

South Carolina Commission on Higher Education
Committee on Access & Equity and Student Services

Minutes of the Meeting
Virtual Meeting
October 1, 2020
2:45 p.m.

Committee Members Present

Mr. Paul Batson, Chair
Dr. Bettie Rose Horne, Assistant Chair
Dr. Hugh Mobley

Committee Members Absent

Mr. Devron Edwards
Dr. Mark A. Smith

Commission Members Present

Dr. Cleveland Sellers

Guests Present

Dr. Charlie Spell, SC State University
Ms. Reinell Thomas-Myers, SC State University
SMSgt Steven A. David, SC Air National Guard
MSG Paul A. Mead, SC Army National Guard
Dr. Dan Ennis, Coastal Carolina University

Staff Members Present

Dr. Rusty Monhollon
Dr. Karen Woodfaulk
Ms. Lisa Collins
Ms. Lorinda Copeland
Mr. Kevin Glears
Dr. Gerrick Hampton
Ms. Kathryn Harris
Mr. Jesse Kimbrough
Mr. Frank Myers
Ms. Colette Reamer
Ms. Laverne Sanders
Ms. Leslie Williams

1. Introductions and Approval of Minutes

Chairman Paul Batson called the meeting to order. Chairman Batson welcomed Commissioner Hugh Mobley to the Committee on Access & Equity and Student Services. Commissioner Mobley thanked Commissioner Batson for his comments.

Dr. Karen Woodfaulk introduced the presenters on the agenda. Ms. Laverne Sanders introduced the guests in attendance, and she confirmed that the meeting was held in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

A **motion** was made (Horne), **seconded** (Mobley), and **carried** to approve the minutes of September 3, 2020.

2. South Carolina State University SC-PRRMT FY2019-20 Fourth Quarter Report (For Approval)

Dr. Woodfaulk provided a brief overview of the SC Program for the Recruitment and Retention of Minority Teachers (SC-PRRMT) Fourth Quarter Report. She explained that the SC-PRRMT Program is funded by the SC General Assembly by proviso through EIA funds. Dr. Woodfaulk stated that SC-PRRMT provides teacher education support and coursework at SC State University and off campus sites throughout the state per the proviso. She said that SC-PRRMT provides support to nontraditional students such as career changers and teacher assistants to receive certification for teacher education. Dr. Woodfaulk stated that SC-PRRMT had 85 participants in the program at the end of the fourth quarter. She reported that this reflects a slight decrease from the prior year, which had an enrollment of 87 participants. Dr. Woodfaulk

stated that the enrollment in SC-PRRMT at the end of the fourth quarter included 10 seniors, 20 juniors, 18 sophomores, 32 freshmen and 5 MAT participants. She stated ten participants graduated this year.

Dr. Woodfaulk reported that SC-PRRMT expanded the number of their sites this quarter to include Laurens School District #55. SC-PRRMT now has a total of nine sites in the program around the state for FY2019-20. She explained that SC-PRRMT is continuing to expand sites throughout the state despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ms. Reinell Thomas-Myers, Program Manager of SC-PRRMT, acknowledged and thanked Chairman Batson for his encouraging remarks made during the Commission Meeting and for the Committee's support. She reported that there are 88 students enrolled for fall term 2020. Ms. Thomas Myers explained that SC-PRRMT is continuing to recruit students despite the pandemic. Ms. Thomas-Myers stated that SC-PRRMT is recruiting students from their previous recruitment list. She said she will continue to reach out to school districts throughout the fall through virtual means.

Chairman Batson asked Ms. Thomas-Myers how SC-PRRMT is dealing with site expansion during this time. Ms. Thomas-Myers replied that in addition to virtual recruiting, SC-PRRMT will increase communications and send fliers, notifications, etc. to prospective school districts. She said that SC-PRRMT will contact the school districts once they have settled into the school year.

Dr. Charlie Spell stated that working with SC-PRRMT has been successful. He said that SC-PRRMT would like to continue to receive support from the State Department of Education.

