

Appendix B



APPLICATION FOR A MEMBER INSTITUTION
SEEKING ACCREDITATION
AT A MORE ADVANCED DEGREE LEVEL

Name of Institution:	
Location:	
Implementation Date	
Name and Title of Individual Completing the Application:	Telephone:
	Internet Address:
	Fax Number:
Date Submitted:	

SUBMIT FOUR COPIES OF THIS COMPLETED FORM TO:

*Dr. Belle S. Wheelan, President
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097
(404) 679-4500*

Due dates:

For consideration by the Board of Trustees in June: **April 15**
For consideration by the Board of Trustees in June: **October 1**

INSTRUCTIONS

When initiating course work or programs beyond the degree level currently approved by the Commission on Colleges, an institution must complete an "Application for Level Change" with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. The application consists of two parts: Part A - Description of the proposed programs/courses to be offered at a more advanced degree level; and Part B - Description of Ongoing Compliance with the *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement*. The two parts combined constitute a primary source of information used by the Commission on Colleges to award membership at the new degree level.

For purposes of accreditation, the Commission classifies institutions according to the highest degree level offered by an institution. Those classifications are as follows:

Level I	Offers the associate degree as the highest degree
Level II	Offers the baccalaureate degree as the highest degree
Level III	Offers the master's degree as the highest degree
Level IV	Offers the master's and specialist degree as the highest degrees
Level V	Offers three or fewer doctorate degrees as highest degrees
Level VI	Offers four or more doctorate degrees

Note: An institution adding a doctorate degree causing it to be reclassified from Level V to Level VI is required to only inform the Commission of the additional doctorate in order for the Commission to reclassify the institution within the Commission's data base.

When completing the application, please adhere to the following:

1. In cases in which year-end information is requested, use the most recently completed fiscal year. Report enrollment information for the most recent academic year.
2. Use "NA" to mark items not applicable to the institution.
3. **Four** copies (on CD, DVD or hardcopy) are required by the Commission on Colleges. The institution should keep one completed copy for future use.
4. Applications are reviewed by the Board of Trustees twice a year: during meetings in June and in December. For review during the December meeting, the completed application must be submitted by **no later than October 1**; for review during the June meeting, the completed application must be submitted by **no later than April 15**.

PART A

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROGRAMS/COURSES TO BE OFFERED AT A MORE ADVANCED DEGREE LEVEL

NAME(S) OF NEW PROGRAM(S). Please be specific (e.g., Bachelor of Arts degree in English).

GENERAL INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

Name of agency that has legally authorized the institution to provide the new degree program:

Date institution plans to enroll first students at the new degree level:

Date institution projects it will graduate the first regular class at the new degree level:

Enrollment Data

Current Enrollment - Please refer to your most recent completed Institutional Profile and report the following enrollment data for the current term:

a.	Total Full-Time Undergraduate Enrollment (carrying a load of 12 or more credit hours) (Section Two, part A, line 1 of enrollment profile)	
b.	Total Full-Time Post-Baccalaureate Enrollment (Carrying a load of 9 or more credit hours) (Section Two, part A, line 2 of enrollment profile)	
c.	Total FTE Part-Time Undergraduate Enrollment (carrying fewer than 12 credit hours) (Section Two, part A, line 3b of enrollment profile)	
d.	Total FTE Part-Time Post-Baccalaureate Enrollment (carrying fewer than 9 credit hours) (Section Two, part A, line 4b of enrollment profile)	
e.	Total Non-Credit Enrollment (Section Two, part A, line 6b of enrollment profile)	
	Total of all figures reported in a-e above. (Section Two, part A, line 7 of enrollment profile)	

Projected Enrollment - Please indicate below the number of students projected to enroll in the new degree program(s):

a. Full-Time Enrollment	
b. Part-Time Enrollment (headcount)	
c. Non-Credit Enrollment (headcount)	
d. Projected Total	

Current Educational Programs

Levels of Program Offerings (Check all that apply)

- Less than one year of work beyond grade 12
- At least one but less than two years of work beyond grade 12
- Associate degree-granting program of at least two years
- Diploma or certificate programs of at least two but less than four years of work beyond grade 12
- Four or five-year baccalaureate degree-granting program
- First professional degree
- Master's and/or work beyond the first professional degree
- Work beyond the master's level but not at the doctor's level (Specialist in Education)
- A doctor of philosophy or equivalent degree
- Other (Specify)

Ownership of branches and other institutions:

Provide as an appendix a list of every postsecondary institution owned by the corporation and the degree programs offered, its address, and the name and title of each institution's chief administrator.

