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Commission on Higher Education
Accessibility | Excellence | Accountability

Policies: Academic Programs, Academic Units, Centers, Institutes, and Consortia

This manual sets forth the policies governing Academic Programs, Academic Units, Centers, Institutes, and Consortia and is intended to be used together with the companion procedures manual.

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I. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Academic discipline refers to a major area of study identified in the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP), specifically the first four digits of the CIP Code.
Academic programs refer to associate, certificate, baccalaureate, master's, specialist, and doctoral degree programs.
Academic Unit refers to an organizational entity (e.g., department, school, or division) that is responsible for delivering academic programs and courses and overseeing curriculum in a defined field or group of fields.
Accrediting agency refers to institutional and programmatic accreditors.
Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP) advises the Commission on Higher Education (CHE) on all matters relating to academic affairs generally, and specifically on matters relating to new and existing programs.
Center/Institute refers to a unit that organizes faculty to conduct and disseminate research and scholarship, as well as to contribute to student education, public service, and economic development in a specific field. Centers and institutes cannot confer degrees or other credentials. Success is measured by their ability to generate external funding, produce innovative research, disseminate findings, and provide educational and professional development opportunities.
Certificate in a four-year institution is a stand-alone organized series of courses offered for credit at either the undergraduate or graduate level of study for eligible students that results in a credential awarded by the institution.
CHEMIS is the Commission on Higher Education Management Information System.
Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code is a classification system developed by the National Center for Education Statistics used to identify major areas of study and to support accurate tracking, assessment, and reporting of fields of study and program completion activity.
Collaborative Programs are programs offered by one or more institutional partners who contribute courses, faculty, or other resources and for which a lead institution confers the degree.
Combined Degree Programs is when a student earns two or more degrees or credentials while progressing through a single, integrated course of study at the same institution.
Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing (CAAL) is a standing committee of the SC Commission on Higher Education (CHE).

Competency-Based Education (CBE) is an educational approach that awards credit based on demonstrated mastery of skills or competencies rather than time spent in class.
Concentrations (also called tracks, options, specializations, or emphases) refer to a defined sequence of courses with a distinctive curricular focus. If these sequences appear on a student's transcript, they are recognized by CHE as concentrations in this policy and in the program inventory.
Consortium refers to a formal association—with an appropriate Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement—between institution(s) and/or other organization(s) to share the responsibility of conducting and disseminating research and scholarship, contributing to public service, and promoting economic development.
Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) refers to methods institutions use to evaluate and award academic credit for college-level learning acquired outside traditional classroom settings, including work experience, military training, professional certifications, standardized examinations (e.g., AP, IB, CLEP), portfolio assessment, and other experiential learning that aligns with institutional standards and learning outcomes.
Degree program, for purposes of CHE program approval, refers to a series of courses or activities that lead to an associate, baccalaureate, master's, specialist, or doctoral degree.
Delivery modality refers to the primary method by which students participate in a program or course. Common modalities include:

- **Traditional (face-to-face) instruction:** Students and instructors are physically present in the same location for regularly scheduled class meetings, with most instruction occurring on campus or at an approved site.
- **Blended/Hybrid instruction**: More than 50 percent of instruction is delivered through distance education technologies, with the remainder delivered face-to-face.
- **Distance/Online education:** Instruction is delivered so that students are not required to be physically present at the same location as the instructor. The majority (often 100 percent) of coursework, learning materials, and interactions are delivered synchronously or asynchronously through online or other digital platforms, with no required physical presence at a delivery site.
    - **Synchronous online instruction:** A form of distance education in which students and instructors meet at scheduled times using technology (e.g., web conferencing) that allows real-time interaction.
    - **Asynchronous online instruction:** A form of distance education in which students access course materials and complete learning activities on their own schedule within defined deadlines, without required real-time meetings.

