



THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Office of the Provost and
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

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Memorandum

December 5, 2024

To: USM Faculty and Staff

Lance Nail

From: Lance Nail, Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Re: Degree Plan Review Phase I Decisions

I appreciate the cooperation and input of faculty, school directors and deans in the process of reviewing degree plans which are not meeting IHL productivity metrics. We received several excellent proposals to combine and revitalize degree plans that should lead to increased degree production. The following actions have been approved by University administration. Faculty in these programs have been informed of the decisions described below. Where teach out plans are required, those plans will be developed and submitted to the appropriate councils for approval.

Category 1

Dance (Performance and Choreography), BFA:

The Dance (Performance and Choreography), BFA and Dance (Dance Education), BFA degree plans will consolidate into the Dance Performance & Choreography BFA.

Marine Science (Hydrography), BS:

The Marine Science (Hydrography), BS degree plan will be revised with the Marine Science BS degree plan to create a single major in Oceanography and Hydrosatial Science, BS.

Medical Laboratory Sciences (MLT to MLS), BS:

The Medical Laboratory Sciences (MLT to MLS), BS degree plan will be revised to a BAS degree plan.

Ocean Engineering, BS:

The Ocean Engineering, BS degree plan will continue based on continuous improvement efforts currently being implemented.

Physics, MS:

The Physics, MS degree plan will transition to fully online.

Political Science, MA:

The Political Science, MA degree plan will transition to fully online and implement a cohort admissions model to streamline course offerings.

Sustainability Studies (Coastal System Dynamics), BS:

The Sustainability Sciences (Coastal System Dynamics), BS degree plan will transition to fully online.

Category 2

Art (Drawing and Painting), BFA and Art (Sculpture), BFA:

The Art (Drawing and Painting), BFA and Art (Sculpture), BFA degree plans will be combined into a single Art, BFA degree plan. In addition, the design plan for graphic design will develop into a BFA in Graphic Design.

Environmental Science, MS, and Geology, MS:

The Environmental Science, MS, Geology, MS and Geography, MS degree plans will consolidate into a single Environmental and Earth Science, MS degree plan.

Forensics (Anthropology), BS:

Efforts are underway to revise the Forensics degree plans into three unique and accredited degree plans. The existing Forensics (Anthropology), BS will sunset as part of this proposal.

Music (Performance-Organ), BM:

The Music (Performance-Organ), BM degree plan will sunset.

Music (Performance-Percussion), BM; Music (Performance-Piano), BM; Music (Performance-Strings), BM; Music (Performance-Voice), BM; and Music (Performance-Wind Instrument), BM:

The Music (Performance-Percussion), BM; Music (Performance-Piano), BM; Music (Performance-Strings), BM; Music (Performance-Voice), BM; and Music (Performance-Wind Instrument), BM degree plans will consolidate into a single Music Performance, BM degree plan.

Theatre (Acting), BFA and Theatre (Design and Technology), BFA:

The Theatre (Acting), BFA and Theater (Design and Technology), BFA will be combined into a single Theatre, BFA degree plan with a revised process for admitting students to the BFA program.

Theatre (Design and Technology), MFA, Theatre (Directing), MFA, and Theatre (Performance), MFA:

The Theatre (Design and Technology), MFA, Theatre (Directing), MFA, and Theatre (Performance), MFA degree plans will consolidate into a single Theatre, MFA degree plan.

Category 3

Computational Science (Mathematics), Ph.D.:

The Computational Science (Mathematics), Ph.D. degree plan does not have a STEM CIP code which hinders enrollment. The degree plan will sunset and a unified Ph.D. program from Mathematics and Physics with a STEM CIP code will be proposed.

Computational Science (Physics), Ph.D.:

Similar to the degree plan above, the Computational Science (Physics), Ph.D. degree plan does not have STEM CIP code. The degree plan will sunset and a unified Ph.D. program from Mathematics and Physics with a STEM CIP code will be proposed.

Criminal Justice (Juvenile Justice), BA:

The Criminal Justice (Juvenile Justice), BA degree plan will sunset.

Dance (Dance Education), BFA:

The Dance (Performance and Choreography), BFA and Dance (Dance Education), BFA degree plans will consolidate into the Dance Performance & Choreography, BFA degree plan.

Human Capital Development (Instructional Technology and Design), Ph.D.:

Additional data about graduates from a predecessor program increased the number of graduates from this program to meet the IHL minimum. This degree plan will be reviewed in Phase II.

International Business, BSBA:

The dean and school director recommended sunsetting the International Business, BSBA degree plan. A faculty member appealed via the alternative faculty appeal process and presented a list of ideas to revitalize and maintain International Business as a full BSBA degree plan. University administration upheld the recommendation to sunset the International Business, BSBA degree plan. The College of Business is considering the creation of an International Business certificate.

Marine Science, BS:

The Marine Science degree plan will be revised with the Marine Science (Hydrography), BS degree plan to create a single degree plan in Oceanography and Hydrosatial Science, BS.

Mathematics, MS:

The Mathematics, MS degree plan will transition to fully online.

Merchandising, BSBA:

A request to sunset the Merchandising, BSBA degree plan has been approved by the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning.

Music (Jazz Studies), BM:

The Music (Jazz Studies), BM degree plan will be consolidated with the Music (Performance-Percussion), BM; Music (Performance-Piano), BM; Music (Performance-Strings), BM; Music (Performance-Voice), BM; and Music (Performance-Wind Instrument), BM degree plans into a single Music Performance, BM degree plan.

Music (Choral Pedagogy), BMed:

The Music (Choral Pedagogy), BMed degree plan will sunset.

Music (Instrumental Pedagogy), BMed:

The Music (Instrumental Pedagogy), BMed degree plan will sunset.

Philosophy, BA and Philosophy (Pre-Law), BA:

The Philosophy, BA and Philosophy (Pre-Law), BA degree plans will be sunset. A plan for a new degree plan that includes elements of philosophy and religion is expected.

Physics (Computational Science), MS:

The Physics (Computational Science), MS degree plan will sunset.

Public Relations, MS:

The recommendation from the Senior Associate Provost for Institutional Success was to sunset and teach out the Public Relations, MS degree plan. The school director and program coordinator requested an opportunity to appeal. They presented a case for retaining the Public Relations, MS degree plan. University administration upheld the recommendation to sunset the Public Relations, MS degree plan.

STEM Education, MS:

The recommendation from the Senior Associate Provost for Institutional Success was to sunset the STEM Education, MS degree plan. An opportunity to appeal was requested. Two faculty members from the Center for STEM Education presented a proposal to retain the STEM Education, MS degree plan with the support of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The proposal included revising the current online and face-to-face format requiring 36 hours with 18 required in math or science courses to a fully online format requiring 30 hours with 24 hours in STEM Education coursework and 6 hours of elective graduate coursework in any STEM prefix, SME elective, or ANT, CIE, DPH, HE, SOC, WGS coursework. University administration approved retaining the STEM Education, MS degree plan with the stipulation that the proposal to revise the program

to a 30-hour fully online format be implemented immediately and that enrollment targets be set for achievement by Fall 2026.

Sustainability Studies, BA:

The Sustainability Studies, BA degree plan will sunset.

Lance Nail, Ph.D., CFA

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Professor of Finance

The University of Southern Mississippi