

**South Carolina Commission on Higher Education
Darla Moore School of Business
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC**

**Committee on Access & Equity and Student Services
Minutes of the Meeting
November 3, 2005
2:30 p.m.**

Commission Members Present

Dan Ravenel, Chair
Dr. Bettie Horne
Ms. Cynthia Mostellar

Staff Present

Dr. Karen Woodfaulk
Ms. Sherry Hubbard
Ms. Sandra Rhyne
Ms. Karen Wham
Ms. Laverne Sanders
Ms. Julie Carullo

Guests

Mr. Charlie FitzSimons-S.C. Independent Colleges & Universities

Dr. Cheryl Cox-State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education

1. Approval of Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dan Ravenel. The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed by the Committee. Dr. Bettie Horne motioned for the minutes to be accepted and Ms. Cindy Mosteller seconded.

Dr. Karen Woodfaulk provided an overview of the issues under consideration in the State Scholarship and Grants Report.

2. Lottery Tuition Assistance Scholarship

Ms. Karen Wham gave an overview of the Lottery Tuition Assistance Program (LTAP). Ms. Wham stated that the program is divided into three models: a flat award amount of \$840.00 (Model 1); review funding for dually enrolled students (Model 2); eliminate certain students from the program (Model 3).

Mr. Ravenel asked how many students receive LTAP. Ms. Wham responded that 33,219 students in 04/05 received LTAP. She stated that approximately 50 percent were part-time. The Committee discussed the three models.

Mr. Ravenel stated that Model 2 is achievable. Ms. Wham reported that Model 3 is designed to cap the award for students who had an EFC above \$5,000. The EFC for the Pell Grant Program is capped at \$3,850. Ms. Cindy Mosteller asked about the goals of LTAP. Dr. Woodfaulk explained that one goal is to provide assistance for retraining and another is to provide assistance for students who would otherwise not be able to afford to

go to college. Ms. Mosteller asked what was the deciding factor in student retention. Dr. Woodfaulk responded that in light of the student population there could be a variety of reasons why students persists in college. She explained that it is not known if students intend to get a degree, a certificate, or simply take one course.

3. SC Need-Based Grant

Ms. Sandra Rhyne provided information regarding the Need-based Grant Program. Ms. Rhyne stated that the first item under consideration is establishing a flat award amount for the two-and four-year institutions (Model 1). Ms. Rhyne stated that currently the Need-based Grant is the only state financial aid that is not transferable between the state's higher education institutions. She stated that establishing a flat award amount would allow students to transfer the Grant between schools. Ms. Mosteller asked if this would save grant funding. Ms. Rhyne stated it would save 2.6 million dollars at four year institutions and \$662,000 at two year institutions. Dr. Woodfaulk said the neediest students may not receive a Need-based Grant. She stated a student could be needier at one institution than at another institution. Dr. Woodfaulk stated that there are 48,000 students in the State who are Pell recipients and the State has more needy students than it can currently fund.

Ms. Rhyne noted that in Model 2 there is not cost savings to the State. This model will ensure that the neediest students at each institution would be awarded the Need-based Grant by giving Pell Grant eligible students priority.

The Committee decided not to pursue Model 3 in regards to establishing a maximum Expected Family Contribution for the LTAP.

4. Palmetto Fellows Scholarship

The Committee agreed to accept an increase in the annual award amount. However, the Committee requested the fiscal impacts of increasing the award amount from \$6,700 to \$8,500 and from \$6,700 to \$10,000. Ms. Sherry Hubbard then shared a copy of a survey she will mail to the 2005 college graduates. The Committee discussed the survey and suggested several changes. Some of the changes included: 1) in question #2, add the location of the university; 2) combine questions #3 and #4 so that students can indicate how much money they receive by each type of aid; 3) add a question about how important financial aid was in their decision to attend graduate school; and, 4) add a question about whether they plan to reside in South Carolina after graduate school.

5. LIFE Scholarship

Ms. Rhyne reported that 28,433 students that received the LIFE Scholarship this year. She said there were about 11,000 freshmen. Ms. Mosteller commented that the main issue is to have retention of college students rather than scholarship recipients. Mr. Ravenel stated that CHE could make recommendations for the LIFE to require two of the three criteria at 3.25 GPA, top 30% of the class and 1100 on the SAT.

6. **HOPE**

Ms. Mosteller commented that she was amazed at the retention rate--not of the scholarship--but of those who stayed in college even after they lost the scholarship. Mr. Ravenel stated that the Commission can report to the legislators that the HOPE Scholarship is successful because students stay in college at a higher rate than the general freshmen population. The Committee also requested the fiscal impact of the award amount be increased from \$3,000 to \$3,500.

The Committee requested that the staff revise the issues under consideration based on the comments made at today's meeting. Once the revisions have been made, the document will need to be e-mailed to the Committee member and guests present.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laverne Sanders