Delivery site is a non-campus physical location controlled or sponsored by the institution (or its agents) where instruction is provided to students who are physically present.
Dual Degree is a combined or simultaneous program that involves a student working for two different degrees at different institutions.
Duplication occurs when an academic program at a given degree or certificate level is substantially similar in curriculum, learning outcomes, and credential to an existing approved program and is offered to essentially the same student population in the same or an overlapping geographic or online market.
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) **Student Enrollment** is based on the number of credit hours required for a student to be considered a full-time student and is usually calculated as 12 credit hours per semester for an undergraduate student and nine credit hours per semester for a graduate student.
Implementation, for program-approval purposes, refers to the specific date and term when the program becomes active and begins enrolling students.
Joint Degree Programs are an agreement in which students study at two or more institutions, and the institutions grant a single academic award bearing the names, seals, and signatures of each of the participating institutions.
Majors are composed of a series of courses, 30 or more credit hours, related by discipline and form a subject of academic study chosen as a field of specialization.
Minors are composed of a series of courses totaling at least 15 credit hours, related by discipline and focus outside the major. CHE approval for minors is not required.
Organizational units are academic administrative units such as colleges, schools, and departments that are engaged in carrying out research, public service, or instruction, or any combination of the above as their primary purpose(s).
Program title is the official title of the proposed program that will be used in the institution's catalog, the CHE Inventory of Academic Programs, and official communications about the program (e.g., communications with IPEDS; the SC Department of Education; accrediting bodies; and Specialized Professional Associations).
Site refers to the physical location (e.g., street address) at which an academic program is delivered.
Site Codes are numerical codes assigned by CHE that represent locations where coursework and/or programs are offered by an institution, regardless of delivery mode.

II. INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE: The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE, the Commission) establishes and maintains policies and procedures for approving educational programs. The goal of CHE's review is to ensure that resources are used effectively and efficiently so that institutions can offer students high-quality, accessible programs. While institutions are expected to comply with applicable institutional accrediting standards, this policy reflects the responsibilities and statutory authority of CHE. It may align with accreditor expectations, but it is not intended to duplicate or replace institutional accreditation requirements. This policy, along with all other CHE policies referenced in this document, is available on the Commission's website (www.che.sc.gov).

STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS: Pursuant to §59 103 35 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, as amended, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE) is responsible for reviewing and approving new academic programs for public institutions of higher education in the State of South Carolina.

RESPONSIBILITIES: CHE's responsibility in program approval and review is to assess the quality of educational programs and ensure they adhere to established standards. CHE evaluates trends, identifies effective practices, and assesses the viability of various programs. This includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

a. Quality and Scope of the Program: Evaluating the program's objectives and its alignment with the institution's mission, role, and scope.
b. Estimated Costs: Analyzing the costs associated with the program, including personnel, facilities, library resources, and other necessary components to maintain a high-quality program, or a timeline for acquiring these resources.
c. Workforce Development Needs: Evaluating the state's workforce development plans and how they align with the needs of various industries.
d. Enrollment Demand and Completion Trends: Assessing trends in enrollment and program completion rates.
e. Experiential Learning Opportunities: Reviewing opportunities for practical experience, i.e., apprenticeships, internships, or practicums.
f. Transfer of Credits: Considering policies for credit transfers such as traditional institution-to-institution, dual enrollment, and exam-based credit award options as per current CHE policy (www.che.sc.gov).

g. Completion Options: Exploring various methods that offer students flexibility and access to complete their education.
h. Credit for Prior Learning: Recognizing credits earned through prior learning, military service, and life or work experience.
i. Student Learning Outcomes: The specific knowledge, skills, values, and behaviors that students are expected to exhibit as evidence of their learning at the conclusion of an educational program.
j. Employment Outlook: Investigating employment prospects and career exploration using labor market information.
k. Innovative Programs: Supporting interdisciplinary, collaborative, and innovative academic programs.
l. Research: Building research capacity and stimulating research activity.
m. Statewide and National Initiatives: Monitoring initiatives that affect South Carolina at the statewide, regional, and national levels.

III. Policies

A. New Degree Programs

CHE must approve all new degree programs, regardless of their delivery mode, location, institution, or whether similar programs already exist in the state.