Commissioner Bettie Horne stated that she would like for SC-PRRMT to report the success of the program in retaining the students in teaching positions once they begin teaching. Ms. Thomas-Myers explained that once students graduate and return to their hometowns, their data show that the SC-PRRMT participants are teaching in their school districts. Dr. Spell stated that data could be provided on the number of participants who remain in their teaching positions.

The Committee **moved** (Horne), **seconded** (Mobley) and **carried** to approve the SC-PRRMT Quarter 4 Report.

3. Proposed Statutory/Regulatory Changes:

Dr. Woodfaulk explained the regulations were reviewed for clarity, and changes were made to update the regulations. Dr. Woodfaulk provided an overview of the changes along with staff.

a.) LIFE Scholarship, SC HOPE and Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Regulations (For Approval)

Dr. Hampton provided the changes in the definition section of the LIFE Scholarship regulations. Section 62-1200.5, Definitions:

- a. **Item D** adds a section to the annual credit hour requirements to provide the student eligibility to receive the scholarship in a prorated amount in the final term of the award to maintain full time status.
- b. **Item M** removes M.S. in Cytology and Biosciences at MUSC and included PharmD programs at MUSC and USC because the programs no longer exist.
- c. **Item U** adds language to allow proration of award during student's final term of enrollment.
- d. **Item W** adds language to expand all types of eligible high schools in the state such as public, private, charter, virtual, Montessori or magnet.

- e. **Item NN** adds language to clarify a student must be a resident of South Carolina at the time of high school graduation.

Dr. Hampton explained the following changes in Section 62-1200.10, Student Eligibility for LIFE Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship Enhancement:

- a. **Item A.(1&2)** adds language to clarify the student has to be a resident of SC at the time of graduation and college enrollment.
- b. **A.3(a)**. adds language for consistency, to clarify high school ranking requirements, high school transcript requirements, and transcript requirements for S.C residents who graduate from out-of-state high schools.
- c. **A.3(b)**. adds language to superscore the ACT.
- d. **A.3I**. adds language to clarify high school ranking requirements.
- e. **A.3(d)(2 & 5)**. brings averages up to reflect current SC Uniform Grading policy
- f. **E**. adds language to clarify early graduation process should go through institution
- g. **I**. adds language added to clarify that remediation policy for LIFE Scholarship must occur during first two terms of enrollment.
- h. **L**. adds language modified to update current programs; Removed M.S. in Cytology and Biosciences at MUSC and included PharmD programs at MUSC and USC.
- i. **N**. adds language to clarify that out-of-state conversion of GPA for initial eligibility is responsibility of counselor.
- j. **P**. adds language added to allow proration of award during student's final term of enrollment.

Section 62-1200.15 Continued Eligibility, LIFE Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship Enhancement:

- a. **G**. adds language to clarify that institutions must notify LIFE Scholarship recipients of LIFE GPA and credit hours by the end of Spring term to determine if they have any deficiency in their credit hours.

Section 62-1200.15 Continued Eligibility, LIFE Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship Enhancement:

- a. **B. & E**. adds language to update current programs; removed M.S. in Cytology and Biosciences at MUSC and included PharmD programs at MUSC and USC.
- b. **D**. adds language added to clarify the number of terms the scholarship can be used at a two-year institution.

Dr. Hampton explained the following changes in Section 62-1200.40. Enrollment in Internships, Cooperative Work Programs, Travel Study Programs and National and International Student Exchange Programs: LIFE Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship Enhancement:

- a. **C**. adds language to allow an eligible student who is participating in a university approved Internship, Co-op or Travel Study and Exchange Program for one term out of the academic year to retain the award with the average of 30 credit hours for the year, based on initial college enrollment.

Dr. Hampton explained the following changes in Section 62-1200.45. Military Mobilization, LIFE Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship Enhancement:

- a. **C.** adds language to allow an eligible student who is participating in active duty military service or mobilization for one term out of the academic year to retain the award with the average of 30 credit hours for the year, based on initial college enrollment.

Section 62-1200.60, Institutional Policies and Procedures for Awarding LIFE Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship Enhancement:

- a. **M.** adds language modified to update current programs; removed M.S. in Cytology and Biosciences at MUSC and included PharmD programs at MUSC and USC.
- b. **R.** adds language to clarify that institutions must notify LIFE Scholarship recipients of LIFE GPA and credit hours by end of Spring term.

