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MEMORANDUM

To: Members, Advisory Committee on Academic Programs

From: Dr. Gail M. Morrison, Director of Academic Affairs and Licensing

Report on Admission Standards for First-Time Entering Freshmen
FY 2008-09

Act 629 of 1988, *The Cutting Edge*, requires that with respect to admission standards at the public colleges and universities:

- In consultation and coordination with the public institutions of higher learning in this state, the State Commission on Higher Education shall ensure that minimal admissions standards are maintained by the institutions.

- The Commission, with the institutions, shall monitor the effect of compliance with admission prerequisites that are effective in fall, 1988 (Section 59-104-10(A)).

In April 1988, the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs adopted a procedure that requires each institution to report annually on applications, acceptances, and enrollment and to specify the minimum approximate SAT score (combined math and verbal) that is required of most applicants for admission as freshmen.

In Act 359 of 1996, the General Assembly reiterated the importance of reporting admissions standards. Section 59-103-45(3) again directed the Commission to review minimum undergraduate admission standards.

Attached is the annual report on 2008 admission standards for first-time entering freshmen (**Attachment 1**) at South Carolina public senior colleges and universities. This document summarizes the results of five different reports related to admission standards and to measures of achievement of first-time entering freshmen for the fall of 2008.

The Report is presented in five parts:

Part I: Fall 2008 Applications, Acceptances, and Actual Enrollments
Part II: Fall 2008 Data Related to High School Course Prerequisites
Part III: Fall 2008 SAT and ACT Scores
Part IV: Fall 2008 Provisionally Admitted Students
Part V: Fall 2009 Minimum Admissions Requirements

The data for Parts II-IV, and the actual enrollment data included in Part I, were electronically supplied by the institutions via the Commission on Higher Education's Management Information System (CHEMIS).

Recommendations

The staff recommends that the Committee approve the following:

1. Although there was an increase in first-time freshmen meeting all the high school course prerequisites for public college admission, the senior institutions whose compliance rate falls below the state average of 95.2 percent should focus on efforts to ensure increasing compliance, particularly in the science area, thereby enhancing student preparation for success in college and making majors in science, engineering, and technology more likely for entering students.

2. This report should be transmitted to the South Carolina Department of Education and the chairs of the House and Senate Education Committees.

Attachment 1

ANNUAL REPORT ON ADMISSION STANDARDS FOR FIRST-TIME ENTERING FRESHMEN, FALL 2008 SOUTH CAROLINA PUBLIC SENIOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

This document reviews the results of five different reports related to admission standards and measures of achievement for first-time entering freshmen. The results are presented in five parts:

- **Part I:** Fall 2008 Applications, Acceptances, and Actual Enrollments
- **Part II:** Fall 2008 Data related to high school course prerequisites
- **Part III:** Fall 2008 SAT and ACT scores
- **Part IV:** Fall 2008 Data related to provisional students
- **Part V:** Fall 2009 Minimum admission standards.

Part I: Applications, Acceptances, and Actual Enrollments

In Fall 2008, 71,317 applications were received for admission as first-time freshmen at the public senior colleges and universities. Of these, 43,817 or 61.4% met the minimum admission standards at one or more of the public senior institutions and were offered admission to the institution. Of those who were offered admission, 15,902 or 36.3% of applicants actually enrolled.

Table 1 on the following page shows the number and percent of students who applied, were accepted, and actually enrolled at each public senior institution.

TABLE 1 APPLICATIONS, ACCEPTANCES, AND ACTUAL ENROLLMENTS S.C. PUBLIC SENIOR INSTITUTIONS, FALL 2008					
Institutions	Number of Applications[1]	Number of Applicants Offered Admission[1]	Percent of Applicants Offered Admission	Number who Actually Enrolled	Percent Accepted and Enrolled
Research Institutions					
Clemson	15,542	8,355	53.8%	2,923	35.0%
USC-Columbia	17,015	9,953	58.5%	3,859	38.8%
Sub Total	32,557	18,308	56.2%	6,782	37.0%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities					
The Citadel	2,024	1,521	75.1%	607	39.9%
Coastal Carolina	7,514	5,215	69.4%	1,655	31.7%
Coll. Of Charleston	9,964	6,402	64.3%	1,956	30.6%
Francis Marion	2,689	1,657	61.6%	681	41.1%
Lander	2,112	992	47.0%	555	55.9%
S.C. State	4,204	3,169	75.4%	966	30.5%
USC-Aiken	2,509	1,327	52.9%	594	44.8%
USC-Beaufort	1,133	693	61.2%	303	43.7%
USC-Upstate	2,546	1,661	65.2%	728	43.8%
Winthrop	4,065	2,872	70.7%	1,075	37.4%
Sub Total	38,760	25,509	65.8%	9,120	35.8%
Total Sr. Institutions	71,317	43,817	61.4%	15,902	36.3%

[1]Reported manually by the institutions.

South Carolina State University offered admission to the largest percentage of applicants, 75.4%, followed by The Citadel at 75.1%, and Winthrop University at 70.7%. Coastal Carolina, College of Charleston, Francis Marion, USC-Beaufort, and USC-Upstate offered admission ranging from 60% to 69%. USC-Columbia, USC-Aiken, Clemson University and Lander University offered admission to the lowest percentage of applicants at 47% to 59%. Lander University enrolled the largest percentage (55.9%) of students who were offered admission. The remaining institutions had enrollment percentages that ranged from 30% to 45%. The most "selective" institution, based on the ratio of applicants offered admission to the number of applications, is Lander University (47% offered admission). USC-Aiken follows with just over 52% offered admission. Despite anecdotal complaints about "too high" admission standards, no public institution has "very selective" admissions standards, including Clemson and USC-Columbia.