1. New degree programs are defined as follows:
    a. Offerings in any degree program that conclude with the conferral of a degree at any level in any field or major not previously offered and approved by CHE to be offered at the institution, in-state, out-of-state, or out-of-country, including via distance education.
    b. Courses constituting 50 percent or more of a program of study not previously approved by CHE offered on-campus or off-site by any instructional modality (e.g., Executive, Professional, Applied, or Low-Residency) within three years of approval for associate's, baccalaureate, specialist, or master's programs, or within five years of approval for doctoral programs.
    c. Any program offered at one degree level that is proposed to be offered at a different level (e.g., the institution offers a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) and plans to introduce a Master of Arts (M.A.)).
    d. All proposals for new doctoral programs must include a review by a qualified out-of-state evaluator prior to the submission of the proposal. This review should evaluate the program's strengths, its effect on current offerings, its relation to similar programs, the institution's capacity to support it, and local workforce demand. South Carolina and regional statistics will be given priority.
    e. New certificate programs offered by four-year institutions over 15 credit hours.
    f. Certain CIP code changes (see Section D of this policy).

2. Each institution must submit a three-year academic forecast to CHE by June 1 every year.
    a. In the first year of the forecast, institutions must identify all proposed new degree programs they plan to advance during that fiscal year and submit an Executive Summary for each. CHE staff and the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP) will conduct an initial review of these proposals based on the Executive Summaries.
    b. For the second and third years, institutions may outline anticipated areas of program development at a broad

disciplinary, workforce, or industry-sector level. These years do not require specific program titles, degree designations, delivery formats, or other details.

c. Information provided for the second and third years is intended solely to support statewide planning, trend analysis, workforce assessment, and interinstitutional coordination. This information does not constitute a commitment by the institution to develop or submit a program proposal, nor does it imply Commission approval to proceed.

3. Annually, the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing (CAAL) shall review a slate of proposed new academic programs, compiled from institutional three-year forecasts and executive summaries, and direct which programs may proceed to full proposal development. The slate shall, at a minimum, summarize for each proposed program: workforce and employer demand (state, regional, and national), evidence of non-duplication, resource feasibility, alignment with institutional mission and state goals, and contribution to addressing identified workforce gaps, and, where applicable, the program's role in serving niche or emerging fields not currently represented in the state's academic portfolio. New programs are therefore evaluated in a two-phase process: (1) submission and review of executive summaries and (2) approval of selected full proposals.
4. Full proposals developed following CAAL approval of an Executive Summary shall be reviewed by ACAP before consideration by CAAL. ACAP review may be conducted electronically. Institutions whose full proposals have been reviewed by ACAP shall present their proposals to CAAL for review and action. A full proposal may be scheduled for discussion at an ACAP meeting when substantive questions, concerns, or feedback warrant further consideration with the submitting institution.
5. The forecasting and slate review process applies only to proposed new degree programs as defined in Section III.A.1.a. Other actions that may be treated as "new" under this policy—such as certain certificate programs over 15 credit hours, new centers, CIP code changes, four-year degrees proposed by the SC Technical College System (SCTCS), and other actions—follow their respective approval or notification processes and are not part of the forecasting slate.
6. Full proposals may be submitted with Chief Academic Officer (CAO) and President approval pending governing board action, to proceed to ACAP for review. All new program proposals must receive approval from the institution's academic governance structure, including the CAO, President, and governing board, prior to CAAL

review and action. Programs cannot be reviewed by CAAL until they have been approved by the institution's Board of Trustees. All approved new academic programs will be included in the CHE Inventory of Approved Programs. Institutions may not confer degrees on academic programs that are inactive in the inventory.