Section 62-1200.65, Institutional Disbursements: LIFE Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship Enhancement:

- a. **C.** adds Language modified to update current programs; Removed M.S. in Cytology and Biosciences at MUSC and included PharmD programs at MUSC and USC.

Dr. Woodfaulk explained that the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship regulation allows institutions to notify students of their eligibility status at the end of the spring term in order for students to attend summer school if needed to maintain their eligibility. She said this has not been a regulatory requirement for the LIFE Scholarship, although some of the institutions instituted a notification process for LIFE Scholarship recipients enrolled at their institutions. Dr. Woodfaulk explained that this regulation has been very helpful to Palmetto Fellows Scholarship recipients and can assist LIFE Scholarship recipients as well.

Dr. Hampton provided a section summary of the HOPE Scholarship:

Section 62-900.90 Definitions

- a. **J. "High school"** adds language to expand types of eligible high schools.
- b. **S. "South Carolina resident"** adds language clarified to provide that students must be residents at the time of high school graduation.

Section 62-900.95, Student Eligibility:

- a. **A.(1&2).** adds language to clarify to provide that students must be residents at the time of high school graduation and initial college enrollment.
- b. **A.3(a).** adds language to clarify high school ranking requirements, high school transcript requirements, and transcript requirements for S.C residents who graduate from out-of-state high schools.

Section 62-900.90, Definitions:

- a. **J. "High school"** adds language to expand types of eligible high schools.
- b. **S. "South Carolina resident"** adds language clarified to provide that students must be residents at the time of high school graduation.

Section 62-900.95, Student Eligibility:

- a. **A.(1&2)**. adds language clarified to provide that students must be residents at the time of high school graduation and initial college enrollment.
- b. **A.3(a)**. adds language to clarify high school ranking requirements, high school transcript requirements, and transcript requirements for S.C residents who graduate from out-of-state high schools.
- c. **A.7**. adds language also to clarify high school conversion requirements.

Section 62-900.125, Institutional Policies and Procedures for Awarding:

- a. **G**. adds language to clarify that institutions must notify S.C. HOPE Scholarship recipients of LIFE GPA and credit hours by end of Spring term.
- b. **A.7**. Language also added to clarify high school conversion requirements.

Section 62-900.125, Institutional Policies and Procedures for Awarding:

- a. **G**. adds language to clarify that institutions must notify S.C. HOPE Scholarship recipients of LIFE GPA and credit hours by end of Spring term.

Commissioner Mobley **motioned** and Commissioner Horne **seconded** to approve the proposed regulations for the SC HOPE Scholarship, LIFE Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship Enhancement Programs. The motion **carried**.

Ms. Kathryn Harris explained the proposed Palmetto Fellows Scholarship regulations changes by section.

Section 62-310. Definitions:

- a. Section **Q**. languages removes SC abbreviation and spells out South Carolina.
- b. Section **JJ**. modifies language for reapplication students to clarify taken a Gap year process and return to receive the Palmetto Scholarship. Language also modified to spell out South Carolina.
- c. Section **SS**. adds language to clarify students utilizing a gap year immediately following high school graduation.

Section 62-315, Initial Eligibility for Palmetto Fellows Scholarships:

- a. Section **D**. language removes SC abbreviation and spells out South Carolina.

Section 62-320, Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Application:

- a. **C.(1-3)**. makes modification in language to strike the test month and change the language to reflect test administration date to as determined by CHE. Language also modified to spell out South Carolina.
- b. **D.(1-3)**. makes modification in language to reflect test administration date to as determined by CHE. Language also modified to spell out South Carolina.
- c. **E**. modified language to include allowance of ACT Superscore composite test scores.
- d. **F-G, I, K, L**. modified language to spell out South Carolina.

Section 62-325, Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Selection Process:

- a. **B.** modifies language to spell out South Carolina.

