to face or online. Student feedback gained from course evaluations assist the instructor in editing the design of the course.

The Assessment Committee reviews student achievement data of critical assignments and state professional assessments to identify student achievement results. Since courses are aligned to state standards, COE faculty are able to identify the courses that may need alignment or if a particular delivery design should be edited or changed.

In July of 2017, the College of Education began offering the Educational Leadership program in an online format. Although the fully online format is available, many of the students choose to complete the program in both face-to-face and online modalities.

Kate Tiedemann College of Business: Master of Business Administration

The MBA program is ranked #30 best online MBA program by U.S. News & World Report (USNWR).

The sole MBA program at USFSP the program can be completed 100% by any student that chooses to do so, but most students take some combination of courses (part-time, full-time, online, on campus) while they are completing the program. Although the MBA program is available to students and can be completed totally online, all student data is collected and reported without regard to delivery mode.

Detailed information regarding USFSP's MBA program, is available in the [USNWR profile](#) and attached [data file](#).

FR 4.2 - Program Curriculum

The institution's curriculum is directly related and appropriate to the purpose and goals of the institution and the diplomas, certificates, or degrees awarded. As its mission, USFSP upholds the following: We will "Inspire scholars to lead lives of impact." USFSP faculty are responsible for developing the philosophy and program of study for each academic program, and all courses within the University. With state and national professional standards in mind, all curriculum is developed and maintained by university faculty in accordance with USF policies and USFSP procedures. Through a [collaborative process](#), faculty identify the knowledge base central to their programs and provide opportunities for students to take advantage of such knowledge through continuous improvement processes and by making adjustments to the curriculum as warranted by data and needed for relevancy and currency.

All curriculum is developed by USFSP faculty and proceeds through a through [curriculum approval process](#), which spans college curriculum committees and is then reviewed and when appropriate, approved by the applicable faculty senate committee (undergraduate or graduate). All curriculum at USFSP, whether face to face or online, is developed and maintained by University faculty in accordance with Florida Board of Governor's policy ([BOG regulation 8.011 new programs](#)), the policies of the [USFSP Faculty Governance Charter](#) and the respective [Undergraduate Council \(Draft\)](#) and [Graduate Council](#). The [USF System University Academic Program Advisory Council \(APAC\)](#) reviews and recommends all pre-proposal, new program proposals, as well as existing program suspension and termination.

[Distance Education courses and programs](#) are also reviewed by the [Online Learning and Instructional Technology \(OLTIS\)](#) team, which provides support for faculty teaching online courses through instructional design consulting (during the pre-construction phase), actual course construction, and the production of course materials. OLITS also provides faculty personalized professional development opportunities in various settings, including one-on-one and group workshop settings, to assist in course design and best practices in distance education.

University degree programs and courses that were originally approved as face-to-face instruction must be formally reviewed by the appropriate curriculum committees, Faculty Senate Committee (Undergraduate or Graduate) and the OLITS team prior to being delivered in an online format. This process includes submitting either an updated [USF System curriculum change](#) request documenting the online delivery modes and technology or submitting proposals that document how the curriculum will be

converted to an online / distance education format. As part of the commitment to best practices in Distance Education, USFSP has subscribed to the Quality Matters program and is currently in the process of reviewing all existing distance education courses. The Quality Matters Certification process is a faculty centered, peer review process designed to certify the quality of online (distance education) and blended courses (Face-to-Face & distance), and OLITS provides the relevant services for this review. Together with the faculty, OLITS ensures that all courses developed as distance education courses are done so in a manner consistent with University policy and procedures and are appropriate for the degrees awarded by the institution.

In each college and across colleges, faculty are solely responsible for the curriculum in each program, and maintain program relevancy in accordance with professional industry needs and requirements. Each college at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg features programs that have full accreditation within their industry. The accredited programs meet or exceed the required expectations for accreditation, and many of the courses required for completion in each program are offered in both online (distance education) and face-to-face formats. All of the programs support the USFSP mission to “Inspire students to lead lives of impact” by offering relevant and rigorous coursework and experiential learning opportunities that are industry specific and support the goals of each professional academic program. A summary of the USFSP distance education programs that have achieved industry accreditation is presented below, by college.

College Of Education

Through a collaborative visioning process, faculty identified the knowledge base important to its programs, as well as the mission of the College of Education (COE) and USFSP. With state and national professional standards in mind, as well as the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices (FEAPs), faculty came to consensus and developed the candidate and leadership learning outcomes. In collaboration with its community partners in the schools, the faculty continues reviewing and refining the programs it offers with an emphasis on candidate learning outcomes. The assessment system employed for the programs are designed to encompass relevant data collection for analysis and decision-making. As a result, the COE's programs reflect continuous improvement, are regionally responsive, and are designed to meet the needs of every student in the areas they serve.