7. An institution may appeal a decision made by CHE regarding a program action the institution submitted. The appeal must be made in writing to the President and Executive Director of the SC Commission on Higher Education (PED), who may consult with CHE staff and, in the PED's discretion, request that CHE revisit the decision at a future CHE meeting.
8. If a program is proposed in response to a termination recommendation in the CHE Program Productivity Report, it will be treated as a new program proposal. The program will be identified as a restructured version of the program that was recommended for termination.
9. The standard minimum requirements for degrees are:
    a. Baccalaureate degree: 120 credit hours (except reduced credit bachelor's degrees described below).
    b. Master's degree: 30 graduate credit hours (programs may require more for disciplinary, licensure, or accreditation needs).
    c. Doctoral degree: Normally 60–90 graduate credit hours beyond the baccalaureate, including coursework and a dissertation or capstone, with a specific minimum number of credit hours established at the program level.
    d. Reduced credit undergraduate baccalaureate degrees:

    In alignment with emerging accreditor and state practices for reduced credit baccalaureate degrees, a limited number of specialized or applied baccalaureate programs may be approved at a minimum of 90 credit hours, subject to all the following conditions:

        i. The program is designed as an intentionally structured three-year pathway and is clearly distinguished in all publications from traditional 120-credit baccalaureate degrees (e.g., through a distinct degree title or notation).
        ii. The curriculum includes sufficient breadth and depth to meet institutional and accreditor standards for the baccalaureate level, even with fewer than 120 credits.
        iii. The program prepares graduates for direct entry into the workforce or a clearly defined next step (e.g., articulated 3+1 master's), consistent with its specialized or applied focus.

iv. The institution documents how student learning outcomes, general education, and major requirements remain comparable in quality to 120-credit baccalaureate programs.

Any deviation from these minimums must be justified in writing and submitted to the Director of Academic Affairs and Licensing (DAAL) for case-by-case consideration.

10. No program may be publicized as an approved program in an institution's catalog or in any other medium before it has received formal approval from CHE. Institutions may market proposed programs as "pending approval" for recruitment purposes only after CAAL votes favorably on the program proposal, and violations of this requirement may delay consideration of the program. Failure to comply with this requirement may require the program to restart the review process and be resubmitted in the next academic year.
11. Institutions seeking approval for a program at a higher level than specified in their CHE-approved mission statement must request a mission and status change before or at the same time as the program proposal. CHE has the authority to approve or deny this request.

A1. Dual, Joint and Combination Degrees

Dual Degree Programs

1. A new program proposal is required for a dual program if one of the programs in the proposed dual degree is new. Should the programs ever separate, a new program proposal is also required.
2. A program modification proposal is required for dual programs offered by more than one institution; a Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement (MOU or MOA) that clearly delineates program responsibilities and fiscal arrangements among all participants, signed by the appropriate senior-level institutional officers, must be submitted and approved with the final program proposal. Institutions may submit a single proposal for dual programs; however, the proposal must present separate information for faculty, facilities, and financial support for each institution.
3. A notification proposal is required for a dual program if one program is offered at an out-of-state or out-of-country institution and the South Carolina institution will not confer the degree. An MOU or MOA that clearly delineates program responsibilities and fiscal arrangements among all participants, signed by the appropriate senior-level institutional officers, must be submitted with the notification as supporting documentation.

Combination Degree Programs

4. A notification proposal is required for combination degree programs at the same institution.

Joint Degree Programs

5. A new program proposal is required for joint programs. An MOU or MOA that clearly delineates program responsibilities and fiscal arrangements among all participants, signed by the appropriate senior-level institutional officers, must be submitted and approved with the final program proposal. Institutions may submit a single proposal for joint programs; however, the proposal must present separate information for faculty, facilities, and financial support for each institution. Should the joint programs separate, the submission of a new program proposal will be required.

A2. Competency-Based Education and Direct Assessment

1. Institutions proposing new academic programs delivered fully or partially through competency-based education (CBE) must clearly document in their program proposal:
    a. Assessment methods used to evaluate competency attainment, specifying whether Direct Assessment or Credit-Hour equivalency is used.
    b. For the Direct Assessment method, outline the specific competencies students will master and explain how these align with current learning outcomes.
    c. For the Credit-Hour Equivalency method, describe how seat-time requirements will be fulfilled.
    d. Faculty qualifications and professional development plans to support effective CBE delivery.
    e. Student support services provided for the program, including tutoring, frequency of faculty contact, and other programmatic supports.
    f. Policies for documenting student progress and determining when students are ready for competency assessment.
    g. Documentation demonstrating compliance with applicable state authorization and accreditation requirements for CBE programs.

