



*Southern Association of Colleges and Schools  
Commission on Colleges*

**INSTITUTIONAL SUMMARY FORM  
PREPARED FOR COMMISSION REVIEWS**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Francis Marion University

**Accreditation Liaison**

Dr. Charlene Wages, V.P. for Administration, 843.661.1146, cwages@fmarion.edu

**Technical Support person for the Compliance Certification**

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**Accreditation Activity (*check one*):**

- Submitted at the time of Reaffirmation Orientation
- Submitted with Compliance Certification for Reaffirmation
- Submitted with Materials for an On-Site Reaffirmation Review
- Submitted with Compliance Certification for Fifth-Year Interim Report
- Submitted with Compliance Certification for Initial Candidacy/Accreditation Review
- Submitted with Merger/Consolidations/Acquisitions
- Submitted with Application for Level Change

**Submission date of this completed document: September 5, 2017**

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

### 1. Level of offerings (Check all that apply)

- Diploma or certificate program(s) requiring less than one year beyond Grade 12
- Diploma or certificate program(s) of at least two but fewer than four years of work beyond Grade 12
- Associate degree program(s) requiring a minimum of 60 semester hours or the equivalent designed for transfer to a baccalaureate institution
- Associate degree program(s) requiring a minimum of 60 semester hours or the equivalent not designed for transfer
- Four or five-year baccalaureate degree program(s) requiring a minimum of 120 semester hours or the equivalent
- Professional degree program(s)
- Master's degree program(s)
- Work beyond the master's level but not at the doctoral level (such as Specialist in Education)
- Doctoral degree program(s)
- Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Types of Undergraduate Programs (Check all that apply)

- Occupational certificate or diploma program(s)
- Occupational degree program(s)
- Two-year programs designed for transfer to a baccalaureate institution
- Liberal Arts and General
- Teacher Preparatory
- Professional
- Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## GOVERNANCE CONTROL

Check the appropriate governance control for the institution:

- Private (*check one*)
  - Independent, not-for-profit  
Name of corporation OR  
Name of religious affiliation and control: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Independent, for-profit \*  
If publicly traded, name of parent company: \_\_\_\_\_

- Public state \* (check one)
  - Not part of a state system, institution has own independent board
  - Part of a state system, system board serves as governing board
  - Part of a state system, system board is super governing board, local governing board has delegated authority
  - Part of a state system, institution has own independent board

\* If an institution is part of a state system or a corporate structure, a description of the system operation must be submitted as part of the Compliance Certification for the decennial review. See Commission policy "Reaffirmation of Accreditation and Subsequent Reports" for additional direction."

**INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION FOR REVIEWERS**

The Board of Trustees for Francis Marion University is composed of the Governor of the State or his designee, who is an *ex officio* member of the board, and sixteen members, with fifteen of these members to be elected by the General Assembly and one member to be appointed from the State at large by the Governor. The General Assembly elects and the Governor appoints these members based on merit regardless of race, color, creed, or gender and strives to assure that the membership of the board is representative of all citizens of the state of South Carolina.

Of the fifteen members to be elected, one member must be elected from each congressional district and the remaining eight members must be elected by the General Assembly from the State at large. None of the Trustees are employed by the University and none have any contractual, or personal or familial financial interest. All elected members serve four-year terms.

**Directions:**  
*Please address the following and attach the information to this form.*

**1. History and Characteristics**  
*Provide a brief history of the institution, a description of its current mission, an indication of its geographic service area, and a description of the composition of the student population. Include a description of any unusual or distinctive features of the institution and a description of the admissions policies (open, selective, etc.). If appropriate, indicate those institutions that are considered peers. Please limit this section to one-half page.*

Founded as a state college in 1970, Francis Marion University adheres to the primary purpose of its establishment: to make available to people of all ages and origins an excellent baccalaureate education in the liberal arts and selected professional programs in business, education, and nursing. Professional graduate programs at the master's level are also offered in business, education, and psychology.

