

## **University of South Carolina Salkehatchie**

Act 629 – Summary Reports on Institutional Effectiveness  
Fiscal Year 2005-2006

This report includes: General Education, Success of Transfer Students, and Policies and procedures to ensure that academic programs support the economic development needs in the State by providing a technologically skilled workforce.

### **Achievement of Students Transferring from Two to Four-Year Institutions**

Transfer reports for the USC Regional Campuses can be found at  
<http://kudzu.ipr.sc.edu/effectiveness/assessment/IEReports/transfers/>.

### **General Education Program**

As indicated in the institution's Mission Statement, "Salkehatchie offers associate in arts and associate in science degree programs, and its primary purpose is to provide the first two years of a university education, offering USC Columbia courses taught by USC approved faculty." By definition, General Education is a set of skills and a collection of knowledge in different content areas. To meet these criteria, "USC Salkehatchie requires its graduates to possess oral and written communication, critical thinking, and computational skills. In addition, its graduates must have grounding in the liberal arts through the acquisition of knowledge in the following areas: humanities or fine arts, social or behavioral sciences, and natural sciences or mathematics."

### **Skills Indicators**

#### **Oral and Written Communication**

- Orally communicate clearly and effectively.
- Write compositions that are sufficiently coherent, unified, and developed.
- Write prose that are clear, understandable, and free from such errors in grammar and mechanics as would obstruct reader comprehension.
- Have knowledge of library research methods and mechanics.
- Read with understanding.

#### **Computational and Numerical Skills**

- Make good consumer decisions.
- Read and interpret mathematical information contained in newspapers and magazines.
- Demonstrate calculator competency.
- Solve problems using the basic properties and operations of mathematics.
- Demonstrate computer competency.

#### **Critical Thinking**

- Use inductive and deductive reasoning to draw conclusions.
- Recognize bias in reasoning.
- Recognize inconsistencies in reasoning.

### **Content Area Indicators**

#### **Humanities**

- Understand the basic elements of fiction, poetry, and drama.
- Analyze works of literature in the three major genres of fiction, poetry, and drama.

**Natural Sciences**

- Understand the scientific method.
- Understand the application of scientific principles to daily life.

**Social and Behavioral Sciences**

- Understand and critically analyze the behavior of individuals, groups and institutions in society.
- Understand the cultural, political, economic, or social contexts and developments that shape people's lives.

**Assessment Methods**

USC Salkehatchie uses annual teaching evaluations, annual student satisfaction surveys, and bi-annual alumni surveys to track the effectiveness of General Education. All surveys include components to aid the institution in its measurement of success in delivering General Education. Moreover, each relevant office studies the results of the surveys to determine if changes are necessary.

**Assessment Results**

By the requirements of the awarding of an associate's degree, students must take and successfully complete six hours of English. Therefore, if the student satisfies this requirement then they have acquired the written communication skills appropriate for General Education. Additionally, the vast majority of our students complete a course in Speech, thus satisfying oral communications requirements. Students must also successfully complete requirements in mathematics, natural science, and social/behavioral sciences. Again, the successful completion of these requirements implies that the students have acquired the skills appropriate for General Education.

The questions in the annual student satisfaction surveys that apply to General Education are as follows:

1. I am satisfied with the extent of my intellectual development since enrolling at Salkehatchie.
2. My academic experience at Salkehatchie has had a positive influence on my intellectual growth and interest in ideas.
3. Most of my courses this year have been intellectually stimulating.
4. I am more likely to attend a cultural event (for example, a concert, lecture, or art show) now than I was before coming to Salkehatchie.

In the most recent survey (2004), 77% of the students surveyed responded with 'strongly agree' or 'agree' to the above statements. Questions 1-3 above resulted in the strongest positive results (86%) while question 4 was weaker (52%). In consideration of this, Salkehatchie has taken positive steps to bring cultural events to the campuses in Allendale and Walterboro.

The questions in the bi-annual Alumni Survey that are applicable to General Education are as follows:

1. Indicate your satisfaction with your general education program of study.
2. Indicate your satisfaction with instruction in your general education program.
3. Indicate your overall academic experience satisfaction.

In the 2005 survey, 92% of the respondents indicated they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with their general education experience in their answers to the three questions.

## Use of Assessment Findings

The University of South Carolina Salkehatchie campus is proactive in meeting the needs of the students in regards to General Education. One of the reactions to student surveys has been advisors stressing college orientation courses such as University 101 to students. Courses such as this one facilitate student immersion into the collegiate atmosphere and introduce them to critical thinking. As mentioned earlier, the campus has also realized the importance of cultural events and has taken steps to offer more to its students. The campus operates the Opportunity Scholars Program (OSP), which, among numerous other activities, strives to increase student cultural awareness. Some examples of activities carried out during the past four years are:

- February 27, 2003: Speaker on China sponsored by OSP
- April, 2003: OSP trip to the Koger Center (Columbia, SC) to watch Shakespeare's *As You Like It*
- March 6-9, 2004: OSP trip to Washington, DC
- August 22-26, 2005: International Festival sponsored on campus
- February 22, 2005: Tuskegee Airmen speak for OSP sponsored Black History event
- October 5, 2005: OSP sponsored Brain Bowl

Although developmental/remedial courses have been removed from the curriculum, the above mentioned Opportunity Scholars Program has helped supplement these losses for students in need. The program offers counseling, tutoring, and career guidance services. In the broader view, the campus offers small class sizes, which allows for more one-on-one interaction with the faculty.

The University of South Carolina Salkehatchie campus has and will continue to emphasize General Education as a prime focus of its mission.

## Policies and Procedures to Ensure that Academic Programs Support the Economic Development Needs in the State by Providing a Technologically Skilled Workforce

As part of its mission, the University is resolved to enhance the industrial, economic, and cultural potential of the state so that South Carolina and the University can prosper together. All USC campuses play a vital role in the economy of South Carolina. A study by the Division of Research in the Moore School of Business that quantifies this economic impact can be found at <http://kudzu.ipr.sc.edu/effectiveness/uscimpact.pdf>

Since 1993, the University has included a technology and computer use goal in its *Eleven General Education Goals* that were established by the Provost's Assessment Advisory Committee. The goal states that students will be able to use computers and other technology to perform tasks appropriate to their major fields. Each college is responsible for establishing minimum standards that students must meet before graduation, outlining the courses offered that help students learn these skills, and how the skills are assessed. This information is available at <http://kudzu.ipr.sc.edu/assessment/compskills>. To reach the goal, students are expected to use computers to create, edit, and revise written texts, analyze quantitative data, access information and databases, integrate graphical, visual, and statistical information into written presentations, and send and receive electronic communication.