A3. Transfer of Credit and Credit for Prior Learning

All new program proposals must describe how the program will recognize and award transfer credit and credit for prior learning. The proposal must identify the institutional policies and procedures that govern the evaluation, documentation, applicability, and recording of transfer credit and credit for prior learning and explain how awarded credit will align with program learning outcomes, competency requirements, and applicable accreditation, licensure, or certification standards.

B. Program Modifications

1. Program modifications are defined as follows:
    a. The extension or transfer of an existing, approved program to an instructional site that is different from the location or site already authorized, including but not limited to: early college sites, youth apprenticeship sites, out-of-state or out-of-country sites, where instruction is delivered in traditional format or in a combination of traditional and distance education formats. This occurs when 50 percent or more of the curriculum is offered at the site(s) within three years for associate's (except for those offered by technical colleges), baccalaureate, specialist, master's, and doctoral-professional practice programs, or within five years for doctoral-research/scholarship programs. Note: health professions programs (e.g., nursing and medical programs) with a required clinical component must obtain CHE review and approval as a program modification, regardless of delivery mode or the percentage of total program credit hours offered at that site.
    b. The addition, or consolidation of concentrations offered within an existing major, including the second and all subsequent concentrations to be added to a program. The consolidation of concentrations also requires a Notification of Termination for the concentrations being consolidated, after the consolidation has been approved.
    c. The addition of an approved program to a new in-state delivery site not previously approved by CHE for that institution or program, regardless of delivery mode or proportion of credits offered at the site, including early college, and youth apprenticeship locations.
    d. Substantive curricular changes when considering the addition, deletion, or modification of required courses, defined as:
        i. Undergraduate programs: 19 hours or more to an existing undergraduate program.
        ii. Graduate programs: 13 hours or more to an existing master's, specialist, or doctoral program.
    e. Substantive changes in program goal, purpose, curriculum, organizational structure, or target audience or any other change made to the program that initiates a substantive change request to the accrediting body.

f. A change in the degree designation of a program when this change involves a significant shift in the program's purpose (e.g., Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) to Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.); Master of Science (M.S.) to Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.); or B.A. to Bachelor of Science (B.S.)).
g. The addition of a new degree type of the same program at the same degree level (e.g., the institution offers a B.A. and wants to add a B.F.A.), with the exception of doctoral programs.
h. The reconfiguration of several existing related degrees into a single degree (e.g., B.A. in French; B.A. in German; and B.A. in Spanish collapsed into a B.A. in Modern Languages).
i. The creation of a dual program using two existing (already approved) programs. A justification must be provided for any shared coursework, and CHE recommends that no more than 25 percent of the major coursework be shared between the programs (i.e., shared courses should fulfill major requirements, not general education or elective requirements).

2. Institutions must obtain all required faculty, administrative, and board of trustees (as applicable by institution) approvals before submitting a program modification proposal for consideration. ACAP will review the proposal and provide advisory feedback. The President and Executive Director (PED) may approve, deny, or approve with conditions a program modification after considering CHE staff's recommendation and ACAP feedback. The PED will render a decision within 90 calendar days of receiving a complete proposal. CHE has final approval for appealed decisions.
3. The DAAL may, at their discretion, elevate a program modification proposal to a new program proposal or determine that it may be processed as a notification of change. The DAAL may also elevate a program modification proposal for review by CAAL and CHE.
4. If a program modification is elevated for CAAL consideration, the program may be publicized as "pending Commission on Higher Education approval" for recruitment purposes only after a favorable vote by CAAL. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in delayed consideration of the program.
5. All approved program modifications will be included in the CHE Inventory of Approved Programs as necessary.

Program Modification Timing

1. CHE staff will consider program modifications only for established programs that have been operating for at least two academic years.