Table 2 provides a five-year overview of applications, acceptances, and actual enrollments. The number of applicants has increased by 16,771 over the last five years, and the number enrolled has increased by 823 students. However, the percentage of applicants who were accepted and enrolled **has decreased** by approximately 4.6%. This

decrease may suggest that, as a whole, the public senior institutions are becoming somewhat more selective in offering admissions to students, but that, in turn, students who are offered admission are becoming more selective in choosing where they wish to attend. In addition, the relatively high cost of tuition may be influencing students' choices.

TABLE 2 Applications, Acceptances, and Actual Enrollments S.C. Public Senior Institutions Five Year Comparison					
Year	Number of Applications	Number of Applicants Offered Admission	Percent of Applicants Offered Admission	Number who Actually Enrolled	Percent Accepted and Enrolled
2004	54,546	36,906	70.5%	15,079	40.9%
2005	57,938	39,068	67.4%	15,728	40.3%
2006	61,539	38,907	63.2%	15,635	40.2%
2007	65,709	40,484	61.6%	16,168	39.9%
2008	71,317	43,817	61.4%	15,902	36.3%

Part II: Extent to Which 2008 Freshmen Met the High School Course Prerequisites

Since Fall 1988, public senior colleges and universities in South Carolina have required that applicants for freshmen admission (who graduated from high school in 1988 or subsequent years) must have completed certain high school courses before being admitted. The required courses include the following:

1. **Four units of English**: At least two units must have strong grammar and composition components, at least one must be in English literature, and at least one must be in American literature. Completion of College Preparatory English I, II, III, and IV will meet this criterion.
2. **Three units of Mathematics**: These units include Algebra I (for which Applied Mathematics I and II may count together as a substitute if a student successfully completes Algebra II), Algebra II, and Geometry. A fourth higher-level mathematics course is strongly recommended. The fourth course should be selected from among algebra III/trigonometry, pre-calculus, calculus, statistics, or discrete mathematics.
3. **Three units of Laboratory Science**: Two units must be taken in two different fields and selected from among biology, chemistry, or physics. The third unit may be from the same field as one of the first two units (biology, chemistry, or physics) or from any laboratory science for which biology and/or chemistry is a prerequisite. Courses in earth science, general physical science, or introductory or general environmental science for which biology and/or chemistry is not a prerequisite will not meet this requirement. It is strongly recommended that

students take physical science (taught as a laboratory science) as a prerequisite to the three required units of laboratory science outlined in the section.

4. **Two units of the same foreign language**.
5. **Three units of social science:** One unit of U.S. History is required; a half unit of Economics and a half unit in Government are strongly recommended.
6. **Four units of electives**: Four college preparatory units must be taken from at least three different fields selected from among Computer Science, English, Fine Arts, Foreign Languages, Humanities, Laboratory Science (excluding earth science, general physical science, general environmental science or other introductory science courses for which biology and/or chemistry is not a prerequisite), Mathematics above the level of Algebra II, and Social Sciences. It is suggested that one unit be in Computer Science which includes programming (i.e., not just keyboarding) and one unit in Fine Arts (appreciation of, history , or performance).
7. **One unit of physical education or ROTC.**

NOTE: Each institution may make exceptions in admitting 1.) students who do not meet all of the prerequisites, limited to those individual cases in which the failure to meet one or more prerequisites is due to circumstances beyond the reasonable control of the student or 2.) students who have taken the Tech Prep (Applied Academics) courses rather than the required college preparatory curriculum described above and who meet all other institutional admissions criteria.

The required high school course prerequisites have been changed for students who will be college freshmen in Fall 2011. The changes require students to take four units of mathematics, one unit of fine arts, and at least one elective.

As shown in **Table 3**, although the proportion of all applicable first-time freshmen meeting all of the prerequisites increased from 94.9% in 2007 to 95.2% in 2008, the percentage of students meeting all of the prerequisites is still below the 1999 average of 98.15%. This decrease is attributable to the continued low percentage at USC-Beaufort since it became a four-year institution and all students rather than merely “baccalaureate ready” students were factored into the data. Additionally, other fluctuations of concern occur at Francis Marion, Lander and USC-Upstate at the four-year institutions.