Indicate whether each of those institutions is accredited and the name of the accrediting agency.

**PROPOSED PROGRAMS/COURSES TO BE OFFERED
AT A MORE ADVANCED DEGREE LEVEL**

1. Describe the rationale for the new program(s), including an assessment of need.

2. List and describe the new program(s), including the following:
 - a. General institutional admissions requirements and any separate admission requirements for the new program(s).

 - b. Completion requirements, including the number of credits which must be earned in programs at the new degree level. Include in the description the number and distribution of general education credits to be completed, the number of credits to be earned in the major or area of concentration, the number of electives to be completed, and other requirements which students must meet in order to receive a degree.

 - c. The curriculum and program oversight by the institution

 - d. Mode of instruction

 - e. Means for evaluating student achievement

3. If the proposed programs/courses are to be offered at off-campus instructional sites, list each specific location, its address, the mode of delivery, and the percentage of the educational program that will be offered at each site.

FACULTY RESOURCES AND QUALIFICATIONS

1. Describe faculty resources needed for the new program(s). Include the institution's plans to use current faculty to teach the new courses and any plans for additional faculty.
2. Provide as an appendix a completed Faculty Roster Form which provides information to the Commission regarding the qualifications of faculty teaching in the new degree program(s). Please follow the Instructions for the Form and number all pages.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

Identify resources to support the new programs, including

- financial resources (an itemized budget for the first year and a copy of the most recent audit must be supplied)
- library/learning resources
- physical facilities
- instructional equipment.

PART B

DESCRIPTION OF ONGOING COMPLIANCE WITH THE *PRINCIPLES OF ACCREDITATION*

CORE REQUIREMENTS

For each of the Core Requirements listed below, document that the institution complies with the requirement and describe the anticipated impact of the level change on that aspect of the institution. Note: When completing this section, the institution may refer to responses in Part A instead of submitting duplicate information and materials. **Documentation should be referred to in the narrative and its location in an appendix cited.**

An institution seeking membership at a more advanced degree level agrees to disclose any and all information which the Commission may request to carry out its evaluating and accrediting function.

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

Minimum Documentation Required

A copy of the charter or letter of authorization from the appropriate agency/organization indicating that the institution may award the new degree programs.

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

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

Minimum Documentation Required

Evidence that the governing board has approved the new degree program(s).

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

Minimum Documentation Required

1. Copy of mission statement as it appears in the catalog and other institutional documents. Indicate any change to the mission statement which accommodates the initiation of new programs at a more advanced degree level.
2. A description of how the mission statement was developed and approved and how it is reviewed.

3. A list of institutional publications where the statement of purpose is described.

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

Minimum Documentation Required

1. A copy of the institution's strategic plan, including how the plan relates to the new degree program(s). Indicate how the new degree program(s) are integrated with other units of the institution.
2. A brief description of the institution's planning and evaluation processes and identification of who is responsible for ensuring that the processes function systematically. Include an explanation of how the planning and evaluation processes intersect with the budgeting process.
3. A description of the educational goals and expected outcomes in the new degree program(s).
4. A description of the process for determining how achievement of educational goals will be ascertained in the new degree program(s) and a timeline by which the processes function.
5. A description of how the new program(s) will be evaluated and how the findings will be used to make any necessary changes to the programs.

