

Information of interest to accredited programs

Degree-Granting Authority

The University of South Alabama was founded in 1963 and has degree-granting authority in accordance with Alabama law as a state institution of higher learning (16-55-1 of the Code of Alabama). Specifically, the code (16-55-4) states that the “trustees may prescribe courses of instruction, rates of tuition and fees, confer such academic and honorary degrees as are usually conferred by institutions of like character; and they may do whatever else they may consider in the best interest of the institution.”

State Authorizations for Out-of-State Students

The University of South Alabama offers degree programs and courses to out-of-state students. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) maintains and manages appropriate state authorizations for these programs and courses through its membership and compliance with requirements as outlined in the policy of the National Council for State Authorizations Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). OIE also is the primary contact with the State of Alabama’s state portal entity, the Alabama Commission on Higher Education.

Maintaining appropriate state authorizations is a multi-pronged approach:

First, The University is a member of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). Membership in NC-SARA allows the University to offer distance education in all other NC-SARA member states under the guidelines established in the NC-SARA Policy Manual version 21.1. The University is currently compliant with all reporting and policy expectations required by NC-SARA. One of the ways the University ensures compliance is by educating the campus community through its State Authorizations website and regular, semesterly communication with deans, chairs, and program coordinators of academic programs about NC-SARA and its requirements.

Second, where programs are also governed by a state licensing board (e.g., Master of Science in Nursing), there may be additional requirements that the University must meet to ensure appropriate state authorization. In these instances, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness works closely with programs leading to state licensure to make sure that they are compliant with expectations regarding professional licensure disclosure requirements. NC-SARA requires programs to provide disclosures about state licensure to prospective, admitted, and current students. Each of our programs provide program disclosures available via a dynamic search tool on the State Authorizations website. In addition to disclosures students receive from program faculty during the admissions and enrollment process, students can also visit the state authorizations web page, select their program, and view state-by-state disclosures, such as in this example from nursing.

As part of this process, programs determine whether the program meets a particular state’s curricular and program requirements, if any. To date, the institution has not been required to report changes in program offerings to these agencies.

Finally, the University proactively communicates with students to ensure that they are regularly updating their address and location.

Institutional accreditation

Any reference to the University of South Alabama's institution accreditation must refer to the full name of our accrediting body: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

Further, any statement about the University of South Alabama's institutional accreditation must be stated as directed by SACSCOC policy:

The University of South Alabama is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award bachelor's, master's, educational specialist and doctoral degrees. Questions about the accreditation of the University of South Alabama may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on [SACSCOC's website](#).

Information about the University's accredited status is published using consistent language in the [University Bulletin](#) (page 10), the [Student Handbook](#) (page 16), and on the [Institutional Effectiveness website](#). Other areas of the University publishing information about the University's accredited status use the same statement and/or link to accreditation information on the Institutional Effectiveness website. For example, USA's off-campus instructional site in Baldwin County provides a description of its accreditation and a link to the Institutional Effectiveness website.

Institutional assessment of academic programs

All academic programs at the University of South Alabama participate in annual academic program assessment. As part of this process, academic programs identify 3-5 student learning outcomes and identify methods for assessing those outcomes. By the third Thursday in October, programs must report the data and information collected from their assessments and include their plans for how they will use that data to improve student learning. Throughout the year, programs must follow-up to indicate whether and how they implemented their plans to improve student learning. Information and resources regarding Academic Program Assessment can be found at https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/institutionaleffectiveness/educational_program_assessment_reporting_resources.html

University Mission

The University of South Alabama has a clearly defined, comprehensive, and published mission specific to the institution and appropriate for higher education. The institution's mission addresses teaching and learning and also research and public service.

The mission of the University of South Alabama reads: The University of South Alabama, with a global reach and special focus on the Gulf Coast, strives to make a difference in the lives of those it serves through promoting discovery, health, and learning.

This mission statement is regularly reviewed and approved by the University of South Alabama's Board of Trustees as a single statement to describe the institution's mission. It is published in the University's [Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin](#) (page 8), [The Lowdown](#) (page 1), the [Faculty Handbook](#) (page 1), and as part of the [University Strategic Plan](#). In addition to current versions of these documents being posted online, archived copies of these documents are available either online or as hard copies in the University Library.