As the COE's mission, the College seeks to prepare exemplary teachers and school leaders for roles in a diverse and changing society. The college offers graduate and undergraduate programs, offered both face-to-face and via distance education, recognized for accomplishing defined learning outcomes, supported by a foundation of applied research, and dedicated to meeting the needs of the diverse communities it serves. In pursuit of this mission, faculty are guided by a respect for evidence, the pursuit of scholarship, and the ethics of community responsibility.

By providing excellent professional instruction in content and pedagogy within the context of social justice, the COE enhances the educational experiences of the students of the Tampa Bay region and the schools COE candidates serve. The programs and professional commitments of the USFSP College of Education are founded on an evidence-based perspective of knowledge in education. This knowledge

base includes the scientific knowledge produced by academic disciplines and the wisdom of practice gained through service to students, parents, and community members. Three organizing themes detailed in the Curriculum Framework guide the Unit's programs and courses, whether offered face-to-face or via distance education: Knowledgeable Professionalism, Reflective Teaching, and Collaborative Leadership. All of USFSP College of Education programs are accredited by the [Council for Accreditation of Education Preparation \(CAEP\)](#) through the National Council for Accreditation for Teacher Education (NCATE).

Kate Tiedemann College Of Business

The Kate Tiedemann College Of Business (KTCOB) faculty are responsible for developing and managing the college's curriculum. The curricular management process requires that proposals for all changes undergo a significant amount of review, feedback, and input from stakeholders at the college and institutional level. The result of this review process is a high quality, continually improved business program. The KTCOB faculty continually review and enhance the content of the undergraduate and graduate curricula, ensuring relevance and adherence to industry standards. The goal of this ongoing process is to maintain a relevant curriculum that aligns with the KTCOB mission as well as the USFSP 20/20 Vision, which focuses on providing the support students need to be successful in their careers and lead lives of impact.

The most recent comprehensive review of the online Master of Business Administration degree occurred in 2015-2016. The Graduate Curriculum and Assessment Committee (GCAC) undertook a review of the graduate core courses to evaluate program effectiveness and relevance to the KTCOB mission as well as

USFSP mission. As part of the review, the curricula of peer institutions were analyzed to identify emerging trends in core course offerings, and two curricular changes emerged. The changes to the program ensured that students would be able to be impactful in their career fields and in their lives, as is the mission of USFSP. The changes that were proposed were the addition of the Organizational Behavior course, and a new concentration and certificate program in Business Analytics. All of the programs in the Kate Tiedemann College of Business are accredited by the [Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business \(AACSB\)](#). In January 2018, the KTCOB submitted the Continuous Improvement Review Report to the AACSB in partial fulfillment of requirements for reaffirmation of specialized accreditation with the organization.

College of Arts and Sciences

College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) faculty have sole responsibility for the creation, assessment, and revision of all educational programs and courses--face-to-face and online--offered within in the college. Faculty in each department maintain the curriculum in each program and make additions, adjustments, and revisions as necessary to ensure each program remains relevant and provides impactful experiences and learning opportunities for students within the programs.

The Master of Arts in Digital Journalism and Design is a fully online graduate school experience offered by the College of Arts and Sciences. On-campus classes stress intellectually stimulating seminar-style classes taught by professors and adjunct faculty with strong academic credentials and professional experience. Online programs feature content and course design that is immersive, intuitive and interactive.

Face-to-face undergraduate and graduate programs within USFSP's Department of Journalism and Media Studies have been accredited since 2004, earning re-accreditation every five years since. ACEJMC found each degree-seeking program offered by the Department of Journalism and Media Studies in compliance with each its nine standards for excellence. While programs with multiple ACEJMC-accredited programs are rare, rarer still are accredited programs with online degrees. USFSP's Digital Journalism and Design department's achievement validates the hard work of our students and faculty.

Academic Program Reviews

USFSP complies with the State University System of Florida Board of Governors regulation [8.015 Academic Program Review](#) that requires the periodic review of all academic degrees at least once every seven years. Every academic department at USFSP participates in review, which includes external evaluation and/or specialized accreditation reviews where applicable. The review process includes providing specific data about student achievement in terms of stated student learning and program objectives, enrollment data, and overall program effectiveness. External reviewers evaluate each department--including courses and degree programs--for content currency, appropriateness and requirements. This includes all modes of instructional delivery. Summaries of program reviews (ex. [Psychology](#), [Political Science](#), [Environmental Science](#)) are submitted to the USF System Office of Institutional Effectiveness and subsequently to the Florida Board of Governors in accordance with the established schedule.