TABLE 3 Percent of Applicable[1] First-Time Freshmen Meeting High School Course Prerequisites In-State and Out-of-State						
Institutions	**2006 Applicable Freshmen**	**2006 Percent Meeting Prerequisites**	**2007 Applicable Freshmen**	**2007 Percent Meeting Prerequisites**	**2008 Applicable Freshmen**	**2008 Percent Meeting Prerequisites**
Research Institutions						
Clemson	2,812	98.8%	2,762	99.7%	2,923	99.5%
USC-Columbia	3,624	95.3%	3,642	96.0%	3,774	95.5%
Sub Total	6,436	96.8%	6,404	97.6%	6,697	97.2%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities						
The Citadel	538	88.8%	621	89.0%	607	90.9%
Coastal Carolina	1,459	94.5%	1,645	92.3%	1,640	97.0%
College of Charleston	1,962	99.2%	2,062	99.2%	1,949	97.8%
Francis Marion	797	94.7%	779	95.5%	681	93.1%
Lander	580	80.7%	433	91.7%	535	88.2%
SC State	881	82.5%	1,214	95.3%	966	97.9%
USC-Aiken	652	89.6%	617	84.1%	582	93.8%
USC-Beaufort	213	81.7%	276	72.5%	288	78.8%
USC-Upstate	769	87.4%	800	93.9%	683	91.7%
Winthrop	1174	93.4%	1,052	90.4%	1,051	92.8%
Sub Total	9,025	91.7%	9,499	93.0%	8,982	93.8%
Total Sr. Institutions	15,461	93.9%	15,903	94.9%	15,679	95.3%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC						
USC-Lancaster[2]	58	100.0%	91	96.7%	101	83.2%
USC-Salkehatchie[2]	18	94.4%	0	0%	14	100.0%
USC-Sumter[2]	70	98.6%	98	100.0%	100	98.0%
USC-Union[2]	17	100.0%	15	100.0%	18	100.0%
Sub Total USC Two-Year	163	98.8%	204	98.5%	233	91.8%
Grand Total	15,624	93.9%	16,107	94.9%	15,912	95.2%

[1]Not applicable to foreign students, GED students, and students who graduated prior to 1988.

[2]At the USC two-year campuses, the prerequisites are applicable only to those students classified by the institution as baccalaureate-ready and accepted as such.

Institutional Issues

The lowest compliance rate is shown by USC-Beaufort (78.8%). USC-Beaufort has continued to have a low compliance rate, but it steadily increased after becoming a four-year institution in Fall 2004 and showed a 12.8% increase in compliance between 2005 and 2006; a decrease of 9.2% from 2006 to 2007; and an increase of 6.4% between 2007 and 2008. In response to a staff inquiry, an official at USC-Beaufort stated that the university allows some flexibility in accepting students without the core requirements. For example, the official explained that the high schools require physical science, yet the university cannot accept it. The university also allows flexibility with the electives. According to the official, the university is not going to deny admission to a student simply because the student did not take three different electives. All exceptions are made by judgments of the university's faculty and staff; however, university representatives are communicating with counselors in their area to stress the importance of three laboratory sciences and a variety of electives and will continue to do so. University representatives will also make sure they discuss this issue at all events and at private high school visits throughout the state. Furthermore, the official stated that out-of-state students are not held accountable for the South Carolina core requirements if they meet their state's high school graduation requirements. Because of this policy, the compliance rate for out-of-state students in 2008 (**Table 3B**) is 63.1%, whereas the compliance rate for in-state students is 83.4% (**Table 3A**).

The College of Charleston's compliance rate decreased from 99.2% in 2007 to 97.8% in 2008. However, this decrease is still above the 2008 average of 95.2%.

Francis Marion University's compliance rate decreased from 95.5% to 93.1%. Thirty-seven out of 47 students (79%) who did not meet the prerequisites did not meet the lab science requirement.

Lander University's compliance rate decreased from 91.7% to 88.2%. Of the 78 students who did not meet the prerequisites, 43 students (55%) did not meet the lab science requirement. Lander University implemented a plan of action to improve its compliance rate and showed improvement as a result of this plan in 2007.

USC-Upstate's compliance rate also decreased as it went from 93.9% in 2007 to 91.7% in 2008. Of the 72 students who did not meet the prerequisites, 50 (69%) did not meet the lab science requirement.

Given the fact that in 2001 institutions agreed to require a third lab science, a dip in the compliance rate was to be expected. By 2008, it is reasonable to expect that students would be improving their compliance with the new prerequisite, and in general that is happening throughout the system.

Coastal Carolina (97.0%), displayed a downward trend (94.5% to 92.3%) from 2006 to 2007, but showed a significantly increased compliance in 2008 (97.0%). South Carolina State University also showed an increase in compliance from 82.5% in 2006 to 95.3% in 2007 and 97.9 % in 2008. In response to a staff inquiry in 2006, South Carolina State University submitted a report on reasons for declining compliance and a plan of action to increase compliance in July 2006. At that time, officials at South Carolina State University stated that of the provisional students, 58% were missing the second foreign language, 39% were taking Tech Prep math courses instead of the required Algebra I and II, and 21% were taking physical science, earth science, and general science instead of the laboratory sciences. A representative from South Carolina State University responded to a staff inquiry that the strategies in the plan of action submitted in July 2006 were not fully implemented. The strategies were being revised and were to be implemented in Fall 2008. South Carolina State University hired an Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management and established a campus-wide committee to ensure the implementation of the plan of action, which may be responsible for the increase in 2008.

The percent of applicable first-time freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites is broken down further into "In State Only" **(Table 3A**) and "Out-of-State Only" **(Table 3B)** to determine if out-of-state students were responsible for the overall decrease from 1999 in the percentage of first-time freshmen meeting the high school course prerequisites.

As **Table 3A** and **Table 3B** show, the decrease in compliance reported in **Table 3** for The Citadel can be attributed to its out-of-state students. At The Citadel, 97.9% of in-state, first-time freshmen meet high school course prerequisites, compared to only 86.3% of out-of-state, first-time freshmen.

Likewise, the low compliance rates demonstrated by Lander, USC-Aiken, USC-Beaufort, USC-Upstate and Winthrop are partly due to out-of-state students as the percentage of in-state, first-time freshmen who meet high school course prerequisites is higher than the percentage of out-of-state, first-time freshmen meeting these requirements at those schools. However, at Francis Marion University, the low compliance rate is attributed to its in-state students. At Francis Marion, 97.1% of out-of-state, first-time freshmen meet high school course prerequisites, compared to only 92.9% of in-state, first-time freshmen.