2. Subsequent substantive program modifications, as defined in Section III.B.1(a–i), to the same program will generally not be considered more frequently than once every academic year. This interval ensures that prior changes are fully implemented, evaluated, and reflected in the CHE academic program inventory before additional substantive changes are proposed.
3. CHE staff may review program modifications more frequently than once per year when the proposed changes are necessitated by one or more of the following:
    a. Requirements of an institutional or programmatic accrediting body, state or federal regulatory changes, or licensure/certification expectations.
    b. An approved program improvement plan or CHE action (e.g., "under review" status or recommendations arising from program productivity).
    c. Documented employer or workforce demand demonstrating that a more rapid response is needed to meet state, regional, or national workforce needs.

C. Program Notifications

The DAAL has the authority to acknowledge and approve program notifications based on CHE staff review and recommendation. Program Notifications are defined as follows:

a. Off-site delivery of existing programs that are delivered via 100 percent Online Delivery or Blended/Hybrid.
b. Out-of-state or out-of-country delivery of existing programs, regardless of delivery mode, if that program or part of a program does not request, require, or receive appropriations from the state.
c. Change in program title.
d. Minor changes in objectives or purposes of the program (substantive changes may constitute a new program proposal).
e. Changes in the curriculum when adding, deleting, or modifying required courses that result in the following credit hour changes:
    i. Undergraduate programs: 15 -18 credit hours
    ii. Graduate programs: 9-12 credit hours
f. The deletion or consolidation of concentrations offered within an existing major.
g. The addition of a concentration to programs offered by a four-year institution or University of South Carolina (USC) two-year institutions if it is the first concentration added since program approval and implementation. The

addition of concentrations to programs offered by the SC technical colleges.

h. New certificate programs offered by four-year institutions: 15 credit hours or less.
i. New sites for certificate programs already approved by CHE and offered by four-year institutions.
j. New dual enrollment sites for all universities and colleges, USC two-year institutions, and the SC technical colleges.
k. Change in name for a center or institute only if CHE previously approved it.
l. Change in programmatic accreditor and/or the change in the accreditation status of an academic program.
m. Change to the implementation date-whether earlier or later.
n. Offering a Combination Degree.

1. Institutions must submit a Notification of Change to CHE at least 90 calendar days prior to implementation when:
    a. Adding 100 percent online delivery to an approved program.
    b. Extending a certificate program to a new site.
    c. Offering an existing program, or a portion of a program, out-of-state or internationally through distance education.
    d. Making any academic program change, using the appropriate Notification of Change form, to allow DAAL sufficient time to determine whether the action qualifies as a notification or requires submission as a program modification or new program proposal.
2. For programs offered out-of-state or internationally through distance education, institutions must:
    a. Report on the total number of in-state students enrolled in the program.
    b. Comply with the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) or obtain required state approval.

Notification Volume and Timing

1. Institutions may not implement the proposed change until they receive written acknowledgment from CHE.
2. The DAAL will report all acknowledged notifications to CAAL at its regular meetings.
3. CHE staff may elevate any notification of change to CAAL or request that the proposed action be submitted as a program modification or new program proposal.

D. CIP Codes

CHE will apply the following standards for determining if Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code changes to a program constitute: (a) a new academic program (b) a substantive modification to an existing program, or (c) a notification to an existing program.

1. A CIP code change will be treated as the creation of a new academic program when any of the following conditions apply:
    a. If the CIP code requires formal approval through the institution's academic governance structure (e.g., Faculty Senate or equivalent)
    b. If the CIP code change requires new accreditation, re-accreditation or otherwise affects the program's compliance with accreditation standards.
    c. If the program's objectives or target audience change significantly (for example, from undergraduate to graduate level or to a substantially different career path).
    d. If there are significant curriculum changes or shifts in academic focus (for example, from a general business degree to a specialized degree in data analytics).
2. A CIP code change will be treated as a modification to an existing academic program when the following conditions apply:
    a. The CIP code reflects minor adjustments such as updates to content, refinement of objectives, or changes in mode of delivery, without altering the fundamental nature of the program.
    b. The CIP code change reflects a reclassification of the same program to better align with current industry or disciplinary standards, and does not alter the core content, learning outcomes, or primary objectives of the program.
3. A CIP code change will be treated as a notification to an existing academic program when the following condition applies:
    a. Any changes resulting from updates issued by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).
    b. There are no curricular changes, degree credit hour changes, or state funding implications associated with the change.