The University seeks to provide students with a foundation for lifelong learning and to help them develop skills for professional careers in business, industry, government, public service,



and education as well as for more advanced study in professional and graduate schools. To that end, we place major emphasis on the quality of our faculty, staff, library, and educational support services. Student involvement in the faculty's ongoing scholarly pursuits are encouraged and supported.

Remaining true to the founding, the University primarily serves in-state students with its highest concentration from the Pee Dee regions of the state (northeastern SC). The University is located near the growing community of Florence, SC. The University has an unusually extensive general education curriculum which includes 12 hours in the laboratory sciences.

The University has a very diverse student body due to its inclusive admissions policy which uses both admission test scores and high school performance in determining admission status. Our in-state peers are Lander University, Coastal Carolina University, the Citadel and the Aiken, Upstate and Beaufort colleges of the University of SC.

## 2. List of Degrees

*List all degrees currently offered (A. S., B.A., B.S., M.A., Ph.D., for examples) and the majors or concentrations within those degrees, as well as all certificates and diplomas. For each credential offered, indicate the number of graduates in the academic year previous to submitting this report. Indicate term dates.*

Francis Marion University offers the following majors and degrees:

- Forty-eight majors within 5 baccalaureate degrees (i.e., Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Business Administration, Bachelor of Science in Nursing, and Bachelor of General Studies)
- Eight majors within 5 master-level degrees (Master of Arts in Teaching, Master of Education, Master of Business Administration, Master of Science, and Master of Science in Nursing)
- One graduate-level specialist degree
- One graduate-level certificate.

| Credentials Offered by Francis Marion University and the Number of Graduates during Each Semester of the 2016-2017 Academic Year |             |           |             |
|--|-------------|-----------|-------------|
|  | Summer 2016 | Fall 2016 | Spring 2017 |
| <i>Bachelor of Arts with a major in:</i>   |             |           |             |
| Biology  | 0           | 0         | 0           |
| Economics  | 0           | 0         | 0           |
| English  | 0           | 8         | 15          |
| History  | 1           | 0         | 3           |
| Mass Communication   | 0           | 4         | 10          |
| Mathematics  | 0           | 0         | 0           |
| Modern Language  | 0           | 1         | 2           |
| Political Science  | 1           | 0         | 6           |

|   |   |    |    |
|---|---|----|----|
| Psychology  | 0 | 3  | 6  |
| Sociology   | 0 | 8  | 2  |
| Theater Arts  | 0 | 0  | 2  |
| Visual Art  | 0 | 6  | 6  |
|   |   |    |    |
| <i>Bachelor of Science with a major in:</i>                   |   |    |    |
| Art Education   | 0 | 0  | 0  |
| Biology   | 9 | 41 | 57 |
| Biology (Medical Technology Emphasis)                         | 0 | 0  | 0  |
| Chemistry   | 1 | 3  | 6  |
| Computer Science  | 0 | 0  | 6  |
| Early Childhood Education                                     | 1 | 6  | 12 |
| Economics   | 0 | 0  | 0  |
| Elementary Education  | 1 | 11 | 4  |
| Engineering Technology  | 0 | 1  | 0  |
| Healthcare Administration                                     | 0 | 27 | 27 |
| History   | 1 | 2  | 4  |
| Industrial Engineering  | 0 | 0  | 4  |
| Mathematics   | 0 | 1  | 7  |
| Middle Level Education (Mathematics/Science Licensure)        | 0 | 0  | 1  |
| Middle Level Education (Mathematics/Social Studies Licensure) | 0 | 0  | 2  |
| Middle Level Education (Mathematics/English Licensure)        | 0 | 0  | 0  |
| Middle Level Education (Science/Social Studies Licensure)     | 0 | 1  | 0  |
| Middle Level Education (Science/English Licensure)            | 0 | 1  | 0  |
| Middle Level Education (Social Studies/English Licensure)     | 0 | 0  | 2  |
| Music Industry  | 0 | 2  | 1  |
| Pharmaceutical Studies  | 0 | 0  | 0  |
| Physics   | 0 | 1  | 4  |
| Political Science   | 2 | 8  | 9  |
| Psychology  | 2 | 14 | 35 |
| Sociology   | 1 | 15 | 9  |
|   |   |    |    |
| <i>Bachelor of Business Administration with a major in:</i>   |   |    |    |
| Accounting  | 0 | 4  | 8  |
| Business Administration                                       | 1 | 6  | 6  |
| Economics   | 0 | 2  | 3  |
| Finance   | 0 | 3  | 7  |
| Management  | 0 | 13 | 20 |
| Management Information Systems                                | 1 | 2  | 4  |
| Marketing   | 2 | 3  | 11 |
|   |   |    |    |
| <i>Bachelor of Science in Nursing with a major in:</i>        |   |    |    |
| Nursing Generic (No RN)                                       | 0 | 28 | 28 |
| Nursing (RN to B.S.N.)  | 9 | 15 | 4  |
| Nursing (RN to B.S.N.) – Blended Distance Education           | 2 | 2  | 0  |