Institutional Strategic Planning and Assessment

On March 11, 2022, the University of South Alabama Board of Trustees approved the institutional mission and University Strategic Plan 2022-2027. The Strategic Plan 2022-2027 and information about our planning process can be found at <https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/presidentsoffice/strategicplan/>.

As part of its institutional assessment of the strategic plan, the University develops and regularly updates the University Scorecard, which is found at <https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/institutionaleffectiveness/scorecard.html>. All colleges, schools, the University Library and Administrative units report annually on the extent to which they are achieving established objectives and the extent to which they are advancing the University's strategic plan.

For information about student success metrics:

https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/institutionaleffectiveness/student_achievement_indicators.html

<https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/institutionalresearch/retention-rates.html>

<https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/institutionalresearch/factbook.html>

<http://usabandev.southalabama.edu/idt/>

About USA

The University of South Alabama, founded in 1963, offers a superb, well-rounded educational experience with high academic standards. USA's fields of study are remarkably diverse, encompassing business, the liberal arts, education, engineering, computing, the sciences and health care. USA enrolls approximately 14,000 students and has awarded more than 100,000 degrees in its history. The Mitchell-Moulton Scholarship Initiative, a \$50-million fundraising challenge, is strengthening USA's commitment to expanding opportunities for current and future students.

A University of South Alabama education provides opportunities for students to explore and develop interests that build the foundation of lifelong career paths. With more than 50 undergraduate degree programs, there are plenty of avenues for discovery. Through graduate study in 38 master's and 14 doctoral programs, students focus on specific areas of learning and research to gain specialized skills. Academic programs are offered through 10 divisions: Pat Capps Covey College of Allied Health Professions; College of Arts and Sciences; Mitchell College of Business; School of Computing; College of Education and Professional Studies; College of Engineering; College of Medicine; College of Nursing; the Graduate School; and the Auburn University School of Pharmacy at USA.

USA's undergraduate Honors College for highly motivated and accomplished students includes course work and extracurricular activities throughout the four years of a student's undergraduate career. In the past few years, USA students have been awarded national scholarships and fellowships that include a National Merit Scholar, five Goldwater Scholarships, seven Hollings Scholarships, 29 Tau Beta Pi Scholarships (Engineering Honor Society), and 17 fellowships for graduate study from organizations such as the American Heart Association and the National Science Foundation.

The faculty at USA promote an environment in which hands-on research is widely available to undergraduate and graduate students. As problem-solvers and pioneers in developing new technologies and promoting bold ideas, USA researchers collaborate across disciplines to address global issues and uncover new fields of inquiry. The outcomes are new information and opportunities, the transformation of traditional disciplines, new global partnerships and innovations that benefit society.

In health care, USA Health is the region's only academic medical center and serves the region with advanced and innovative care through USA Medical Center, USA Children's & Women's Hospital, USA Physicians Group and the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute.

USA's beautiful, tree-shaded main campus spreads across 1,200 acres. The campus includes state-of-the-art educational facilities as well as a 116,000-square-foot recreation center, indoor and outdoor pools, a nature trail and even a disc golf course.

In addition to USA's outstanding academic programs, our students enjoy a wide variety of social, cultural, entertainment and athletic activities that contribute to an outstanding college experience. The USA Jaguars men's and women's athletics teams compete in 17 Division I sports within the Sun Belt Conference. Intramural and club sports allow all students the opportunity to participate at a level that suits their abilities.

Students have many choices for on-campus housing, with six residential communities that are home to 32 residence halls. These co-ed communities offer standard double occupancy rooms, plus suite and apartment-style accommodations with kitchenettes. Each community has recreational and study lounge areas, multipurpose rooms and laundry facilities. The Greek housing community is made up of nine houses for specific social Greek organizations.

USA's location in the historic city of Mobile, Alabama, and the University's close proximity to the beaches of the Gulf Coast affords a wide variety of off-campus recreational, arts and cultural opportunities.

To learn more about USA, visit our website at www.southalabama.edu or schedule a campus visit by calling (251) 460-6141 or (800) USA-JAGS.