Table 3A shows that four institutions (College of Charleston, Francis Marion, Lander, and USC-Upstate) report a decrease in their compliance rate for in-state, first-time freshmen for 2008 ranging from 1.5 to 4.8%.

As **Table 3B** shows, seven institutions improved their compliance rate for out-of-state students in 2008. Francis Marion (+15%), USC-Aiken (+27.53%), and USC-

Beaufort (+11.2%) showed the greatest improvement. However, despite this improvement, six of the ten comprehensive teaching institutions report a compliance rate for out-of-state students below the average of 94.0% for all institutions, ranging from 63.1% to 88.2%, and all six are below the average of 92.9% for this sector.

TABLE 3A

Percent of Applicable[1] First-Time Freshmen Meeting High School Course Prerequisites In State Only (GEO-Origin = SC)

Institutions	2006 Applicable Freshmen	2006 Percent Meeting Prerequisites	2007 Applicable Freshmen	2007 Percent Meeting Prerequisites	2008 Applicable Freshmen	2008 Percent Meeting Prerequisites
Research Institutions						
Clemson	1,884	99.2%	1,819	99.9%	1,828	99.8%
USC-Columbia	2,252	98.0%	2,115	97.8%	2,194	97.5%
Sub Total	4,136	98.5%	3,934	98.8%	4,022	98.6%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities						
The Citadel	235	96.6%	255	97.6%	243	97.9%
Coastal Carolina	633	97.9%	772	96.1%	748	97.7%
College of Charleston	1,008	99.5%	1,191	99.6%	1,067	98.1%
Francis Marion	747	96.0%	751	96.0%	646	92.9%
Lander	545	81.1%	395	94.2%	492	89.4%
SC State	693	82.8%	955	96.0%	673	97.3%
USC-Aiken	621	90.8%	566	86.2%	531	94.4%
USC-Beaufort	185	83.2%	222	77.5%	223	83.4%
USC-Upstate	728	87.8%	739	94.2%	638	92.0%
Winthrop	1042	95.1%	936	91.7%	883	94.9%
Sub Total	6,437	92.1%	6,782	94.4%	6,144	94.2%
Total Sr. Institutions	10,573	94.6%	10,716	96.0%	10,166	95.9%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC						
USC-Lancaster[2]	58	100.0%	87	96.6%	97	83.5%
USC-Salkehatchie[2]	18	94.4%	0	0%	14	100.0%
USC-Sumter[2]	70	98.6%	93	100.0%	95	97.9%
USC-Union[2]	17	100.0%	15	100.0%	18	100.0%
Sub Total USC Two-Year	163	98.8%	195	98.5%	224	92.0%
Grand Total	10,736	94.7%	10,911	96.0%	10,390	95.9%

[1]Not applicable to foreign students, GED students, and students who graduated prior to 1988.

[2]At the USC two-year campuses, the prerequisites are applicable only to those students classified by the institution as baccalaureate-ready and accepted as such.

TABLE 3B Percent of Applicable[1] First-Time Freshmen Meeting High School Course Prerequisites Out-of-State Only (GEO-Origin not = SC)						
Institutions	**2006 Applicable Freshmen**	**2006 Percent Meeting Prerequisites**	**2007 Applicable Freshmen**	**2007 Percent Meeting Prerequisites**	**2008 Applicable Freshmen**	**2008 Percent Meeting Prerequisites**
Research Institutions						
Clemson	928	98.0%	943	99.5%	1,095	98.9%
USC-Columbia	1,456	85.6%	1,527	93.5%	1,580	92.7%
Sub Total	2,384	90.4%	2,470	95.7%	2,675	95.2%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities						
The Citadel	303	82.8%	365	83.3%	364	86.3%
Coastal Carolina	826	91.9%	873	88.9%	892	96.4%
College of Charleston	964	97.9%	871	98.7%	882	97.4%
Francis Marion	50	76.0%	28	82.1%	35	97.1%
Lander	35	74.3%	28	89.3%	43	74.4%
SC State	188	81.4%	259	92.7%	293	99.3%
USC-Aiken	49	40.8%	51	60.8%	51	88.2%
USC-Beaufort	40	50.0%	54	51.9%	65	63.1%
USC-Upstate	65	50.8%	61	90.2%	45	86.7%
Winthrop	142	73.9%	116	80.2%	168	81.5%
Sub Total	2,662	88.2%	2,706	90.0%	2,838	92.9%
Total Sr. Institutions	5,046	89.3%	5,176	92.7%	5,513	94.0%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC						
USC-Lancaster[2]	10	0.0%	4	100.0%	4	75.0%
USC-Salkehatchie[2]	4	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0%
USC-Sumter[2]	4	0.0%	5	100.0%	5	100.0%
USC-Union[2]	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Sub Total USC Two-Year	18	0.0%	9	100.0%	9	88.9%
Grand Total	5,064	89.0%	5,185	92.7%	5,522	94.0%

[1]Not applicable to foreign students, GED students, and students who graduated prior to 1988.

[2]At the USC two-year campuses, the prerequisites are applicable only to those students classified by the institution as baccalaureate-ready and accepted as such.