|   |    |    |    |
|---|----|----|----|
|   |    |    |    |
| <i>Bachelor of General Studies with a major in:</i>       |    |    |    |
| General Liberal Arts and Sciences                         | 10 | 13 | 10 |
|   |    |    |    |
| <i>Master of Business Administration with a major in:</i> |    |    |    |
| Business Administration                                   | 0  | 2  | 10 |
| Healthcare Executive Management                           | 0  | 1  | 0  |
| <i>Master of Education with a major in:</i>               |    |    |    |
| Instructional Accommodation                               | 2  | 19 | 12 |
| Learning Disabilities                                     | 0  | 5  | 1  |
|   |    |    |    |
| <i>Master of Arts in Teaching with a major in:</i>        |    |    |    |
| Learning Disabilities                                     | 0  | 4  | 5  |
|   |    |    |    |
| <i>Master of Science with a major in:</i>                 |    |    |    |
| Applied Psychology  | 3  | 5  | 3  |
| Physician Assistant Studies                               | 0  | 0  | 0  |
|   |    |    |    |
| <i>Master of Science in Nursing with a major in:</i>      |    |    |    |
| Family Nurse Practitioner                                 | 0  | 21 | 0  |
| Nursing Educator  | 1  | 1  | 0  |
|   |    |    |    |
| <i>Specialist in School Psychology with a major in:</i>   |    |    |    |
| School Psychology   | 3  | 1  | 6  |
|   |    |    |    |
| <i>Certificate in Nursing Education</i>                   | 0  | 0  | 0  |

### 3. Off-Campus Instructional Locations and Branch Campuses

List all locations where 50% or more credit hours toward a degree, diploma, or certificate can be obtained primarily through traditional classroom instruction. Report those locations in accord with the Commission's definitions and the directions as specified below.

**Off-campus instructional sites**—a site located geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers **50 % or more** of its credit hours for a diploma, certificate, or degree. This includes high schools where courses are offered as part of dual enrollment. For each site, provide the information below. **The list should include only those sites reported and approved by SACSCOC.** Listing unapproved sites below does not constitute reporting them to SACSCOC. In such cases when an institution has initiated an off-campus instructional site as described above without prior approval by SACSCOC, a prospectus for approval should be submitted immediately to SACSCOC.

| Name of Site | Physical Address (street, city, state, country) Do not include PO Boxes. | Date Approved by SACSCOC | Date Implemented by the institution | Educational programs offered (specific degrees, certificates, diplomas) with 50% or more credits hours offered at each site | Is the site currently active? (At any time during the past 5 years, have students been enrolled and courses |
|--------------|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|
|              |  |                          |                                     |   |   |

|   |   |              |              |                                   | offered? If not, indicate the date of most recent activity.) |
|---|---|--------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Trident Technical College (FMU rents space) | Mt. Pleasant Campus<br>1125 John Dilligard LN<br>Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464 | Aug 22, 2014 | Aug 16, 2014 | RN-to-Bachelor of Science Nursing | No<br>(Last activity July 3, 2017)                           |
|   |   |              |              |                                   |  |

**Institutions with off-campus instructional sites** at which the institution offers **25-49%** credit hours for a diploma, certificate, or degree—including high schools where courses are offered as dual enrollment—are required to notify SACSCOC in advance of initiating the site. For each site, provide the information below.