E. Program Proposals Submitted by Colleges in the SC Technical College System

New program proposals submitted by colleges in the SC Technical College System (SCTCS) must first be evaluated by the SCTCS staff and approved by the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education before submission to CHE.

1. All programs new to the SCTCS must comply with CHE's program approval process. A new program is defined as one not currently offered at any SC technical college under an approved SCTCS model.
2. Any program that is proposed to be offered as a four-year degree must be submitted to CHE as a new program proposal and must follow the CHE program approval process; such programs are not subject to the annual forecasting and slate review process that is used for new degree programs. The full proposal will be evaluated by CHE staff, presented to ACAP for feedback, and presented to CAAL and CHE for action.
3. For programs currently offered within SCTCS but new to the proposing college, SCTCS staff will certify the program to CHE and submit a Notification of Change form. This provision does not apply to four-year degree programs, which must follow the process outlined in item 2.
4. New Centers should follow the guidance for New Centers, Institutes, and Consortia (see Section I of this policy).
5. SCTCS will submit a Notification of Change when approved programs are delivered at additional sites within the college's service area, including dual enrollment.
6. Diploma and certificate programs offered by SCTCS colleges do not require Commission approval.

F. Proposals Submitted for Educator Preparation Programs

Education units in public institutions that offer State Board of Education-approved educator preparation programs must be fully accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and maintain that accreditation. Programs that prepare teachers and other school professionals will be approved with the provision that CAEP accreditation be sought and/or maintained for the unit and that the program receive national recognition from the appropriate Specialized Professional Association (SPA) or accrediting body.

Should an institution's education unit lose CAEP accreditation or be accredited with conditions (i.e., stipulations or probation), the institution must notify CHE of the change of status within 15 calendar days of the CAEP decision. The institution may not apply to CHE for any new educator preparation programs until CAEP has granted or restored full accreditation to the unit.
Note: Educator Preparation Programs (EPP) must adhere to the policies of the SC Department of Education (SCDE).

1. For master's programs in teacher education, a Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) should be offered for individuals seeking initial certification, while a Master of Education (M.Ed.) should be provided for those already certified or not pursuing initial certification. Coursework should reflect the unique program goals of each M.A.T and M.Ed. program.
2. Institutions seeking to add a concentration to an EPP that leads to a new certification, not currently authorized by the State Board of Education, must submit a proposal for a new program.
3. Institutions must communicate with the SCDE and submit a Statement of Intent Form for any new or modified programs to the SCDE before submitting a complete proposal to CHE. Proposals for new EPPs require CHE approval before consideration by the State Board of Education. New or modified program proposals from public institutions will not be reviewed by the State Board of Education until CHE grants approval. CHE will notify SCDE staff once it has approved a proposal for a new EPP.
4. Proposals for EPPs designed to prepare teachers and other school professionals must include all additional information required by the SCDE when submitted to CHE. The SCDE may begin its review of this information at that point; however, the program must be approved by CHE before it can be considered by the State Board of Education.
5. Within 12 months of receiving CHE approval, new or modified proposals must either secure approval from the State Board of Education or provide the DAAL with an update on the proposal's status. If an institution does not receive approval or demonstrate satisfactory progress within a 24-month period, it must resubmit the proposal and seek reauthorization if it wishes to implement the program.
6. Institutions changing the name of a program through SCDE, CAEP, SPA, or any other accrediting body must comply with CHE policies on program modifications, notifications of change, or notifications of termination, as applicable.
7. Institutions offering EPPs at the graduate level may submit a notification of change instead of a program modification for off-site programs if they have a time-limited contract with a local education agency (LEA) to deliver the program. In such cases, a copy of the contract or MOU with the LEA must accompany the notification.
8. If an institution is notified by the SCDE that its program certification authority has been terminated by the State Board of Education, it must immediately submit a notification of termination to CHE for that program. These programs cannot

enroll new students, and current students have two years to complete their studies.