Part III: SAT and ACT Scores as Indicators of Academic Preparation, Fall 2008

Act 629 of 1988, *The Cutting Edge*, and Act 359 of 1996 require public senior colleges and universities in South Carolina to report annually to the Commission on the admissions standards for first-time entering freshmen students. Act 359 also requires that the Commission review admissions standards. This report includes the average scores for

all first-time entering freshmen, including those admitted under the regular admission policies of the institution and those who are admitted on a provisional basis (admitted under exceptions to the regular admission policies), foreign students, and students aged 22 and above. Scores are submitted separately for each category of in-state students, out-of-state students, and in-state and out-of-state students combined.

Beginning in 1995, the Commission began using a more inclusive standard of comparison for indicators of academic preparation for entering students. The combined mean for college entrance examinations has been calculated based on the scores of the entire entering freshman class including foreign students, provisional students, students aged 22 and above, and students taking the ACT.

The majority of students attending South Carolina institutions take the SAT rather than the ACT as a college entrance examination. However, increasing numbers of students are presenting ACT scores. Since 1994, this report has included both ACT and SAT scores, with the SAT combined mean and the ACT composite score listed in separate columns.

Reporting the ACT and SAT scores separately does not give an accurate picture of the academic preparation of the total freshman class at each institution. Looking at the indicators of academic preparation for the first-time entering freshman class without exclusions allows the Commission to examine all indicators of success in college. An ACT/SAT combined mean is now calculated for the entire entering freshman class. The scores of students who report only ACT scores have been converted to SAT equivalencies using the ACT-SAT concordance tables developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). The converted scores are then averaged with the SAT scores to arrive at an SAT/ACT combined mean.

When ACT scores are converted into SAT equivalents and combined into the mean, the SAT/ACT combined mean is slightly lower than the SAT combined mean excluding ACT scores (except for the research institutions). In general, this lowered mean results because more than one SAT combined score (verbal and math) converts into the same ACT score, whereas only one ACT composite score converts to an SAT combined score except at the lowest end of the range. Depending on where students' scores fall within a range (including ACT/SAT equivalencies in the calculation of the mean), they could either increase or decrease the combined mean at that institution.

Table 4 ranks institutions by institution type and SAT/ACT combined mean. In addition, the combined mean for SAT scores only and the percentage of students reporting ACT scores only is also shown in **Table 4**.

TABLE 4 SAT/ACT SCORES OF FIRST-TIME ENTERING FRESHMEN, FALL 2008 (INCLUDING Foreign and Provisional Students and Students Age 22 and Above) SOUTH CAROLINA PUBLIC SENIOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITIES			
Institutions	SAT & ACT Combined Mean[1] Including Foreign, Prov. & Age 22 & Above	SAT (Only) Combined Mean Including Foreign, Prov. & Age 22 & Above	% Reporting ACT Score Including Foreign, Prov. & Age 22 & Above
Research Institutions			
Clemson	1227	1227	21.1%
USC-Columbia	1191	1191	25.0%
Average Research Institutions	**1207**	**1207**	**23.3%**
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities			
The Citadel	1076	1106	25.2%
Coastal Carolina	1027	1030	36.9%
College of Charleston	1169	1197	46.6%
Francis Marion University	946	950	30.3%
Lander University	955	964	36.2%
S.C. State University	845	851	45.9%
USC-Aiken	983	987	24.9%
USC-Beaufort	971	976	22.1%
USC-Upstate	1000	1009	30.9%
Winthrop	1071	1076	28.8%
Average Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	**1030**	**1041**	**35.9%**
State Average, Senior Institutions	**1106**	**1115**	**30.5%**
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC			
USC-Lancaster	881	927	40.8%
USC-Salkehatchie	807	834	34.1%
USC-Sumter	938	956	42.0%
USC-Union	826	890	43.7%
Average Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC	**876**	**913**	**39.5%**

[1]ACT scores converted to SAT equivalencies using the ACT/SAT Concordance Tables.

Table 5 presents a comparison of the number of students accepted with ACT scores for 2007 and 2008. The majority of institutions indicated that the results reported to CHEMIS are for the highest SAT or ACT scores for the decision on student admission to the institution. All but four of the four-year institutions had increases in the percentage of students reporting ACT scores ranging from +0.8% to +9.8%. In general, the impact on senior institutions was 2.0%. The comprehensive teaching institutions (+2.8%) showed a larger increase than the research institutions (+2.0%); and the regional two-year campuses of the University of South Carolina showed only a slight increase (+0.7%).

Table 5
Comparison of the Percent of Students Reporting ACT Scores
Academic Years 2007 and 2008

Institutions	% First-Time Freshmen Including Foreign, Prov. & Age 22 & Above Reporting ACT in 2007	% First-Time Freshmen Including Foreign, Prov. & Age 22 & Above Reporting ACT in 2008
Research Institutions		
Clemson	17.3%	21.1%
USC-Columbia	24.2%	25.0%
Average Research Institutions	**21.3%**	**23.3%**
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities		
The Citadel	28.3%	25.2%
Coastal Carolina University	27.1%	36.9%
College of Charleston	44.1%	46.6%
Francis Marion University	31.7%	30.3%
Lander University	34.2%	36.2%
S.C. State University	36.2%	45.9%
USC-Aiken	27.2%	24.9%
USC-Beaufort	19.8%	22.1%
USC-Upstate	34.0%	30.9%
Winthrop University	26.7%	28.8%
Average Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	**33.1%**	**35.9%**
State Average, Senior Institutions	**28.4%**	**30.5%**
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC		
USC-Lancaster	43.9%	40.8%
USC-Salkehatchie	27.9%	34.1%
USC-Sumter	36.1%	42.0%
USC-Union	56.5%	43.7%
Average Two Year Regional Campuses of USC	**38.8%**	**39.5%**

Table 6 compares the SAT/ACT combined mean for each institution for 2006, 2007, and 2008. **Table 6** indicates the research universities had an increase in the

average combined SAT/ACT mean for USC-Columbia (11 points) and Clemson University (5 points) between 2007 and 2008. The four-year comprehensive teaching institution sector shows mixed results. Four of the institutions had increases over 2007 scores and six had decreases. Two of the two-year campuses of USC had a decrease and two had increases from 2007 SAT/ACT combined scores.

