



South Carolina
Commission on Higher Education
Access | Affordability | Excellence

Minutes of the Council of Presidents
March 1, 2023
USC Alumni Center
900 Senate Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Council of Presidents Members Present:

Dr. Michael Amiridis, University of South Carolina, Columbia

Dr. Michael Benson, Coastal Carolina University (Virtual)

Dr. Luther (Fred) Carter, Francis Marion University

Dr. James Clements, Clemson University (Virtual)

Dr. Lisa Saladin for Dr. David Cole, Medical University of South Carolina (Virtual)

Dr. Walter Collins, University of South Carolina Lancaster (Virtual)

Dr. April Cone, University of South Carolina, Salkehatchie

Col. Alexander Conyers, South Carolina State University

Dr. Richard Cosentino, Lander University

Dr. Galen DeHay, Tri-County Technical College (Virtual)

Dr. Susan Elkins, University of South Carolina, Palmetto College

Dr. Marilyn Fore, Horry-Georgetown Technical College

Dr. Bennie Harris, University of South Carolina Upstate (Virtual)

Dr. Daniel Heimmermann, University of South Carolina, Aiken

CHE Staff

Dr. Rusty Monhollon, President & Executive Director

Dr. Andrew Hsu, College of Charleston

Dr. Patricia Lee, Williamsburg Technical College

Dr. Randy Lowell, University of South Carolina Union

Dr. Forrest Mahan, Aiken Technical College (Virtual)

Dr. Keith Miller, Greenville Technical College

Dr. Jaime Cooper for Dr. Stacey Moore, York Technical College (Virtual)

Dr. Al Panu, University of South Carolina Beaufort

Dr. Jeff Perez, South Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities

Dr. Kevin Pollock, Central Carolina Technical College

Dr. Ronald Rhames, Midlands Technical College

Dr. Hope Rivers, Piedmont Technical College

Dr. Edward Serna, Winthrop University (Virtual)

Dr. Michael Sonntag, University of South Carolina, Sumter

Dr. Mary Thornley, Trident Technical College

Dr. Walt Tobin, Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College

Dr. Willie Todd, Denmark Technical College

Dr. Kyle Wagner, Northeastern Technical College (Virtual)

Gen. Glenn Walters, The Citadel

Other Guests Present

Dr. Sally Selden, The Citadel

I. Welcome

Chair Fore

Chair Fore called the meeting to order at 11:02 am and welcomed all meeting attendees. Chair Fore acknowledged the Council's purpose to be united in one common cause to promote the value of higher education in the State of South Carolina, to share ideas and to learn from one another.



The meeting agenda was posted on the Commission on Higher Education (CHE) website with proper notice of the meeting. The meeting was held in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). There were no public guests or media present.

II. Approval of Minutes

Chair Fore

Chair Fore introduced the draft minutes for the October 5, 2022, Council of Presidents (COP) meeting, and asked whether there was any discussion. President Rhames made the motion to accept the minutes as drafted. The motion was seconded by President Tobin. The minutes were unanimously approved and the motion carried.

III. Discussion Topics:

Hate Crimes Bill

President Carter

Chair Fore called on President Carter, Francis Marion University, to provide an overview of the Hate Crimes legislation introduced this legislative session. President Carter stated many are upset that South Carolina has not passed a Hate Crimes bill yet and he believes higher education institutions should step forward to endorse legislation. Currently, five versions of hate crime bills have been filed and the one presented at the COP meeting expressed the general concept of hate crimes legislation. President Carter stated it is important for the COP to use their voice to encourage state legislators to pass hate crimes legislation. President Carter does not recommend all members to send or sign a letter of endorsement, but rather suggests the Chair send a letter on behalf of the COP. He asked if there were any objections to his proposal.

Chair Fore thanked President Carter for his request and subsequent motion for the COP to endorse the passage of Hate Crimes legislation by sending a letter from the Chair on behalf of the COP to the House and Senate leaders. President Tobin seconded the motion and the floor was open for discussion. Colonel Conyers and President Hsu voiced their support for the motion and President Hsu asked for an explanation for South Carolina's reticence for not passing Hate Crime legislation. President Carter offered a brief explanation; and following no more discussion, moved forward with the motion as stated. President Miller seconded the motion. Unanimous approval resulted from the vote.

Chair Fore stated the motion carried and will gladly write a letter on behalf of the Council of Presidents to encourage State legislators to pass a Hate Crimes Act this legislative term.

Higher Education Permanent Improvement Capital Projects Bill

President Monhollon

Chair Fore called on President Monhollon, South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE), to present on the status of the Higher Education Permanent Improvement Projects bill. President Monhollon stated the Council of Presidents discussed the capital approval process at length at the October 5, 2022 meeting where the Capital Approval Process Review Committee presented their report and recommendations. The Council of Presidents' two subcommittees shared the recommendations with legislative liaisons as well as the Office of the State Engineer.

