

University of South Florida System

Office of Academic Affairs

STATEMENT OF POLICY ON ACADEMIC LEARNING COMPACTS

Introduction

In April, 2004, the Florida Board of Governors resolved that universities will develop "Academic Learning Compacts" and related processes to ensure student achievement in baccalaureate degree programs in the State University System. These Compacts will be made readily available to prospective and enrolled students.

Academic Learning Compacts and Related Processes

For each baccalaureate program listed on the State University System Academic Degree Programs Inventory, academic units will develop and implement the following:

- 1) An Academic Learning Compact (ALC) that:
 - a) Identifies the expected core student learning outcomes for program graduates in the areas of:
 - i) Content/discipline knowledge and skills.
 - ii) Communication skills.
 - iii) Critical thinking skills.
 - b) Identifies corresponding assessments used to determine how well student learning matches the articulated core student learning outcomes.
- 2) Evaluation systems (including external validations) necessary to corroborate that the assessments measure student achievement against the expected core student learning outcomes. Such evaluations will serve to validate the confidence levels associated with assessment mechanisms used in the program, and results will be used to improve student achievement and program effectiveness.
- 3) A process for certifying that each baccalaureate graduate has completed a program with clearly articulated core student learning outcomes in content/discipline knowledge and skills, communication skills, and critical thinking skills, and that corresponding robust and effective assessment mechanisms have been used to ensure that graduates have met the criteria of the ALC.

Communication of Academic Learning Compacts

The Academic Learning Compact must include concise statements of what program graduates will know and be able to do (i.e. the expected core student learning outcomes) and the types of assessments used to determine that the outcomes have been achieved.

The Academic Learning Compact must be written in user-friendly, jargon-free language and must be made available to all students and prospective students. At a minimum, the Academic Learning Compact for each baccalaureate program must be included in the Undergraduate Catalog and posted on the departmental web site along with other information about the program.

Effective Date for Academic Learning Compacts

Academic Learning Compacts must be developed and made available to students by the end of Fall semester 2005.

All new baccalaureate program proposals must include an Academic Learning Compact for the proposed program.

Review of Academic Learning Compacts

As part of the statutorily mandated Academic Program Review process, academic units will be required to demonstrate how information from the periodic assessment of the expected core student learning outcomes described in the Academic Learning Compact and the evaluation of corresponding assessment mechanisms has been used to improve student achievement and program effectiveness.