Francis Marion University does not have any off-campus instructional sites that offer 25-49% credit hours for a diploma, certificate, or degree.

**Branch campus**—an instructional site located geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution. A location is independent of the main campus if the location is (1) permanent in nature, (2) offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential, (3) has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization, **and** (4) has its own budgetary and hiring authority. **The list should include only those branch campuses reported and approved by SACSCOC.** Listing unapproved branch campuses below does not constitute reporting them to SACSCOC. A prospectus for an unapproved branch campuses should be submitted immediately to SACSCOC.

Francis Marion University does not have any branch campuses.

#### 4. Distance and Correspondence Education

Provide an initial date of approval for your institution to offer distance education. Provide a list of credit-bearing educational programs (degrees, certificates, and diplomas) where 50% or more of the credit hours are delivered through distance education modes. For each educational program, indicate whether the program is delivered using synchronous or asynchronous technology, or both. For each educational program that uses distance education technology to deliver the program at a specific site (e.g., a synchronous program using interactive videoconferencing), indicate the program offered at each location where students receive the transmitted program. Please limit this description to one page, if possible.

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| November 16, 2006  | Distance Education – Offsite (School of Education)   |
| September 24, 2007 | Distance Education – Offsite (School of Education)   |
| August 22, 2014    | Off-site location for the RN to Bachelor of Science Nursing (25% of the courses are offered in a hybrid format with the on-line portion being asynchronous). |
| September 3, 2015  | Distance Education – Offsite (Healthcare Administration)   |

The Department of Nursing offers 25% of the courses in the RN-to-BSN program in an asynchronous online format.

The Department of Healthcare Administration offers all courses for the Healthcare Administration major in an online asynchronous format.

The School of Education offers hybrid and on-line courses. On-line courses use asynchronous and synchronous methods depending upon the course and/or professor.

The School of Business offers hybrid courses. The on-line component of the courses uses asynchronous and synchronous methods depending upon the course and/or professor.



The class sessions meet on the FMU campus.

## 5. Accreditation

(1) List all agencies that currently accredit the institution and any of its programs and indicate the date of the last review by each.

| <b>Academic Unit</b>                      | <b>Accrediting Body</b>   | <b>Last Review</b>                       |
|---|---|--|
| School of Education                       | *NCATE (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education) (now CAEP)       | 2013                                     |
| School of Business                        | *AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business)                    | 2015                                     |
| Department of Psychology                  | MPAC (Master's in Psychology and Counseling Accrediting Council)                  | 2008                                     |
| Department of Psychology                  | *NASP (National Association of School Psychologists)                              | 2012                                     |
| <b>Academic Unit</b>                      | <b>Accrediting Body</b>   | <b>Last Review</b>                       |
| Department of Fine Arts                   | *NASAD (National Association of Schools of Art and Design)                        | 2014                                     |
| Department of Fine Arts                   | *NAST (National Association of School of Theatre)                                 | 2015                                     |
| Department of Chemistry                   | ACS (American Chemical Society)   | 2006                                     |
| Department of Nursing                     | *ACEN (Accreditation Commission for Education) Nursing-pre-licensure and RN to BS | 2015                                     |
| Department of Nursing                     | *ACEN (Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing) MSN                     | 2015                                     |
| Department of Physician Assistant Studies | ARC-PA (Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant) | 2016<br>(Probationary status until 2019) |

\*Recognized by the U.S. Department of Education

(2) If SACS Commission on Colleges is not your primary accreditor for access to USDOE Title IV funding, identify which accrediting agency serves that purpose.

Not applicable.

