

University of South Carolina Lancaster

Act 629 – Summary Reports on Institutional Effectiveness
Fiscal Year 2006-2007

USC Lancaster works to help its pre-baccalaureate students attain skills and attributes in the areas of communication, critical thinking, cultural literacy, and personal development. Students in the associate degree programs focus on those areas most appropriate to their professional education goals, with the objective of achieving the following outcomes (which may be viewed online at <http://usclancaster.sc.edu/acadstu/GEG.htm>).

Communication Skills

USC Lancaster helps its students read effectively and attain a basic familiarity with the basic texts of Western and other cultures. In the area of writing skills, USC Lancaster students work to develop the ability to write effectively for both academic and professional audiences. In addition, USC Lancaster helps its students learn to listen critically and speak effectively before a group.

Critical Thinking

USC Lancaster helps its students acquire analytical reasoning abilities and exercise informed value judgments. USC Lancaster students also work to develop mathematical and/ or computational skills.

Cultural Literacy

USC Lancaster strives to give its students an understanding of the history and culture of Western civilization as well as provide some exposure to other cultures. USC Lancaster also recognizes the centrality of science and technology to modern culture; therefore, USC Lancaster students also are offered opportunities to increase their understanding and familiarity in these crucial subject areas.

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

USC Lancaster supports the intellectual, personal, physical, and social development of students, in recognition of the critical interdependency of all these areas. By providing opportunities for productive interaction with students, faculty, and staff, USC Lancaster helps students develop a spirit of curiosity, integrity, and confidence in planning and pursuing academic, career, and personal goals.

Efforts were made, both formally and informally, however, to assess the institution's effectiveness in terms of its academic programs as well as extracurricular activities, with the goal of enhancing overall student development. As a commuter campus, special effort was made to offer more extracurricular activities in order to keep students on campus and to create more of a traditional "collegiate" atmosphere. This was partly accomplished by the addition of an inter-collegiate golf team, along with plans to establish additional sports teams in 2007-2008.

USC Lancaster also hired a new Director of Student Life in 2007. Throughout the year, the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs met regularly with the Director of Student Life to discuss already-scheduled events and to plan for future ones. Regularly-sponsored annual events included the Back-to-School Blast, where faculty, staff, and students gathered for a meal and games (e.g., volleyball, Frisbee, etc.). In April, the campus hosted its annual "Spring Fling" event, which also included a cookout. Both of these events were well-attended and informal interviews with members of the SGA and other student representatives indicates that they were viewed as positive experiences by our students.

Throughout the year, USCL also hosted a number of smaller events. Most of these were cookouts or "pizza parties," as experience has demonstrated that offering food ensures a greater degree of participation by students, faculty, and staff. Before and after each event, the Associate Dean for Academic & Student Affairs and the Director of Student Life have met to discuss the events. The underlying philosophy of these events has been, and continues to be, to provide students with the

opportunity to interact with each other as well as with USCL faculty and staff, in a non-academic setting, and to provide a greater sense of a “collegiate community” on this regional (commuter) campus.

The USCL Opportunity Scholars Program continued to sponsor a number of “Round Table” discussions where faculty and staff were invited to have luncheon with students and to talk about selected topics. These informal meetings are designed to allow students to see faculty and staff members in settings outside the traditional classroom, and to allow for a greater degree of interaction between them than might normally be achieved in the regular classroom.

As one of its student development goals, USC Lancaster attempts to introduce its students to a wide variety of cultural activities. The vast majority of our students are local residents, and most have never traveled any great distance. A number of events were scheduled during 2006-2007 designed to add to the cultural richness of student experiences, including:

- French Film Series (November 2006)
- Medford Library Poetry Contest (Spring 2007)
- USCL “Coffee House” – included poetry, prose readings; student musical performances (Fall 2006 & Spring 2007)
- USCL-sponsored European trip for students/faculty to England, Spain, France (scheduled for May 2008)

ALUMNI PLACEMENT SURVEY

As a part of its annual Strategic Planning process (now spearheaded by Mr. Paul Johnson, Director of Planning), USC Lancaster administered a detailed Alumni Survey in late spring 2007. Results from this survey have not yet been compiled but will be reported and posted when they become available.

Results from USC Lancaster’s Alumni Placement survey indicate that students come from a variety of backgrounds and enter USC with a wide variety of goals and ambitions. Many are part-time students who are already fully employed. Others seek to complete their associate’s degree and enter the workforce directly. Still others choose to continue their educations by seeking additional coursework (presumably towards the baccalaureate degree).

The results also indicate that most students entering the workforce remain in South Carolina, thus contributing to their communities in terms of employment, tax base, etc.

1. How long did it take the students to obtain their first full-time job after graduation?

| | # of Responses | % of Total |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|------------|
| a. Prior to leaving college | <u>8</u> | 42.1% |
| b. Less than one month | <u>0</u> | - |
| c. 1 to 3 months | <u>0</u> | - |
| d. 4 to 6 months | <u>2</u> | 10.5% |
| e. 7 to 12 months | <u>2</u> | 10.5% |
| f. Over 12 months | <u>1</u> | 5.3% |
| g. Have not obtained a full-time job | <u>1</u> | 5.3% |
| h. Did not seek a full-time job | <u>5</u> | 26.3% |
| <i>Total</i> | <u>19</u> | |

2. Indicate which single category best describes the student's current status.

| <i>Currently</i> | # of Responses | % of Total |
|---|----------------|------------|
| a. Continuing my education full-time | 5 | 26.3% |
| b. Employed and continuing my education | 4 | 21.1% |
| c. Employed full-time | 6 | 31.6% |
| d. Employed part-time | 1 | 5.3% |
| e. Self-employed | 1 | 5.3% |
| f. Serving in Armed Forces | 1 | 5.3% |
| g. Caring for a home/family | 1 | 5.3% |
| h. Unemployed, seeking work | 0 | - |
| i. Unemployed, not seeking work | 0 | - |
| j. Other | | - |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>19</i> | |

3. Indicate the relationship between the student's college major their first full-time job after graduation.

| <i>After Graduation</i> | # of Responses | % of Total |
|-------------------------|----------------|------------|
| a. Highly related | 4 | 21.1% |
| b. Moderately related | 3 | 15.8% |
| c. Slightly related | 1 | 5.3% |
| d. Not related | 8 | 42.1% |
| e. Not employed | 3 | 15.8% |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>19</i> | |

4. Indicate the relationship between the student's college major and their full-time job.

| <i>Currently</i> | # of Responses | % of Total |
|-----------------------|----------------|------------|
| a. Highly related | 4 | 21.1% |
| b. Moderately related | 4 | 21.1% |
| c. Slightly related | 1 | 5.3% |
| d. Not related | 5 | 26.3% |
| e. Not employed | 5 | 26.3% |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>19</i> | |

5. Indicate the location of the student's first job after graduation.

| <i>After Graduation</i> | # of Responses | % of Total |
|---|----------------|------------|
| a. South Carolina | 15 | 78.9% |
| b. Southeast, outside of South Carolina | 0 | - |
| c. Outside the Southeast | 1 | 5.3% |
| d. Not employed | 3 | 15.8% |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>19</i> | |