



September 13, 2019

Dr. Christopher Blake
President
Middle Georgia State University
100 University Parkway
Macon, GA 31206-5145

Dear Dr. Blake:

Thank you for submitting the following substantive change:

Substantive change:

Significant Departure Program

Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (M.S.O.T)

Submission date:

6/24/2019

Implementation date:

7/1/2019

Case ID:

SC006852

The 74 credit hour Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (M.S.O.T.) degree program, which is consistent with the mission of Middle Georgia State University, targets licensed Occupational Therapy Assistants who want to complete a master's degree in two years. Courses will be delivered mostly through distance learning instruction, combined with face-to-face labs, practical skills examinations, and clinical field experiences. Administrative oversight will be provided by the Chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy, with an expected initial enrollment of 15 students. The program was approved by the University System of Georgia Board of Regents in May 2019. A comprehensive list of all other programs offered by the University was provided, as well as a list of approved off-campus instructional sites.

The curriculum, course descriptions, and student learning outcomes were provided. Admission and graduation requirements, along with a definition of credit hours, were noted as well. Student learning will be assessed through a variety of methods in compliance with the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) standards. The M.S.O.T. program will also be integrated into the University-wide institutional effectiveness process, which was described in detail. This annual process involves the systematic collection, review, and use of assessment data for continual improvement of teaching and learning. In addition, each program is required to undergo a Comprehensive Program Review every five years.



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The Faculty Roster describes the qualifications of the one full-time and one part-time faculty member who will support the Occupational Therapy program. The full-time faculty member has a related master's degree and only teaches the undergraduate foundational courses. The part-time Program Director has a related doctoral degree and is scheduled to become full-time before students are admitted. Both appear qualified to teach the assigned courses. Qualifications for two future faculty members to be hired were also provided and appear appropriate. Keep in mind that the ultimate determination of faculty qualifications is the responsibility of the peer review teams who will assess the faculty as part of the institution's next SACSCOC accreditation review.

Library and learning resources appear to be adequate. The Middle Georgia State University Library system provides an extensive collection of print and electronic resources that support the occupational therapy curriculum. This collection includes over 100 books; 112,000 e-books; 1,200,000 journal articles; and six online databases. Students may access all of these items in person from any campus location, or online from the Library website. Additional external resources are available through the GALILEO (Georgia Library Learning Online) consortia relationship. Reference and research assistance is available from professional librarian staff through group orientation sessions, individual consultations, LibGuides, and video tutorials. Library resources are also embedded in the Brightspace learning management system.

Student support services appear to be adequate and are available to all students, regardless of location. Along with standard academic support services such as financial aid, student records, and admissions, the University provides additional support through testing, academic advising, and career development. Services are accessible in person and via telephone, Skype, or email. Student computer workstations are available at the Academic Resource Centers and the Student Success Center. The University also offers cultural, social, and recreational programs for development outside the classroom plus leadership opportunities through the Graduate Student Advisory Committee and student government.

The physical resources appear to be adequate. Face-to-face instruction for the M.S.O.T. program will be conducted in existing facilities on the Cochran, Macon, and Warner Robbins campuses. The facilities include faculty office space and classrooms equipped with computers, projectors, screens, and Smartboards. Distance learning instruction will be conducted through the existing Brightspace learning management system. The University already has technical infrastructure in place to support this system. In addition, students have access to online tutorials, the Technology Assistance Center, the Help Desk, and designated Information Technology personnel.

Financial support for the program appears to be adequate; a projected four-year budget was provided. Expenses will include personnel, travel, supplies, and library resources. Revenues will come from student tuition and fees, plus reallocation of existing funds. The program is expected



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to be self-sustaining by the end of the fourth year of operation. A contingency plan is in place to cover costs in the event expected enrollment numbers are not achieved.

Policy Update

Please note that, at its meeting in June 2018, the SACSCOC Board of Trustees approved modification of the *Substantive Change Policy for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions Policy Statement*, for any type of substantive change requiring approval. If an approved substantive change has not been implemented within two years of action by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, the institution will need to submit a new prospectus for the change or application for a level change.

The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reviewed the materials seeking approval of the Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (M.S.O.T.) degree program. It was the decision of the Board to approve the program and include it in the scope of the current accreditation.

Enclosed is an invoice for \$500 to help defray the cost of reviewing the prospectus.

Should you need assistance, please contact Dr. Stephanie L. Kirschmann at 404-679-4501 or via email at skirschmann@sacscoc.org.

Please include the Case ID number above in all submissions or correspondence about this substantive change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Belle S. Wheelan".

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.
President

BSW/SKO:lp

Enclosure

cc: Dr. Kevin T. Cantwell, Associate Provost
Dr. Stephanie L. Kirschmann