9. If an institution decides to terminate a program, it must submit a Notification of Termination to CHE. After CHE acknowledges this notification, the institution must inform the SCDE of the program termination.

G. Off-site Delivery of Existing Approved Programs

1. Institutions may offer less than 50 percent of the total required program credit hours for any approved degree program at a previously approved site without CHE approval.
2. For an existing program or part of a program offered out-of-state or out-of-country entirely through distance education, the institution shall inform CHE of the program offering using the Notification of Change form, no later than 90 calendar days prior to implementing the program or program components at the site(s) in question and must report the total number of in-state students enrolled in the program. Institutions offering out-of-state programs are expected to adhere to the policies and guidelines of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements or receive state approval as required.

H. New Centers, Institutes, and Consortia

Centers, institutes, and consortia (new or existing) for which the institution intends to request or receive state appropriations specifically for that center, institute, or consortium require CHE approval and must be submitted and reviewed as a new program proposal. CHE approval is not required if no appropriation from the state is requested or required, and proposals shall be submitted as notification of change.

1. SmartState Centers will follow this policy if previously approved by the SmartState Review Board or appropriate state government entity.
2. Education Improvement Act (EIA) Centers of Excellence would follow this policy if CHE approved them.
3. Proposals for new centers, institutes, and consortia or existing centers, institutes, and consortia newly intending to request appropriations follow the same procedures as new program proposals.
4. Proposals for new centers supported by designated state appropriations are required to submit evidence of such appropriations as part of their application.

I. Notification of Termination of an Academic Program, Concentration, Site or Center

The institution terminating an academic program or concentration should inform the DAAL of the change 90 calendar days before termination using the Notification of Termination form, which must be submitted by the institution's CAO. The DAAL will notify ACAP and CAAL of such notifications processed by CHE at each meeting.

1. For programs subject to additional approval by a state board or agency other than CHE (e.g., State Board of Nursing, State Board of Education, programmatic accreditors, etc.), when the program no longer satisfies requirements for necessary accreditation or approval, the institution shall consider termination of the program and notify CHE of such termination by submitting the Notification of Termination form. If an institution is notified that the board or agency is revoking approval, licensure, or certification authority of the program, the institution must notify the DAAL as quickly as reasonably possible of such action. The email notification must include an estimated timeframe for when a Notification of Termination form will be submitted. A copy of the report or notification for revoking approval must be included with the email. CHE will notify the appropriate board or agency of notifications of terminations received for such programs.
2. When a program no longer meets the productivity standards set forth by CHE, the institution shall consider termination of the program and notify CHE of such termination by submitting the Notification of Termination form. An institution may also terminate a program or organizational unit based on its own evaluation of that program or unit. In the notification, the institution must provide:
    a. a date certain by which the program will be closed to new students and a date certain by which the CHEMIS 2.0 data file will be closed (typically not longer than 150 percent of program duration, six years for a four-year program); and
    b. a detailed description of the teach-out plan to assure CHE that the plan adequately addresses students' needs.
3. Terminated programs can be reactivated within three years of termination by a program modification proposal. If the program has been terminated for more than three years, the institution must submit a new program proposal to reactivate the program.

J. Accuracy of the Inventory of Academic Programs

Institutions must regularly review and update their inventory of academic programs. To correct discrepancies in the Inventory, CHE requires an inventory correction form for each program, along with copies of all related documents, including the approved program proposal and CHE program approval letter.

All requests for corrections to the academic program inventory must be submitted by the institution's CAO, or a designee of the CAO, to: academicprograms@che.sc.gov.

K. SC Independent Colleges and Universities

South Carolina independent nonprofit colleges and universities are not required to obtain CHE approval for new academic programs; however, upon institutional approval of a new program, the institution shall submit a Notification of Change form to CHE to update the inventory of academic programs.