2.7

- 2.7.1 The institution offers one or more degree programs based on at least 60 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the associate level, at least 120 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the baccalaureate level, or at least 30 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the post-baccalaureate, graduate, or professional level. If an institution uses a unit other than semester credit hours, it provides an explanation for the equivalency. The institution also provides a justification for all degrees that include fewer than the required number of semester credit hours or its equivalent unit. **(Program Length)**
- 2.7.2 The institution offers degree programs that embody a coherent course of study that is compatible with its stated mission and is based upon fields of study appropriate to higher education. **(Program Content)**
- 2.7.3 In each undergraduate degree program, the institution requires the successful completion of a general education component at the collegiate level that (1) is a substantial component of each undergraduate degree, (2) ensures breadth of knowledge, and (3) is based on a coherent rationale. For degree completion in associate programs, the component constitutes a minimum of 15 semester hours or the equivalent; for baccalaureate programs, a minimum of 30 semester hours or the equivalent. These credit hours are to be drawn from and include at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/fine arts, social/behavioral sciences, and natural science/mathematics. The courses do not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession. If an institution uses a unit other than semester credit hours, it provides an explanation for the equivalency. The institution also provides a justification if it allows for fewer than the required number of semester credit hours or its equivalent unit of general education course. **(General Education)**
- 2.7.4 The institution provides instruction for all course work required for at least one degree program at each level at which it awards degrees. If the institution does not provide instruction for all such course work and (1) makes arrangements for some instruction to be provided by other accredited institutions or entities through contracts or consortia or (2) uses some other alternative approach to meeting this requirement, the alternative approach must be approved by the Commission on Colleges. In both cases, the institution demonstrates that it controls all aspects of its educational program. (See Commission policy "Core Requirement 2.7.4: Documenting an Alternate Approach.") **(Course work for Degrees)**

Minimum Documentation Required

1. Catalog containing information regarding the institution's degree programs.

2. A description of each new program, the number of hours required for each, and the minimum and maximum period of time that a student has to obtain each new degree.
3. If the new programs are undergraduate, provide a list of courses in the required general education core and the number of hours required.
4. Written purpose and goals for the general education program. Course description of each course designated as a "general education" course.
5. A justification and rationale for program equivalency, if appropriate.
6. Justification of an alternative approach to offering courses in the new programs, if applicable.

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

Minimum Documentation Required

1. A faculty roster for the program. (See Part A "Faculty Resources and Qualifications" for directions for reporting.)
2. A list of full-time faculty and a list of part-time faculty in the program(s). A description of loads and duties (such as advising, committee service, curriculum/program review) establishing the adequacy of the number of full-time faculty.
3. A list of all faculty members who have been assigned supervisory responsibility for a major within each new program, the major for which the faculty member is responsible, the professional and scholarly credentials of the faculty member, and a list of courses to be taught by the faculty member.
4. A copy of the Faculty Handbook.

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

Minimum Documentation Required

1. Description of library/learning resources that have been acquired to support the new program(s) or copies of contracts with institutions that provide library services or access to learning resources (written, formal agreements with other libraries for resource materials and services). Describe the relevancy of their collections to the proposed program.
2. Financial plan for supporting the expansion of library resources/the contracts needed for the new program(s) and the focus of that support.

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

Minimum Documentation Required

1. A description of student development services specifically relevant to the new programs.
2. A copy of the Student Handbook
3. Organizational chart for Student Support Services.

2.11

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

The member institution provides the following financial statements: (1) an institutional audit (or Standard Review Report issued in accordance with *Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services*

issued by the AICPA for those institutions audited as part of a system-wide or statewide audit) and written institutional management letter for the most recent fiscal year prepared by an independent certified public accountant and/or an appropriate governmental auditing agency employing the appropriate audit (or Standard Review Report) guide; (2) a statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets, exclusive of plant assets and plant-related debt, which represents the change in unrestricted net assets attributable to operations for the most recent year; and (3) an annual budget that is preceded by sound planning, is subject to sound fiscal procedures, and is approved by the governing board. **(Financial Resources)**

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

Minimum Documentation Required

1. *A copy of the audit and management letter from the most recent audited fiscal year.*
2. *A projected budget (revenues and expenses) for the first year of operation of the new program(s).*
3. *A description of the effect of the new program(s) on the total budget of the institution.*
4. *Describe the physical resources that will be used by the new program(s) and document their adequacy*