



Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing (CAAL)
Meeting Minutes
May 15, 2025

Members Present

Commissioner Oran Smith
Commissioner Mick Zais

Commissioner Jenni Bryson
Commissioner Doug Snyder

Member Excused

Commissioner Edgar Dyer, Chair

Commission Staff Present

Jessica Berry
Melissa Price
Darnell Holland
Diane McCree
Endé Clark

Kenita Pitts
Matthew Hartenstine
Christopher Glenn
Tracy Solet

Guests

Allison Steadman, Francis Marion University
Beth Bell, Clemson University
Brian Mallory, University of South Carolina
Beaufort
Briana Peele, Clemson University
Christine Knouff, Laurel Institute of Technology
Christopher McMahan, Clemson University
Doug Decker, Laurel Institute of Technology
Erin Paysinger, Lander University
Gibbs Knotts, Coastal Carolina University
James Colbert, Jr., Lander University
Jason Tselentis, Winthrop University
Karen Oremus, Winthrop University
Karin Roof, The Citadel

Lloyd Willis, Lander University
Maddox Johnston, College of Charleston
Mary Mittwede, Laurel Institute of Technology
Michael Whitney, Winthrop University
Pam Steinke, USC Upstate
P.N. Saksena, Winthrop University
Phil Bridgmon, USC Aiken
Rob Essaf, Clemson University
Rosline Sumpter, South Carolina Technical College
System
Sebastian van Delden, Winthrop University
Teresa Burns, Coastal Carolina University
Trena Houpp, University of South Carolina Columbia
Will Carswell, Francis Marion University

All attended either in-person or via Zoom

1. Welcome, Introduction, Quorum

Commissioner Smith convened the meeting at 10:01 a.m. and welcomed all in attendance.

2. Introductions, Quorum, FOIA

Ms. Solet introduced the Commission members and the in-person guests, confirmed a quorum, and announced the meeting was being held in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

3. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Smith called for unanimous consent to approve the meeting agenda with one edit: the removal of agenda item 5, Election of Vice Chair. **With no opposition, item 5 was removed and the remainder of the agenda was approved.**

4. **Approval of Minutes**

Commissioner Smith called for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 17, 2025 meeting. **Commissioner Zais motioned approval and Commissioner Smith called for a vote, which passed unopposed.**

5. **Election of Vice Chair**

Election of the committee vice chair was deferred by unanimous consent.

6. **New Program Proposals**

a. Lander University, B.S. in Management

Commissioner Smith asked for comment from Dr. Berry, who responded the proposal is on the list of priority occupations under Business Management and Administration, and noted the institution is restructuring the undergraduate Business Administration program and establishing this dedicated program. A representative explained the restructuring of the current undergraduate program and how it relates to agenda items 6.a. and 6.b. Discussion was hard regarding the restructuring lessening students' confusion as to what the degree requirements entail and how the Coordinating Council is assisting with the marketing aspect to help students understand the relationship between required programs for certain occupations. The representative summarized item 6.a., and 6.b. simultaneously. Commissioner Zais asked who develops CIP codes, which a representative from another institution answered is the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Commissioner Smith opened the floor for comment. Commissioner Snyder expressed appreciation to the institution and commented on the need for consistency throughout the state with the CIP to SOC codes, further noting various levels of impact surrounding STEM and Accountancy, and how CHE may be able to assist in making sure there is consistency among institutions with this as well as in the use of terminology in the Unified State Plan. Dr. Berry noted NCES and the Fair Labor Statistics have a CIP to SOC Crosswalk available online and explained CIP codes are updated every ten years, which the institutions review and submit updated CIP codes to CHE. Dr. Berry stated the CIP to SOC Crosswalk is used by institutions when they submit proposals and links can be provided to the committee members. It was noted the Coordinating Council for Workforce Development (CCWD) recently asked institutions to review and align program CIP codes to SOC codes and Lightcast software is available for additional SOC information. Commissioner Smith called for any further comment on either of the two similar programs. Hearing none, **Commissioner Smith called for a motion to approve agenda item 6.a. which was made by Commissioner Zais and seconded by Commissioner Bryson. With no further discussion, Commissioner Smith called for a vote, which carried unopposed.**

b. Lander University, B.S. in Marketing

As agenda item 6.b. had been explained in conjunction with the previous agenda item 6.a., **Commissioner Smith called for a motion to approve agenda item 6.b., which was made by Commissioner Zais and seconded by Commissioner Snyder. With no further discussion, Commissioner Smith called for a vote, which carried unopposed.**

c. Clemson University, M.S. in Statistics and Data Science

d. Clemson University, Ph.D. in Statistics and Data Science

Commissioner Smith asked for comment from Dr. Berry on both agenda items 6.c. and 6.d., who responded both proposals are on the list of priority occupations under: Education and Training, Information Technology, Manufacturing, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), Finance, and Marketing, and further have tracks going from the M.S. to the Ph.D., with the M.S. being a stop-out. A representative from the institution summarized agenda items 6.c. and 6.d., and the floor was opened for questions. Commissioner Smith expressed appreciation for the program and noted the endorsement

by BMW. Commissioner Smith asked for and received confirmation the program would contain some machine-based learning, which similar programs at other institutions do not include. The representative explained the course offerings in applied machine learning as well as in theoretical machine learning, which other Statistics programs in the state and in general do not offer. Commissioner Snyder asked how many data scientists are staying in South Carolina. The representative stated no knowledge of the exact percentage, but noted approximately half of his Ph.D. students are staying in the state. Commissioner Zais endorsed statistics and data science noting none of the many other mathematics courses he had taken had practical applications, but Statics and Probability were applicable to virtually everything, which Commissioner Smith agreed. Commissioner Smith called for any further comment on either of the two similar programs. Hearing none, **Commissioner Smith called for a motion to approve agenda item 6.c. which was made by Commissioner Zais and seconded by Commissioner Snyder. With no further discussion, Commissioner Smith called for a vote, which carried unopposed.**