Currently, Senator Talley, District 12, introduced General Bill S. 314 relating to higher education institutions and threshold amounts for permanent improvement projects. Permanent improvement projects over \$5 million for research institutions and \$2.5 million for all other institutions must be submitted to and approved by CHE and the Joint Bond Review Committee (JBRC). The bill was referred to the Committee on Education. President Monhollon reported Senator Peeler, District 14 and Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee has objections to the bill so it has not been presented to the Senate floor for debate. President Monhollon is unclear if the bill will be presented to the full Senate.

The floor was opened for questions and comments. President Hsu suggested the presidents residing in District 14 with a strong relationship with Senator Peeler reach out to him.

President Clements offered to follow up with Senator Peeler, and per Chair Fore's request, will report to the COP on the outcome of the conversation.

Transfer Recommendation Report

President Monhollon

Chair Fore called on President Monhollon to report on the 2023 South Carolina State Transfer and Articulation Action Plan, which was emailed to all participants. President Monhollon reported on the history of the plan, stating in August 2021, all higher education institutions in South Carolina were invited to join the ad hoc task-force facilitated by CHE, the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO) and the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education (JNGI). For nearly a year, more than 30 key South Carolina transfer-related personnel from the state's two-year technical colleges, public four-year colleges and universities and independent colleges analyzed transfer and articulation systems and policies in the state, resulting in a statewide action plan to maximize transfer student success. The Plan supports CHE's *Ascend 60X30* strategy to increase higher education attainment in the state to 60 percent by 2030.

Recommendations are:

1. Appoint institutional transfer liaisons at each participating institution and convene regular statewide meetings for transfer policy development, collaboration and professional development.
2. Develop and manage a statewide data system and dashboard and provide CHE the authority to collect data.
3. Convene a stakeholder group comprised of representatives from two- and four-year institutions to review and address transfer articulation resources and needs to include:
 - a. Evaluate and assess current transfer and articulation platforms and portals.
 - b. Develop a matrix to standardize courses for equivalent, transferable, degree-benefiting credit.
 - c. Develop a process for common general education learning outcomes to supersede course equivalencies.
 - d. Establish common standards to evaluate and award credit consistently.
 - e. Negotiate a statewide articulation among SCTCS, four-year public institutions and participating SCICU to recognize the Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degrees as fulfilling Baccalaureate general education requirements.
4. Inform students about transfer options and provide resources that provide additional transfer information.
5. Develop a plan to facilitate, implement and incentivize reverse transfer.
6. Request state funding to establish student transfer scholarships and a statewide awareness campaign for transfer.

President Monhollon stated a copy of the report was sent to state legislators. A provision for transfer is included in House Bill H.4060, which will be up for debate. Similar to last year, the proposed legislation guarantees students the transfer of 60 credit hours and junior status, as well as ensures courses that transfer are equivalent.

Per President Monhollon, the Transfer and Articulation Action Plan is a great opportunity for South Carolina to help students and may be expanded to include the military community. The goal is to benefit students by decreasing the amount of time to graduation and to decrease the cost of education.

The floor was opened for discussion. President Clements asked for clarification of recommendation three of the action plan and President Monhollon explained the stakeholder group will discuss what transfer and articulation agreements will look like in South Carolina. The stakeholders will also determine the goals, objectives and timeline, as well as resolve transfer issues and challenges. Chancellor Panu inquired if the task-force looked at other states for best practices; and if so, did any research point to a particular state. President Monhollon called on Dr. Perez, whom participated on the task-force. Dr. Perez stated South Carolina is one of four states participating in the national pilot initiative. Representatives from the other three states, North Carolina, Colorado and Washington will come together to see what each other has developed. The South Carolina ad hoc committee, with great sensitivity, looked at other states to find some are governed by a Board of Regents. For South Carolina, the CHE has been identified as the 'center

of gravity.’ In response to President Carter’s concern regarding independent colleges’ willingness to participate, Dr. Perez stated the majority of independent colleges and universities are supportive of the measure.

Chancellor Heimmermann provided insight on Texas General Education Core Curriculum, which included provisions for reverse transfer. President Tobin remarked on data for credits earned and accepted in addition to issues related to how they are awarded. He also stated, aside from recommendations two and six of the action plan, current transfer and articulation procedures are already in place. President Walters recommended the stakeholder group determine a set of governing principles, citing “do no harm,” and questioned the timeline for the State Transfer and Articulation Action Plan. President Monhollon stated the realistic expectation is greater than one year but the conversation needs to start now. Chancellor Elkins stated Tennessee mandated transfer legislation and she recommended it’s best to figure out what works prior to a mandate from the state, knowing the basic tenets of transfer are currently covered.

After much discussion with comments made by Presidents Fore, Walters, Carter, Hsu, and Monhollon, the consensus is the COP will move forward with the South Carolina State Transfer and Articulation Action Plan, focusing on the transfer of lower division courses and being careful to acknowledge the subtleties of each institution for the transfer of upper division courses.