(3) List any USDOE recognized agency (national and programmatic) that has terminated the institution's accreditation (include the date, reason, and copy of the letter of termination) or list any agency from which the institution has voluntarily withdrawn (include copy of letter to agency from institution).

None.

(4) Describe any sanctions applied or negative actions taken by any USDOE-recognized accrediting agency (national, programmatic, SACSCOC) during the two years previous to the submission of this report. Include a copy of the letter from the USDOE to the institution.

See attached letter in regard to probationary status of Physician Assistant Studies program.



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## **6. Relationship to the U.S. Department of Education**

Indicate any limitations, suspensions, or termination by the U.S. Department of Education in regard to student financial aid or other financial aid programs during the previous three years. Report if on reimbursement or any other exceptional status in regard to federal or state financial aid.

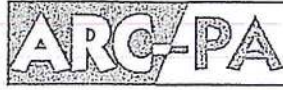
Francis Marion University has received no sanctions from the U.S. Department of Education.

### **Document History**

*Adopted: September 2004*

*Revised: March 2011*

*Revised: January 2014*



*Accreditation Review Commission on Education  
for the Physician Assistant, Inc.*

April 5, 2017

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Luther Fred Carter, PhD  
President  
Francis Marion University  
P.O. Box 100547  
Florence, SC 29502  
[LCarter@fmarion.edu](mailto:LCarter@fmarion.edu)

Dear Dr. Carter:

The Francis Marion University Physician Assistant Program was previously placed on Accreditation-Probation status by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA). After review at the March 2017 commission meeting, the program's accreditation status remains Accreditation-Probation.

The program's status will remain Accreditation-Probation until the Provisional Monitoring visit. As such, the program is prohibited from admitting a cohort of students until approved by the ARC-PA. The Program report due (as outlined in the attached citation document) will be reviewed by the commission at the September 2017 meeting. The program's ability to admit a cohort of students in 2018 will be determined at the September 2017 commission meeting.

The basis for the decision was the information contained in the program's follow up report and its accreditation history.

At the time of the focused site visit, the commission determined the program was making positive strides toward compliance with standards A1.03a, A2.09d and C1.01, while others remain deficient. The site visit revealed evidence of strong institutional support throughout administration. Throughout each meeting with the institutional officials (Dean, Provost, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, the SAC-COC Coordinator and the SACS-COC Liaison Officer), each official expressed a personal and institutional commitment to the making the program successful. Both the dean and the provost took responsibility for shortcomings in supervision and oversight of the previous program director. The dean discussed the ongoing collaboration that is now in place and the progress the interim program director has made. During site visit discussions, the medical director and the dean both acknowledged the previous deficiencies in the program's self-assessment process.

Collaborating Organizations: American Academy of Family Physicians • American Academy of Pediatrics • American Academy of Physician Assistants • American College of Physicians • American College of Surgeons • American Medical Association • Physician Assistant Education Association

Member: Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA)

Recognized by: Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)



Since the last site visit, the program has developed a comprehensive plan to collect and analyze data to promote program effectiveness and self-assessment. Although didactic objectives have been revised, the clinical year syllabi and objectives need further improvement. Site visitors determined that with the start of the new semester (January 2017), students will obtain syllabi that will guide student acquisition of required competencies and allow assessment of student learning.

The ARC-PA noted six (6) areas of noncompliance with the *Standards* presented as citations in the enclosed document. The Citations document includes information on reports due to the ARC-PA.

The *Provisional Monitoring* review of the program by the ARC-PA is scheduled for the March 2019 commission meeting. The program will be contacted by the ARC-PA in advance of that review regarding details of the application, reports and selecting site visit dates.

The ARC-PA appreciates the commitment and dedication to quality PA education demonstrated by your participation in the accreditation process. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Sharon Luke, MSHS, PA-C  
Executive Director

- c: Ruth Wittmann-Price, PhD, RN, ANEF, FAAN; Dean; [RWittmannPrice@fmarion.edu](mailto:RWittmannPrice@fmarion.edu)  
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