

## STANDARD 10.1 ACADEMIC POLICIES

The institution publishes, implements, and disseminates academic policies that adhere to principles of good educational practice and that accurately represent the programs and services of the institution.

### Institutional Response

The university system uses a standard policy format and a uniform review and approval process for university policies to improve communication, promote administrative consistency and efficiency, and ensure compliance with pertinent state and federal laws as well as state and regional accreditation requirements. All institutions and campuses of the USC system must follow the procedures outlined in the [Policy on Policies](#) <sup>[S1]</sup> regarding the approval of new university policies and the revision or repeal of existing policies. Only system-wide university policies are reviewed and modified by the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC). Drafts of new system-wide policies, substantially revised system-wide policies, and policies recommended for repeal must be distributed to the entire university community for review and comment prior to final approval.

**Enforcement and Implementation of Policies.** As stipulated in the [narrative to Standard 4.2.b Board-administrative distinction](#) <sup>[S2]</sup> of the Compliance Certification Report, USC Aiken, as a senior comprehensive campus in the University of South Carolina system, has extensive autonomy and local decision-making capacity within the context of organizational policies and system-wide approval processes, particularly with respect to academic policies and procedures. Areas of considerable autonomy involve:

- **Curricular decisions:** (e.g., [adopting new or modifying existing courses](#) <sup>[S3]</sup>; [developing new programs of study](#) <sup>[S4]</sup>; evaluating [general education](#) <sup>[S5]</sup>, [undergraduate programs of study](#) <sup>[S6]</sup>, and [graduate programs of study](#) <sup>[S7]</sup>);
- **Student matters:** (e.g., [making admissions decisions](#) <sup>[S8]</sup>; [disciplinary actions](#) <sup>[S9]</sup>; [awarding financial aid and scholarships](#) <sup>[S10]</sup>; and [campus housing](#) <sup>[S11]</sup>); and
- **Academic matters:** (e.g., [assigning grades](#) <sup>[S12]</sup>; [appeals of grades and probation and suspension decisions](#) <sup>[S13]</sup>; [grade changes](#) <sup>[S14]</sup>; [transfer of credit decisions](#) <sup>[S15]</sup>; [documenting transfer credits](#) <sup>[S16]</sup>).

**Evidence of the role of Faculty Assembly committees in the implementation and enforcement of academic policies.** As stipulated in the [Faculty Manual](#) <sup>[S17]</sup> and in the [narrative response to Standard 10.4 – Academic governance](#),<sup>[S18]</sup> the faculty of the University of South Carolina Aiken has “legislative powers in all matters pertaining to the standards of admission, registration, requirements for and the granting of degrees, curricula, instruction, research, extracurricular activity, discipline of students, educational policies and standards of the University.” The [2018-19](#) <sup>[S19]</sup> and [2019-20](#) <sup>[S20]</sup> end-of-year reports for the standing committees of Faculty Assembly show the active role faculty play in the governance and oversight of academic matters of the campus, including enforcement of academic policies.

As further evidence, examples are provided of the Scholastic Standings and Petitions Committee’s review of a [denied reinstatement petition that was subsequently appealed and approved with stipulations imposed on the student](#) <sup>[S21]</sup>, an [approved request for academic grade forgiveness](#) <sup>[S22]</sup>, a [denied request for academic grade forgiveness](#) <sup>[S23]</sup>, and [several approved grade changes](#).<sup>[S24]</sup> These examples illustrate that academic policies are implemented and that the decisions to approve or deny a request are in accordance with established policy.

**Evidence that Faculty Assembly committees recommend new or modified academic policies.** Faculty Assembly committees play an important role in studying best practices, examining data, and recommending new or modified academic policies. For example, the [Faculty Assembly agenda from April 2020](#) <sup>[S25]</sup> included proposed policy modifications to the [Student Grievance Policy by the Campus Life Committee](#) <sup>[S26]</sup>, [COVID-19 related Faculty Manual policy changes by the Faculty Welfare Committee](#) <sup>[S27]</sup>, and the modification to the [Student Probation and Suspension Policy by the Scholastic Standings and Petitions Committee](#).<sup>[S28]</sup> Due to COVID-19 safety protocols, these proposed changes were discussed by the Faculty Assembly in a virtual meeting, voted on through [virtual balloting](#) <sup>[S29]</sup>, with the results being verified by the [Faculty Assembly Executive Board](#). <sup>[S30]</sup>

### **Additional Supporting Documentation**

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University of South Carolina Aiken  
Focused Report - 2021

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- S1. [USC system policy UNIV 1.00 - Policy on Policies](#)
  - S2. [Narrative to Standard 4.2.b Board-administrative distinction](#)
  - S3. [Courses and Curricula Committee End-of-Year Report](#)
  - S4. [University Planning Committee End-of-Year Report](#)
  - S5. [General Education Committee End-of-Year Report](#)
  - S6. [Academic Assessment Committee End-of-Year Report](#)
  - S7. [Graduate Advisory Committee End-of-Year Report](#)
  - S8. [Admissions Decision Example](#)
  - S9. [Student Judicial Procedures](#)
  - S10. [Financial Aid Decision Example](#)
  - S11. [Campus Housing Agreements](#)
  - S12. [Guide to Submitting Grades](#)
  - S13. [Scholastics Standing and Petitions Committee End-of-Year Report](#)
  - S14. [Grade Change Example](#)
  - S15. [Transfer of Credit Appeal Example](#)
  - S16. [Transfer of Credit Process Example](#)
  - S17. [Faculty Manual: Faculty Authority in Academic Matters](#)
  - S18. [Narrative response to Standard 10.4 – Academic governance](#)
  - S19. [2018-19 End-of-year Standing Committee Reports](#)
  - S20. [2019-20 End-of-year Standing Committee Reports](#)
  - S21. [Reinstatement Petition Example](#)
  - S22. [Approved Academic Grade Forgiveness Example](#)
  - S23. [Denied Academic Grade Forgiveness Example](#)
  - S24. [Examples of Approved Grade Changes](#)
  - S25. [Faculty Assembly Agenda from April 2020](#)
  - S26. [Proposed Modifications to the Student Grievance Policy by the Campus Life Committee](#)
  - S27. [Proposed COVID-19 Related Faculty Manual Policy Changes by the Faculty Welfare Committee](#)
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University of South Carolina Aiken  
Focused Report - 2021

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- S28. [Proposed Modification to the Student Probation and Suspension Policy by the Scholastic Standings and Petitions Committee](#)
- S29. [Results of Virtual Voting on Policy Modifications](#)
- S30. [Verification of Virtual Votes by the Faculty Assembly Executive Board](#)