Section 62-330, Policies and Procedures for Awarding the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship and the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Enhancement:

- a. **B.** modifies language to reflect Palmetto Fellows Scholarship proration during the student's final term of attendance prior to graduation.
- b. **H.** modifies language to spell out South Carolina.

Section 62-335, Duration and Renewal of Awards:

- a. **C.** modifies language to reflect Palmetto Fellows Scholarship proration during the student's final term of attendance prior to graduation.

Section 62-365, Refunds and Repayments:

- a. **C.** modifies language to spell out South Carolina.

Commissioner Horne asked about students graduating in the sixth term to have their scholarships prorated and how students are accomplishing this in the sixth term. Ms. Harris explained that in some situations we have had students with a considerable amount of completed dual enrollment coursework, students can also attend summer terms, as well as taking credit hour overages during regular terms.

Commissioner Mobley **motioned** and Commissioner Horne **seconded** to approve the proposed regulation for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship and Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Enhancement Program. The motion **carried**.

b.) LIFE Scholarship and Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Eligibility Criteria: Test Optional (*For Information*)

Dr. Woodfaulk explained that staff is providing the LIFE and Palmetto Fellows Scholarship eligibility criteria information for exploratory possibilities for the state scholarships. She stated staff is looking at other areas with criterion other than the SAT and ACT tests. She said this summer presented challenges due to cancellation of the SAT and ACT tests. Dr. Woodfaulk stated parents asked if it was possible to have a test option for students to qualify without using the national standardized tests scores.

Ms. Harris explained the current eligibility criteria for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship. She stated a minimum score of 1200 on the SAT or a 27 on the ACT is required for the Palmetto Scholarship-Program. She said students are required to have a cumulative 3.5 grade point average on the SC Uniform Grading Scale at the end of their junior or senior year. She also stated that students must rank in the top six percent of their class at the end of the sophomore, junior or senior year. She said some high schools do not rank, and some students attended a ranked school but do not meet the rank requirement. She said there is an alternative eligibility criterion for students to still have the opportunity to earn the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship. Ms. Harris explained that for the alternative eligibility criteria, a student must have a minimum score of 1400 on the SAT or a 32 on the ACT and a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 4.0 on the SC Uniform Grading scale at the end of the junior or senior year.

Ms. Harris stated that a possible eligibility criterion could be a cumulative 5.0 GPA on the SC Uniform Grading Scale at the end of the junior or senior year. She said CHE staff reviewed final high school GPA's and the average SAT/ACT scores from the past three freshmen classes of the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship, and determined the target GPA of a 5.0 would serve as a middle point in an effort to account for the lack of a standardized test score.

Dr. Hampton presented the current eligibility criteria for the LIFE Scholarship Program. He said LIFE Scholarship recipients must meet two of three criteria as an entering freshman. LIFE Scholarship recipients must earn a 3.0 cumulative GPA based on the SC Uniform Grading Scale upon graduation, score at least 1100 on the SAT or a 24 on the ACT or rank in the top 30% of the graduating class. Dr. Hampton explained that two-year or technical college's first-time freshmen must earn a cumulative 3.0 GPA on the SC Uniform Grading Policy upon high school graduation.

Dr. Hampton stated a possible eligibility criterion for a first-time entering freshman at an eligible four-year institution could be a cumulative 4.25 GPA on the SC Uniform Grading Scale upon graduation. He stated that after reviewing final high school GPA's and the average SAT/ACT scores from the past three freshmen classes of LIFE Scholarship recipients, the target GPA of a 4.25 could possibly serve as a middle point in an effort to account for the lack of a standardized test score.

Dr. Woodfaulk explained that the information provided is in the exploratory phase, and that staff is collecting data to determine alternatives if national standardized testing is not available.

c.) SC National Guard College Assistance Program Annual Report and Presentation (For Information)

Ms. Lorinda Copeland provided a brief overview of the SC National Guard College Assistance Program (SCNG CAP). She explained that the SCNG CAP was initially a student loan repayment program and transitioned to a college assistance program in 2007. SCNG CAP provides financial assistance to eligible enlisted SC Air and SC Army National Guard members and is administered by CHE in consultation with the SC National Guard. CHE staff meets monthly with the SC National Guard CAP representatives.

