



Meeting of the South Carolina Commission  
on Higher Education  
12:30 p.m., November 6, 2025  
1122 Lady Street, Suite 400, Columbia, SC 29201  
and Zoom Webinar

**Members**

Commissioner Wes Hayes, Chair  
Commissioner Oran Smith, Vice Chair  
Commissioner Paul Batson  
Commissioner Amy Bigham  
Commissioner Jenni Bryson  
Commissioner Brian Cuddy  
Commissioner Daniel Dukes  
Commissioner Edgar Dyer

Commissioner Gene Fant  
Commissioner Mark Masters  
Commissioner Charles Schulze  
Commissioner Doug Snyder  
Commissioner Dino Teppara  
Commissioner Mick Zais

**Commission Staff Present**

Jeff Perez  
Argentini Anderson  
Laura Belcher  
Stephanie Charbonneau  
Scheri Eichelberger  
Monica Goodwin  
Gerrick Hampton  
Kathryn Harris  
Matthew Hartenstine  
DJ Holland  
Diane McCree  
Alfie Mincy  
Noah Perry  
Angela Peters  
Kenita Pitts

Melissa Price  
Tim Rees  
Christopher Robinson  
Elizabeth Robinson  
Holly Robinson  
Atlantis Seckal  
Kara Smith  
Tracy Solet  
Chariti Spann  
James Thompson  
Tanya Weigold  
Leslie Williams  
Bryce Wilson  
Karen Woodfaulk  
Lishu Yin

**Guests**

Beth Bell, Clemson University  
Phillip Bridgmon, University of South Carolina  
Aiken  
Betty Boatwright, South Carolina State  
University  
Teresa Burns, Coastal Carolina University  
Bonnie Carson Durham, University of South  
Carolina Upstate  
Will Carswell, Francis Marion University  
Lewis Carter, SC House of Representatives  
Zachary Christian, Tuition Grants Commission  
James Colbert, Lander University  
Mark Del Mastro, College of Charleston  
Timothy Drueke, Winthrop University  
Robert Essaf, Clemson University  
Jermaine Ford, Florence-Darlington Technical  
College

Andrew Hatchett, University of South Carolina  
Aiken  
Trena Houpp, University of South Carolina  
Pamela Jones, Department of Employment and  
Workforce  
Jeremy King, Clemson University  
Lillian Sims, University of South Carolina  
Palmetto College  
Brian Mallory, University of South Carolina  
Beaufort  
Ernest McNealy, Allen University  
Stacey Moore, York Technical College  
Erin Paysinger, Lander University  
Jay Ragley, Advocatus USA  
Karin Roof, The Citadel  
Felicity Ropp, Palmetto Promise  
Said Sewell, Morris College

Katie Smith, University of South Carolina Aiken  
Allison Steadman, Francis Marion University  
Pam Steinke, University of South Carolina  
Upstate

Katie Stevens, SC Tuition Grants Commission  
Rosline Sumpter, Technical College System  
Lindsay Yearta, CERRA  
Tangar Young, South Carolina State University

All Attended either In-Person, by Phone, or via Video Conference

Chair Smith announced that he would preside over the meeting on behalf of Chair Hayes. He convened the meeting at 12:32 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance.

**I. 1. Introductions and Roll Call to Establish Quorum**

Ms. Belcher introduced the Commissioners. She confirmed a quorum of the Commission and announced that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Chair Smith introduced the draft minutes of the September 4, 2025, CHE Business meeting and asked for any additions or corrections. Commissioner Bigham motioned to approve minutes as presented, and Commissioner Bryson seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**3. Chair's Report**

Chair Smith reported that the Agency Head Salary Commission (AHSC) training has been postponed until the beginning of the new year. Chair Smith then called on Mr. Satcher, Chair of the Higher Education Foundation Board (HEFB), to provide an update. Mr. Satcher delivered an overview of the Foundation's work and described the types of functions it supports to advance the mission of the Commission on Higher Education (CHE) and the State. He noted that the Foundation's available funds are currently limited. President Perez stated that CHE is exploring an enhanced partnership with the Foundation to support higher education initiatives.

**4. President and Executive Director's Report**

President Perez welcomed new CHE staff members: Noah Perry, Office of the President and Executive Director; Tim Rees and James Thompson, Office of Academic Affairs and Licensing; and Holly Robinson, Office of Fiscal Affairs and Operations.

President Perez reported on agency related updates. He announced that the agency recently hosted a Transfer Convening Conference led by the Office of Academic Affairs and Licensing.

President Perez shared that he recently attended the Council of Presidents Meeting on November 5, where common higher education related issues were discussed. He also provided updates on scholarship projections and the tuition mitigation report.

President Perez reported that the new CHE telecommuting policy has been approved by State Human Resources and then provided a summary of the policy's key components.

President Perez reported on the results from the recently conducted CHE Climate Survey. President Perez stated that while progress has been made, there is further work to do regarding the results of the survey. He shared that in collaboration with the senior leadership team next steps have been identified and then he provided an overview of the plan.

Commissioner Cuddy inquired about the survey's frequency. President Perez replied that the survey was first conducted in 2023 and pursuant to the House Legislative Oversight Committee (HLOC) recommendation, is now scheduled to be conducted every two years. Commissioner Cuddy asked whether other state agencies follow a similar schedule, to which President Perez responded that he was unsure. Commissioner Cuddy asked who had been contacted regarding office consolidation. President Perez stated that CHE has engaged the SC Department of Administration, and that the agency is currently pursuing this effort.