Statewide Education and Workforce Development Act (H.3726)

President Monhollon

Chair Fore called on President Monhollon to report on the Statewide Education and Workforce Development Act (H 3726). President Monhollon stated G. Murrell Smith, Speaker of the House, introduced the bill and it was referred to the Committee on Labor, Commerce and Industry. Last fall, an ad hoc committee convened for the purpose of workforce development improvement. General Bill H. 3726 is an omnibus bill with the intent to bring all entities of workforce development under one umbrella. The Statewide Education and Workforce Development will create the Office of Statewide Workforce Development (SWDC), which will consolidate, align, and coordinate all publicly funded workforce development dollars in this state. It will be housed under the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW). A statewide coordinator, Director of the SWDC, will be hired by the Executive Director of DEW for centralized oversight.

The bill also transfers the Coordinating Council for Workforce Development (CCWD) from the Department of Commerce to DEW. Currently, Presidents Clements, Mikota and Hardee serve on the CCWD, which is comprised of 27 members. Under the proposed Act, a newly created Executive Committee will be selected from the current CCWD. The CCWD and the SWDC are charged with establishing a ten-year labor participation rate goal; establishing a ten-year goal for the number of South Carolinians who possess a high-quality credential or postsecondary degree; and studying and making recommendations to address barriers to labor participation, such as childcare and transportation.

The SWDC will oversee regional education centers, which will coordinate and facilitate the delivery of information, resources and services to students, educators, employers and the community for career planning, training, compliance and accountability.

President Monhollon expects the bill to come before the full South Carolina House of Representatives. He asked if there were any questions or comments, which there were none. President Monhollon mentioned the Statewide Education and Workforce Development Act will affect three Council of Presidents’ members, noting one president representing the State’s research, four-year and technical college institutions will be selected by their peers or appointed to serve on the Coordinating Council for Workforce Development and/or the advisory boards for the regional education centers.

Higher Education Faculty Compensation

President Carter

Chair Fore called on President Carter who voiced concerns regarding the costs of faculty compensation and its relevance to the House Ways and Means Committee Fiscal Year 2023-24 State Government Budget. President Carter said the budget continues to include a higher education tuition mitigation initiative in which additional recurring funds are distributed among the state’s institutions of higher education. The public two- and four-year institutions must comply with provisions to freeze in-state tuition and mandatory fees for all in-state undergraduate students to retain the appropriations.

President Carter noted one of the benefits of tuition mitigation is not raising the cost of tuition; however, the disadvantage is the appropriated funds are used for legislatively mandated pay increases, increased

healthcare costs and increased retirement funding. In essence, the appropriations are decreased significantly for discretionary spending due to the need to cover employment expenses. In the state of South Carolina, the legislature earmarks funds to cover increases for employment expenses for state agencies, but not for institutions of Higher Education. President Carter stated Francis Marion University had 18 percent of tuition mitigation funds available for discretionary spending. The delegates in his service area were surprised and not aware of that outcome. President Carter is concerned the Council of Presidents is not doing enough to educate their legislators on tuition mitigation.

The floor was opened for discussion. Presidents Hsu, Thornley, Cosentino and Chancellor Panu remarked on their institutions' appropriations, expenses and remaining funding, if any. The consensus is, on average, an institution can expect to see 16 to 18 percent of tuition mitigation appropriations for spending on salary increases for faculty, which is not adequate. President Thornley commented the issue may not be tuition mitigation but the fact that higher education is not treated the same as other state agencies. Her institution funds provided pay increases to state employees as well as non-funded employees at the college's expense. President Carter reiterated that tuition mitigation is beneficial but higher education needs funding to reduce the burden of mandated expenses. President Cosentino stressed the importance of educating legislators and the newly appointed legislative committee members on this topic.

Due to the perimeters of CHE and the purview of financial well-being of the institutions of higher education, President Monhollon will discuss the issue with his team. President Carter recommended the COP's Chief Business Officers run the costs of tuition mitigation to be prepared for timely discussions with legislators.

Schedule Date for Next Meeting

Chair Fore

Chair Fore recommended scheduling the next Council of Presidents meeting on Wednesday, May 24, 2023.

IV. Old Business

Chair Fore asked if there was any old business to discuss. Consensus was none.

V. New Business

Announcements:

President Monhollon stated CHE is undergoing review by the House Legislative Oversight Committee. A survey was posted last week on its website and the COP is encouraged to respond. President Monhollon welcomed any COP members to testify on behalf of CHE if they are available March 7. He said those interested would register with the House Legislative Oversight Committee.

President Monhollon encouraged the COP to respond to GetConnectedSC's survey in an effort to shape broadband internet initiatives across the state. The survey is posted on CHE's website and is intended to capture the barriers to internet adoption of unserved and underserved communities. Gathered information will shape a five-year broadband equity and access plan for South Carolina. President Monhollon asked the COP to encourage their campuses to complete the survey.

Chair Fore noted at the next meeting, a new chair from one of the research institutions, for the 2023-2024 academic year will be elected.

The COP is asked to think about agenda topics for future meetings. A survey will be sent, similar to the one provided by Chancellor Panu last year.

VI. Adjournment

The Council of Presidents meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m. Chair Fore expressed appreciation for their attendance and participation.