Ms. Copeland also provided an overview of the annual application process, institutional and CHE review and awarding process. She stated that service members must apply for the SCNG CAP awards. The annual application window is June 1 through August 1 each year. Ms. Copeland explained that service members apply through the automated application which opened June 2018. She stated that development continued since the initial rollout and a new automated application completed in August 2020 will open with the new SCNG CAP application cycle in June 2021. The new application eliminates manual processes that were still in place with the initial automated application. She stated that the new application has approximately 23 automated responses for the application approval process. Also, the applicant data will automatically transmit to the CHE internal data system instead of a data upload. She stated that the SC Air or Army National Guard CAP manager reviews the applicant for good standing in the Guard. Ms. Copeland said the service members are notified of their approval status. She stated that the CAP manager inputs eligible service members into the CHE web portal. The institutional contacts and CHE staff access eligible service members through the CHE web portal for verification of eligibility. Funds are disbursed to the institutions for the approved service members.

Ms. Copeland provided a ten-year summary of actual awards for the SCNG CAP as of September 3, 2020 and stated that the data for academic year 2019-20 was not final. She acknowledged that the ten-year summary of awards reflected a decline. Also, she stated that "flagging actions" were implemented in academic year 2016-17 for the SC Army National Guard. Service members in the SC Army National Guard are not eligible for the SCNG CAP if policy standards are not met. She also stated that in cases where ineligible service members or part-time service members are not awarded SCNG CAP, their cost of attendance may be met by other financial aid.

MSG Paul Mead, SC Army National Guard, discussed the number of approved applications for the SC Army National Guard. The approved applications for academic year 2020-21 had increased from 727 on September 8 to 795 as of October 1. He stated that the increase was because of the removal of the restriction which did not allow Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC) scholarship recipients to receive the SCNG CAP.

Chairman Batson asked if he remembered correctly that the Committee had previously removed the ROTC Scholarship restriction. Dr. Woodfaulk responded to Chairman Batson that he was correct. She stated that recipients of a full ROTC Scholarship were not eligible for the SCNG CAP. However, a ROTC Scholarship covers tuition and fees or room and board, not both. She stated a definitional term for a full ROTC Scholarship was added to the regulation providing clarification and was approved by the Committee and the full Commission. SMSgt. Steven David, SC Air National Guard, expressed that the 130 attempted credit hours maximum presents a challenge for some of his service members. He stated that an exception to policy (ETP) was implemented allowing service members who cannot attend technical training within 4 months to receive the SCNG CAP. SMSgt. David explained how the delay in available training slots was impacting retention. Commissioner Horne asked if there were suggestions as to how the Committee could help or if this was a system issue. SMSgt. David responded that the issues are federal and explained that the Air National Guard does not have the same options for training as the Army National Guard. He stated that the goal is to provide a better benefit as an incentive for enlistment and reenlistment for both the Air and Army National Guard. Commissioner Horne responded that better care should be provided to service members. She stated that according to published information, the percentage of the American population joining the official military is less than 10 percent and that there is a reliance on other sectors of the military such as the National Guard. She also stated that the military teaches life skills that benefit students before arrival on a college campus.

Dr. Woodfaulk discussed the regulatory amendments that were approved by CHE during fiscal year 2019-20. The ROTC Scholarship definition was approved to allow ROTC Scholarship recipients eligibility for the SCNG CAP up to the cost of attendance. Dr. Woodfaulk stated that representatives from the SC Technical College System worked with CHE staff on the language to add less than one-year certificates and certification programs. She said that CHE approved the proposed regulation for less than one-year certificates and certification programs to expand SCNG CAP to include less than one-year certificates, certifications or a second associate's degree for service members with bachelor's degrees. Also approved by CHE was the exception to policy (ETP) language for required training which will be submitted with the language for less than one-year certificates and certification programs to the SC General Assembly in January 2021.

d.) Other Business and Adjournment

There being no additional items before the Committee, Chairman Batson requested a motion for adjournment. A **motion** (Horne) was made, **seconded** (Mobley), and **carried** to adjourn the meeting at 4:15 p.m.