TABLE 6
SAT/ACT Scores of First-Time Entering Freshmen
(Including Foreign, Provisional, and Students Age 22 and Above)

Institutions	2006 SAT/ACT Combined Mean	2007 SAT/ACT Combined Mean	2008 SAT/ACT Combined Mean	2007-2008 Change Combined Mean
Research Institutions				
Clemson	1216	1222	1227	5
USC-Columbia	1169	1180	1191	11
Average Research Institutions	**1189**	**1198**	**1207**	**9**
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities				
The Citadel	1085	1078	1076	-2
Coastal Carolina	1036	1028	1027	-1
College of Charleston	1180	1159	1169	10
Francis Marion	952	961	946	-15
Lander	952	989	955	-34
S.C. State	832	814	845	31
USC-Aiken	990	995	983	-12
USC-Beaufort	953	940	971	31
USC-Upstate	1001	1003	1000	-3
Winthrop	1050	1051	1071	20
Average Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	**1031**	**1019**	**1030**	11
State Average, Senior Institutions	**1097**	**1091**	**1106**	15
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC				
USC-Lancaster	875	878	881	3
USC-Salkehatchie	840	841	807	-34
USC-Sumter	936	954	938	-16
USC-Union	828	824	826	2
Average Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC	**882**	**890**	**876**	**-14**

Part IV: Provisionally Admitted Students

Two types of admission may be offered to a degree-seeking student upon admission to an institution. Applicants who meet the institution's minimum admission criteria and who are offered admission are classified as regular students. Applicants who do not meet the institution's regular admission requirements but who are offered admission using alternative criteria are classified as provisional students. Several

institutions reported a percentage of students who had not met the recommended high school course prerequisites, yet reported 0% provisional students. In response to a staff request for additional information about provisional students in 2006, Clemson University reported that the institution does not admit provisional students, but may allow students to be enrolled with "conditions." Similarly, Lander University stated it allows some "discretion" on a limited case-by-case basis. The Citadel does not label any student as provisional, but may limit the number of hours taken or provide specific academic expectations for those students who do not meet the recommended high school course prerequisites. Coastal Carolina University does not have a definition for provisional students because no students are admitted if they do not meet all of the admission requirements.

Table 7 shows provisional freshmen as a percent of total first-time entering freshmen for Fall 2008 for each institution and overall.

TABLE 7
Provisional Freshmen as a Percent of Total First-Time Freshmen
Fall 2008

Institutions	Total First-Time Freshmen	Provisional Freshmen	Percent Provisional
Research Institutions			
Clemson	2,923	0	0.0%
USC-Columbia	3,859	169	4.4%
Total Research Institutions	6,782	169	2.5%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities			
The Citadel	607	0	0.0%
Coastal Carolina	1,655	0	0.0%
College of Charleston	1,956	165	8.4%
Francis Marion University	681	2	0.3%
Lander University	555	0	0.0%
S.C. State University	966	19	2.0%
USC-Aiken	594	40	6.7%
USC-Beaufort	303	17	5.6%
USC-Upstate	728	16	2.2%
Winthrop University	1,075	82	7.6%
Total Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	9,120	341	3.7%
Total Senior Institutions	15,902	510	3.2%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC			
USC-Lancaster	358	229	64.0%
USC-Salkehatchie	264	198	75.0%
USC-Sumter	245	137	55.9%
USC-Union	87	55	63.2%
Total Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC	954	619	64.9%
Grand Total	16,856	1,129	6.7%

Clemson University, The Citadel, Coastal Carolina and Lander University reported accepting no provisional students in 2008. USC-Columbia admitted 4.4% provisional students. Of the comprehensive teaching institutions, the College of Charleston admitted the most provisional students (8.4%).

At its meeting on August 25, 1997, the Commission approved several recommendations for the institutions to consider regarding provisional students. Among these recommendations were two which relate to the data presented in **Table 7**:

- Research universities should limit provisional admissions to no more than 10% of the first-time entering freshman class.

- Four-year teaching universities should limit provisional admissions to no more than 15% of the first-time entering freshman class.

As can be seen from the data presented in **Table 7**, in 2008, the two research universities are in compliance with the recommended 10% guideline. All of the four-year institutions are in compliance with the recommended 15% guideline.