Chair Hayes joined the meeting and thanked Chair Smith for chairing the meeting and commended President Perez and the senior team for developing a plan to address the survey findings. Commissioners asked questions related to the climate survey response plan. Commissioner Smith asked whether all staff completed the survey. President Perez responded that all staff were asked to participate and clarified that he received only compiled results provided by the Inspector General's Office (IG), not individual responses. Commissioner Snyder asked whether the budget would support robust staff professional development, to which President Perez confirmed that it would.

President Perez then provided an overview of the Executive Budget Funding Request for FY 2027.

Commissioner Batson requested clarification on the staff salary funding. President Perez explained that the funding will be used to support salary adjustments for existing staff.

## 5. Committee Reports

### 5.01 Report of the Executive Committee

Chair Smith reported that there were no new items for consideration.

### 5.02 Report of the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

Edgar Dyer

Chair Smith called on Commissioner Dyer to provide a report on the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing. Commissioner Dyer reported that there are three new program proposals on the consent agenda for consideration. He provided an overview of the programs and motioned for approval.

Commissioner Batson asked about the job market related to items 5.02.A. and B. from the University of South Carolina (USC). Ms. Houp, USC staff, confirmed that the programs support the job market need. Chair Smith called for a vote, and the motion passed.

Commissioner Dyer then asked Dr. Peters to summarize the Academic Program Productivity Report. Dr. Peters summarized the report and noted two amendments submitted by USC. Commissioner Dyer motioned for approval of the report.

Commissioner Masters expressed concern that a significant number of programs are noncompliant. Dr. Peters explained that the reporting cycle is delayed covering the period of 2016–2020, and that future reviews will be more current. She also noted that completion rates will be evaluated moving forward. Commissioner Dyer clarified that CHE may only recommend program termination after a program is consistently noncompliant. President Perez stated that in addition to addressing the current backlog, a more in-depth review is needed. Dr. Peters reported an increase of roughly 250 new programs, along with an increase in institution-initiated terminations.

Commissioner Snyder recommended completing the remaining reviews before issuing any recommendations. He expressed concern about relying on dated information and asked whether delaying a vote would cause issues. President Perez replied that omitting approval would leave the cohort's records incomplete. Commissioner Dyer noted that staffing challenges contributed to the delay in reporting. Commissioner Bigham asked for a timeline to become current in reporting, to which President Perez estimated six months to one year. Dr. Yin added that the review occurs in even years and that the next cycle, 2018–2022, is forthcoming.

Commissioner Snyder recommended reviewing current data first and working backward. President Perez stated that there is a proposed path forward that considers the current reporting data while establishing a foundation for future work.

Commissioner Masters motioned to adopt the report with the removal of the waiver requirement, to which Commissioner Zais seconded. Chair Smith called for the vote and the motion passed to amend the report. Commissioner Bigham asked about staff workload; President Perez confirmed the effort would be substantial.

Commissioner Dyer motioned to approve the report to include Commissioner Masters' amendment to remove the waiver requirement, to which Commissioner Zais seconded. Chair Smith called for the vote, and motion was approved. Chair Smith noted that during the next Committee meeting, it will be a discussion on clearly defining what it means to be under review and the term exemption.

Chair Hayes explained that the legislature also reviews the report and may act if an institution repeatedly disregards CHE's recommendations to terminate programs. Commissioner Dyer asked Dr. Peters to summarize the information item.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. University of South Carolina, Aiken, M.S. in Exercise and Sports Science
- B. University of South Carolina Columbia, M.A. in Psychology
- C. University of South Carolina Columbia, Ph.D. in Psychology
- D. Academic Program Productivity Report
- E. Mission Statement Revisions (For information, no action)

**5.03 Report of the Committee on Student Services**

**Jenni Bryson**

Chair Smith called on Commissioner Bryson to provide a report on the Committee on Student Services. Commissioner Bryson summarized the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship regulation. Chair Smith conducted the public hearing regarding the ACT science portion and invited comments; none were offered. Commissioner Dyer moved to close the public hearing, and Commissioner Bigham seconded. The motion passed.

**FOR ACTION**

- A. Public Hearing: Proposed Palmetto Fellows Regulations

**5.04 Report of the Committee on Finance and Administration (CFA)**

**Paul Batson**

Chair Smith called on Commissioner Batson to provide a report on the Committee on Finance and Administration. Commissioner Batson summarized three informational items.

**FOR INFORMATION**

- A. Fines and Fees Report (For information, no action)
- B. Lottery Expenditure Report (For information, no action)
- C. Quarter 1 Budget Report (For information, no action)

**5.05 Report of the Committee on Strategic Planning and Accountability (CSPA) Doug Snyder**

Chair Smith called on Commissioner Snyder to provide a report on the Committee on Strategic Planning and Accountability. Commissioner Snyder displayed a CHE website page highlighting the agency's values and mission, along with a graphic depicting the five-year plan and the Strategy Development and Execution framework. He summarized the initiatives associated with each value and reported that the Committee discussed potential internal and external metrics for the Excellence value. Commissioner Snyder also provided updates on the Inspector General (IG) and House Government Efficiency and Legislative Oversight (GELOC) reports.

Commissioner Snyder stated that the agency is in good standing as it relates to accountability and noted that President Perez meets regularly with the IG to provide updates. Commissioner Snyder demonstrated how to access the reports section of the CHE's website.

**FOR INFORMATION**

- A. Strategic Plan Update (For information, no action)
- B. Accountability (For information, no action)
- C. External Studies Update (For information, no action)

**6. Other Business**

There was no other business to consider.

**7. Executive Session**

Commissioner Smith requested a motion to enter executive session to discuss personnel matters. Commissioners Bryson and Schulze moved and seconded. Commissioner went into executive session. Upon returning to open session, Chair Smith stated that no action was taken during executive session.

**8. End of Business Meeting**

The business meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.