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve agenda item 6.d., which was seconded by Commissioner Bryson. With no further discussion, Commissioner Smith called for a vote, which carried unopposed.

e. Winthrop University, B.A. in Game Design

Commissioner Smith asked for comment from Dr. Berry, who responded the proposal is on the list of priority occupations under Information Technology and gave a brief description of the program proposal. A representative from the institution summarized agenda item 6.e., and the floor was opened for questions. Commissioner Smith asked how common this type of program in South Carolina. The representative explained it is unique in the state. Commissioner Zais asked if the institution or the faculty have relationships with any businesses likely to employ students of the program, which the representative confirmed, naming multiple businesses in the industry, and stated efforts to form contacts with hardware manufactures and to hopefully acquire technology in the classroom for advanced development. Commissioner Zais noted it does not matter how strong a program is if graduates cannot get jobs matching their training and professors need to help students secure internships. Commissioner Smith commended the program as in demand with an outstanding proposal. With no further comment, **Commissioner Smith called for a motion to approve agenda item 6.e. which was made by Commissioner Zais and seconded by Commissioner Bryson. With no further discussion, Commissioner Smith called for a vote, which carried unopposed.**

f. Winthrop University, B.S. in Applied Software Engineering

Commissioner Smith asked for comment from Dr. Berry, who responded the proposal is on the list of priority occupations under Information Technology and gave a brief description of the program proposal. A representative from the institution summarized agenda item 6.f., and the floor was opened for questions. Hearing none, **Commissioner Smith called for a motion to approve agenda item 6.f. which was made by Commissioner Zais and seconded by Commissioner Snyder. With no further discussion, Commissioner Smith called for a vote, which carried unopposed.**

7. **Initial Licensure Proposal**

a. Laurel Institute of Technology, Associate in Specialized Technology in Respiratory Therapy

Commissioner Smith asked for comment from Dr. Berry, who introduced Diane McCree, Senior Licensing Program Manager. Ms. McCree gave a brief overview of the institute and introduced those in attendance. A representative from the institute summarized agenda item 7.a., and the floor was opened for questions. Commissioner Zais inquired as to the accrediting body for the program. The representative explained the program accreditation as well as the institute accreditation. Commissioner Zais asked if the students qualify for

financial aid from the state of South Carolina, which the representative explained students are only eligible for Title IV funding, not state funding from South Carolina, though there may be workforce programs available, if approved. Commissioner Smith asked if the degree is an Associate of Science degree. The representative explained as an occupational degree and not an academic degree, it is a Specialized Associate in Technology degree. Commissioner Bryson asked where the institute is located in Fort Mill, if they are in North Carolina, and if there are any other programs in nearby states. The representative described the location in South Carolina, stated they have no programs in North Carolina, but do in West Virginia and Western Pennsylvania. Discussion was had regarding the choice to come to South Carolina and Commissioner Zais stressed the importance of outreach to potential employers, which the representative acknowledged, explained mandated oversight, and described the vested interest in partnerships with clinical rotation providers. With no further comment, **Commissioner Smith called for a motion to approve agenda item 7.a., which was made by Commissioner Zais and seconded by Commissioner Bryson. With no further discussion, Commissioner Smith called for a vote, which carried unopposed.**

8. REACH Act Module

a. Winthrop University

Commissioner Smith asked for comment from Dr. Berry, who introduced the proposal. A representative from the institution summarized item 8.a., and the floor was opened for questions. Commissioner Smith noted the REACH Act requirement is usually fulfilled by taking a course with a portion dedicated to the various requirements of the Act, and asked if the module would allow compliance without taking the required course. Dr. Berry responded REACH Act modules are not new, noting several institutions have created similar modules which help transfer students meet the requirements. Commissioner Zais asked if any credit hours are awarded, which the representative stated it is zero credit hours as most of the students would have already received academic credit hours for the courses taken, but those courses would not have contained the REACH Act required readings. The module would allow them to read and prove they understand the required readings. Commissioner Smith asked if the module will be online, self-paced, or follow a typical semester calendar. The representative explained it would be online and self-paced. Commissioner Bryson asked how many students the institution is getting from the closure of Limestone College, and the response was approximately 50 students, many of whom are very close to graduation. With no further comment, **Commissioner Smith called for a motion to approve agenda item 8.a., which was made by Commissioner Zais and seconded by Commissioner Bryson. With no further discussion, Commissioner Smith called for a vote, which carried unopposed.**

Dr. Berry expressed appreciation to the Chief Academic Officers who reviewed the REACH Act module on such short notice in order to help students, especially during this transition.

9. Other Business / Discussion

a. Notification Summary Report

Dr. Berry thanked Dr. Price for pulling the information and the report covering March and April 2025 was presented for information purposes. The floor was opened for questions. No discussion was had.

10. Adjournment

With no further business before the Committee, **Commissioner Smith called for a motion to adjourn, which was made by Commissioner Zais and seconded by Commissioner Snyder. Commissioner Smith called for a vote and the motion passed unopposed. The meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.**