



August 14, 2020

Dr. Mark Rudin
President
Texas A&M University-Commerce
2600 West Neal Street
P. O. Box 3011
Commerce, TX 75428

Dear Dr. Rudin:

Thank you for submitting the following substantive change:

Substantive change:
Significant Departure Program
Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Cybersecurity
Submission date:
12/20/2019
Implementation date:
8/3/2020
Case ID:
SC008694

The 120-credit hour Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree program in Cybersecurity, which is consistent with the mission of Texas A&M University-Commerce, will be conducted at the approved RELLIS off-campus instructional site in Bryan, Texas. The primary target audience is students from nearby Blinn College who wish to transfer to the B.S. program. As a rationale for the new program, the University cites U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data projecting a national growth rate of 32% over the next decade for information security analysts. The curriculum will be delivered through face-to-face lecture and laboratory instruction. Initial enrollment is expected to be ten students with administrative oversight provided by the Department Head.

Additional information regarding program approval was requested in March 2020 and was received July in 2020. The University has provided evidence that the program was approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in July 2020.

A 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, plus a definition of credit hours, were noted as well. Student learning will be assessed through individual/team projects, skills demonstrations, and exams. The B.S. program will also be integrated into the University's



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ongoing institutional effectiveness process, which was described in detail. This annual process involves developing student learning outcomes, assessing the outcomes, collecting actionable results, and implementing modifications for improvement. In addition, each program is required to undergo a comprehensive academic review every ten years.

The Faculty Roster describes the qualifications of two full-time faculty members who will support the Cybersecurity program. The faculty members both have related doctoral degrees and appear qualified to teach the assigned courses. Qualifications for a future faculty member 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 Texas A&M University-Commerce Library has an extensive collection of over 500,000 print books; 55,000 print serials; 100,000 online journals; 335,000 eBooks; and 255 research databases. A list of discipline-specific resources related to cybersecurity was provided. These items are accessible in person, or remotely through the Library website. Additional resources are available through the TexShare consortium, a document delivery service, or interlibrary loans. Reference and research assistance is provided by librarians through individual or group consultations. Students may also receive assistance from online LibGuides or via telephone, email, chat, and video conferencing.

Student support services appear to be adequate. Along with standard academic support services such as financial aid, student records, and admissions, the University offers additional support through academic advising, testing services, and disability assistance. Supplemental instruction and tutoring services are available from the Academic Success Center. Students will have access to a bookstore and dining facilities at the RELIS site. Blinn College will provide a full-time advisor for the core and lower division courses, and the University will provide faculty advisors for the upper division courses. A Transfer Coordinator will offer guidance to students to help make their transition to Texas A&M University-Commerce as seamless as possible.

Physical resources appear to be adequate. Face-to-face instruction for the new B.S. program will be conducted at the approved RELIS Academic Alliance off-campus location in Bryan, Texas. The site is a unique collaborative partnership that houses education, workforce development, industry, and research entities on a single integrated campus. Students will be able to take lower division courses at the Blinn College Walter C. Schwartz building and upper-division major courses at the A&M System Academic Complex Building 1, both located on the RELIS site. Research laboratories and resources at this site include a Collaborative Computer Classroom/Laboratory, a simulated Residential Apartment/Internet of Things Laboratory, a Server Room, the Texas Cyber Range, and access to the Texas A&M University Cybersecurity Center.



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Financial support for the program appears to be adequate; a five-year projected budget was provided. Revenues will come from student tuition/fees, reallocated institutional funds, and state appropriations generated through the Texas funding formula. Expenses will include instructional personnel, supplies/materials, and accreditation fees. Revenues are expected to outpace expenses each year of the program's operation.

The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reviewed the materials seeking approval of the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree program in Cybersecurity. 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. Mary P. Kirk at 404-679-4501 or via email at mkirk@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 (invoice with liaison's copy only)

cc: Dr. Ricky Dobbs, Associate Provost, Academic Foundations
Dr. Mary P. Kirk