Trend data for provisional admissions for the last five years for the four-year comprehensive teaching institutions are shown below:

TABLE 7A
Provisional Freshmen as a Percent of Total First-Time Freshmen
Fall 2008

Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
The Citadel	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Coastal Carolina University	9.5%	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
College of Charleston	11.4%	10.5%	9.6%	12.9%	8.4%
Francis Marion University	8.2%	7.1%	9.7%	14.6%	0.3%
Lander University	18.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
S.C. State University	0.0%	8.4%	14.2%	7.4%	2.0%
USC-Aiken	0.3%	1.1%	0.3%	5.9%	6.7%
USC-Beaufort*	12.4%	3.7%	6.9%	10.8%	5.6%
USC-Upstate	4.9%	4.9%	4.6%	2.9%	2.2%
Winthrop University	5.3%	5.4%	6.7%	8.1%	7.6%

These data indicate that the percentage of provisional students admitted to the four-year comprehensive institutions has fluctuated at several institutions over the last five years. USC-Beaufort attained four-year status in 2002 and in 2004 reduced the number of provisional students it accepts to meet the Commission's recommended levels for comprehensive institutions. The Citadel, Coastal Carolina, and Lander University report that there were no provisional students admitted in Fall 2008. South Carolina State

University reported 0% provisional students in 2004, then showed an increase to 8.4% in 2005 and another increase to 14.2% in 2006, but then showed a decrease to 7.4% in 2007 and a decrease to 2.0% in 2008.

USC applies the same admissions standards used at its main campus to students who apply to a USC two-year campus and who are classified by the institution as baccalaureate-ready students. Because these admissions standards are applicable only to those baccalaureate-ready freshmen, a little less than two-thirds of the entering freshmen at the USC two-year campuses are classified as provisional students. The trend data for five years is presented below and shows a general pattern of approximately 68% provisionally admitted students with decreases between 2005 and 2006 and 2007 and 2008.

TABLE 7B
USC Two-Year Campuses Annual Percentage

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
65.6%	66.6%	71.3%	69.1%	68.5%	64.9%

Part V: Fall 2009 Minimum Admission Standards

A component of Act 629 of 1988 requires the Commission to work with public institutions of higher learning in the state to ensure that minimal admission standards are maintained by the institutions. *The publication and dissemination of minimal admission standards was recommended by external consultants who argued that unless students had a clear sense of what institutional expectations are, they could not rise to meet these expectations.* In 1988, each institution was required to specify annually the minimum approximate SAT score (combined math and verbal) that is required of most applicants for admission as freshmen. In 1993, the Commission approved the collection of additional data to include minimum ACT scores if these were submitted in lieu of SAT scores.

It is important to note that these minimum admissions standards are approximate. Some institutions use a predictive equation to determine which students to admit. At these institutions, the minimum required scores will vary somewhat depending on the value and weight of the other elements in the admissions formula. For this reason, the minimum SAT and ACT scores reported by the institutions as required for admission are to be used as guideposts for students aspiring to admission to any given institution.

During the past few years, institutions have been reporting that they no longer use class rank to set the approximate minimum SAT/ACT score, but instead use the Grade Point Average (GPA) of the core high school college prep curriculum. In order to report more accurately the approximate minimum SAT/ACT score for the institutions, the

Commission requested information on which method an institution used to set the minimum score and to report this information for this report. These data are separated into two tables indicating institutions that use class rank (**Table 8**) and those that use core GPA (**Table 9**). Clemson University, the Citadel, College of Charleston, Lander University, South Carolina State University, USC-Aiken, USC-Beaufort, and USC-Upstate report using both forms in setting their approximate minimum scores.

The approximate SAT and ACT score requirements reported by each institution using class rank for Fall 2009 are shown in **Table 8**.

TABLE 8
Admissions Requirements
Approximate Minimum SAT Score (Combined) and
Minimum ACT Score Requirements for
First-time Entering Freshmen
2009

	High School Class Rank						Predictive Equation[1] Equation	
	Top 20% of Class		Top 50% of Class		Top 80% of Class			
Institutions	**SAT**	**ACT**	**SAT**	**ACT**	**SAT**	**ACT**	**Yes**	**No**
Research Institutions								
Clemson University	1050	23	1290	30	1580	36	X	
USC-Columbia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		X
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities								
The Citadel	920	20	920	20	920	20		X
Coastal Carolina University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		X
College of Charleston	1070	22	1140	25	1310	28	X	
Francis Marion University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		X
Lander University	800	16	975	20	1050	22	X	
S.C. State University	830	18	830	18	830	18		X
USC-Aiken	800	17	800	17	N/A	N/A	X	
USC-Beaufort	800	17	800	17	800	17	X	
USC-Upstate	850	18	900	19	900	19	X	
Winthrop University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		X
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC								
USC Lancaster	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		X
USC Salkehatchie	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		X
USC Sumter	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		X
USC Union	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		X

1. Some institutions use predictive equations, formulas which combine elements such as high school class rank and/or high school grade point ratios and/or SAT or ACT scores, to determine which students to admit. At these institutions, the minimum required scores will vary somewhat depending on the value and weight of the other elements in the formula.

Two institutions (Lander University and South Carolina State University), reported changes in approximate minimum SAT/ACT scores in **Table 8** for 2009. All other institutions reporting data in **Table 8** kept the same minimum scores as in 2008.

Lander University is **decreasing** the required SAT/ACT for students in the top 20% (1150/25 to 800/16) and for students in the top 50% (1075/23 to 975/20), and **increasing** the required scores for students in the top 80% (750/15 to 1050/22) for Fall 2009. In response to a staff inquiry, Lander University representatives stated they are in the process of reevaluating their admissions procedures to ensure student success.

South Carolina State University is **increasing** the required ACT for students from 17 to 18 for Fall 2009.

The approximate SAT and ACT score requirements reported by each institution using core GPA for Fall 2009 are shown in **Table 9**. This year is the sixth year that institutions reported the use of the core GPA rather than class rank in reporting minimum SAT/ACT scores. Institutions reporting SAT/ACT with core GPA in **Table 9** indicated some changes for Fall 2009.

Coastal Carolina University is **adding** required minimum scores (SAT/ACT) for the admission of students with a 2.0 core GPA (960/20) and **decreasing** the required minimum scores (SAT/ACT) for the admission of students with a 3.0 GPA from 960/20 to 900/19 and for students with a 4.0 GPA from 900/19 to 870/18.

Francis Marion University is adding required minimum ACT scores for the admission of all students (19 for students with a 2.0 core GPA; 17 for students with a 3.0 or 4.0 core GPA) and increasing the required minimum SAT scores for the admission of students with a 3.0 or 4.0 GPA from 780 to 800.

Lander University is **increasing** the required minimum scores for the admission of students with a 2.0 core GPA from 1025/21 to 1050/22 and **decreasing** the required minimum scores for students with a 3.0 GPA from 980/20 to 875/18 and for students with a 4.0 GPA from 950/19 to 800/16.

South Carolina State University is **increasing** the required ACT scores for the admission of all students from 17 to 18.

Winthrop University is **eliminating** required minimum scores (SAT/ACT) for the admission of students with a 2.0 core GPA.

TABLE 9 Admission Requirements Approximate Minimum SAT Score (Combined) and Minimum ACT Score Requirements for First-time Entering Freshmen 2009								
	High School Core GPA and Minimum SAT/ACT score						Use Predictive Equation	
	Core GPA 2.0		Core GPA 3.0		Core GPA 4.0			
Institutions	**SAT**	**ACT**	**SAT**	**ACT**	**SAT**	**ACT**	**Yes**	**No**
Research Institutions								
Clemson University	1580	36	1270	29	950	22	X	
USC-Columbia	1250	28	950	20	700	15	X	
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities								
The Citadel	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		X
Coastal Carolina University	960	20	900	19	870	18		X
College of Charleston	N/A	N/A	1140	25	1070	22	X	
Francis Marion University	880	19	800	17	800	17		X
Lander University	1050	22	875	18	800	16	X	
S.C. State University	830	18	830	18	830	18		X
USC Aiken	910	19	800	17	800	17	X	
USC Beaufort	800	17	800	17	800	17	X	
USC Upstate	900	19	900	19	850	18	X	
Winthrop University	N/A	N/A	900	19	850	17		X
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC								
USC Lancaster	1250	28	950	20	700	15	X	
USC Salkehatchie	1250	28	950	20	700	15	X	
USC Sumter	1250	28	950	20	700	15	X	
USC Union	1250	28	950	20	700	15	X	

1. Some institutions use predictive equations, formulas which combine elements such as high school class rank and/or high school grade point ratios and/or SAT or ACT scores, to determine which students to admit. At these institutions, the minimum required scores will vary somewhat depending on the value and weight of the other elements in the formula.

Table 9 indicates variability among reports of minimum SAT/ACT scores in conjunction with a core GPA, which is attributable to patterns used by institutions for assessing student qualifications. USC-Beaufort and South Carolina State University determine eligibility based upon a single minimum SAT/ACT score (800/17 and 830/18, respectively). Francis Marion University and USC-Aiken use a single minimum

SAT/ACT score for students entering with a 3.0 and 4.0 core GPA. Clemson University, USC-Columbia, Coastal Carolina University, Lander University, and Winthrop University report different minimum SAT/ACT scores required for entering students with a core GPA of 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0.

In 2005, the SAT added a mandatory Writing section. **Table 10** shows that the Writing section is not a requirement for admission to any institution in South Carolina for Fall 2009, but several institutions (Clemson, USC-Columbia, College of Charleston, South Carolina State University, USC-Upstate, and Winthrop University) use the Writing component for research or for planning services and placements. The College of Charleston reports that it uses either the SAT or ACT Writing score.

TABLE 10
Requirement of SAT Writing Component for Admissions in Fall 2009

Institutions	Yes/No	Additional Information
Research Institutions		
Clemson	No	Used as supplemental information in a student's application. Also, for research.
USC-Columbia	No	Currently required for study & possible use in holistic review.
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities		
The Citadel	No	
Coastal Carolina University	No	
College of Charleston	No	Require either SAT or ACT Writing score. Collecting data for future research.
Francis Marion University	No	
Lander University	No	
S.C. State University	No	Used in planning and services provided to entering freshmen.
USC-Aiken	No	
USC-Beaufort	No	
USC-Upstate	No	Uses for appropriate placement in freshman English courses.
Winthrop University	No	Collecting for review of correlation between our freshman student's performance in first Writing Course.

Conclusion

In general, students are becoming slightly better prepared for postsecondary education as 95.2% of applicable first-time freshmen meet all of the high school course prerequisites in 2008; however, there is considerable variability among institutions because six four-year institutions show increases in the percentage of freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites for all freshmen and six show decreases. Institutions continue to have freshmen who do not meet the lab science and the elective requirements of the high school course prerequisites.

Additionally, as a whole, the public senior institutions are becoming somewhat more selective in offering admissions to students because the percentage of applicants offered admission to a public senior institution has steadily declined since 2004. However, South Carolina still does not have any public institution that has "very selective" admission standards, despite gradual increases at various institutions over a period of years. At the same time, because the percentage of students accepted and enrolled has also declined, it appears that students who are offered admission are becoming slightly more selective in choosing the institutions they wish to attend.