



South Carolina Commission on Higher Education

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MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Ken Wingate, Chair, and Members, Commission on Higher Education

From: Dr. Bettie Rose Horne, Chair, and Members, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

Consideration of Annual Report on Admission Standards for First-Time Entering Freshmen, FY 2010-11

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 2010 admission standards for first-time entering freshmen (**Attachment**) 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 2010.

The Report is presented in five parts:

Part I: Fall 2010 Applications, Acceptances, and Actual Enrollments

Part II: Fall 2010 Data Related to High School Course Prerequisites

Part III: Fall 2010 SAT and ACT Scores

Part IV: Fall 2010 Provisionally Admitted Students

Part V: Fall 2011 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).

Recommendation

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commends favorably to the Commission the endorsement of this report for transmittal to the South Carolina Department of Education and the chairs of the House and Senate Education Committees.

Attachment

ANNUAL REPORT ON ADMISSION STANDARDS FOR FIRST-TIME ENTERING FRESHMEN, FALL 2009 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 2010 Applications, Acceptances, and Actual Enrollments
- **Part II:** Fall 2010 Data related to high school course prerequisites
- **Part III:** Fall 2010 SAT and ACT scores
- **Part IV:** Fall 2010 Data related to provisional students
- **Part V:** Fall 2011 Minimum admission standards.

Part I: Applications, Acceptances, and Actual Enrollments

In Fall 2010, 80,289 applications were received for admission as first-time freshmen at the state's public senior colleges and universities. Of these, 53,333 (66.4%) met the minimum admission standards at one or more of the public senior institutions and were offered admission. Of those who were offered admission, 17,282 (32.4%) 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 2010

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	16,865	9,724	57.7%	3,016	31.0%
USC-Columbia	18,485	12,914	69.9%	4,469	34.6%
Sub Total	35,350	22,638	64.0%	7,485	33.1%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities					
The Citadel	2,667	1,876	70.3%	626	33.4%
Coastal Carolina	9,639	7,170	74.4%	2,006	28.0%
Coll. Of Charleston	11,280	7,896	70.0%	2,010	25.5%
Francis Marion	3,596	2,142	59.6%	738	34.5%
Lander	2,903	1,345	46.3%	686	51.0%
S.C. State	3,534	2,973	84.1%	826	27.8%
USC-Aiken	2,718	1,367	50.3%	630	46.1%
USC-Beaufort	1,390	1,027	73.9%	420	40.9%
USC-Upstate	3,182	2,107	66.2%	894	42.4%
Winthrop	4,030	2,792	69.3%	961	34.4%
Sub Total	44,939	30,695	68.3%	9,797	31.9%
Total Sr. Institutions	80,289	53,333	66.4%	17,282	32.4%

¹Reported manually by the institutions.

Five institutions (The Citadel, Coastal Carolina, College of Charleston, S.C. State, USC-Beaufort) offered admission to 70-80% of applicants. Three institutions (USC-Columbia, USC-Upstate, Winthrop) offered admission to 60-69% of applicants. Three institutions (Clemson, Francis Marion, USC-Aiken) offered admission to 50-59% of applicants. Lander University offered admission to the lowest percentage (46.3%) of applicants and enrolled the largest percentage (51%) of students who were offered admission. The remaining institutions had enrollment percentages that ranged from 25.5% to 46.1%.

Table 2 provides a five-year overview of applications, acceptances, and actual enrollments. The number of applicants has increased by 18,750 over the last five years, and the number enrolled has increased by 1,647 students. However, the percentage of applicants who were accepted and enrolled **has decreased** by approximately 7.8%.

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
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%
2009	77,053	51,543	66.9%	16,861	32.7%
2010	80,289	53,333	66.4%	17,282	32.4%

Part II: Extent to Which 2010 Freshmen Met the High School Course Prerequisites

Since Fall 1988, public senior colleges and universities in South Carolina have required that applicants 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 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 95.6% in 2009 to 96.0% in 2010, the percentage of students meeting all of the prerequisites is still below the 1999 average of 98.15%. In Fall 2010 only Clemson, the College of Charleston, USC-Salkehatchie, USC-Sumter, and USC-Union meet or exceed the 1999 average.

TABLE 3
Percent of Applicable¹ First-Time Freshmen Meeting High School Course Prerequisites

Institutions	2008	2008	2009	2009	2010	2010
	Applicable	Percent	Applicable	Percent	Applicable	Percent
	Freshmen	Meeting	Freshmen	Meeting	Freshmen	Meeting
		Prerequisites		Prerequisites		Prerequisites
Research Institutions						
Clemson	2,923	99.5%	3383	98.1%	3016	99.0%
USC-Columbia	3,774	95.5%	3818	96.6%	4368	96.3%
Sub Total	6,697	97.2%	7,201	97.3%	7,384	97.4%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities						
The Citadel	607	90.9%	591	93.2%	625	91.5%
Coastal Carolina	1,640	97.0%	1761	95.3%	1987	96.5%
College of Charleston	1,949	97.8%	2134	99.3%	2006	99.1%
Francis Marion	681	93.1%	794	90.8%	738	91.5%
Lander	535	88.2%	577	88.7%	676	91.1%
SC State	966	97.9%	723	91.7%	826	97.3%
USC-Aiken	582	93.8%	623	96.3%	618	94.8%
USC-Beaufort	288	78.8%	363	87.1%	410	83.9%
USC-Upstate	683	91.7%	856	92.3%	856	91.4%
Winthrop	1,051	92.8%	1042	92.9%	946	95.3%
Sub Total	8,982	93.8%	9,464	94.3%	9,687	94.8%
Total Sr. Institutions	15,679	95.3%	16,665	95.6%	17,071	95.9%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC						
USC-Lancaster ²	101	83.2%	113	92.9%	116	94.8%
USC-Salkehatchie ²	14	100.0%	4	75.0%	10	100.0%
USC-Sumter ²	100	98.0%	122	100.0%	110	99.1%
USC-Union ²	18	100.0%	19	100.0%	9	100.0%
Sub Total USC Two-Year	233	91.8%	258	96.5%	245	97.1%
Grand Total	15,912	95.2%	16,923	95.6%	17,316	96.0%

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

²At 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 for the last three years has been at USC-Beaufort. Although USC-Beaufort's compliance rate has steadily increased each year since becoming a four-year institution in Fall 2004, there was a 3.2% decrease in compliance from Fall 2009 to Fall 2010. An annual change of this magnitude, either increase or decrease, is not unusual, however.

Lander has the second lowest compliance rate at 91.1%, which is an increase of 2.4% between 2009 and 2010. Lander has shown an increase in compliance since Fall 2008.

The Citadel's compliance rate decreased from 93.2% in 2009 to 91.5% in 2010.

USC-Aiken's compliance rate decreased from 96.3% in 2009 to 94.8% in 2010.

South Carolina State's compliance rate increased from 91.7% in 2009 to 97.3% in 2010.

Five institutions (Clemson, Coastal Carolina, Francis Marion, Lander, SC State, Winthrop, USC-Lancaster, USC-Salkehatchie) showed an increase in compliance from 2009 to 2010.

Overall, the institutions indicated that lab science, foreign language, and the electives were the main prerequisites that were not met for the first time entering freshmen in Fall 2010.

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 96.4% of in-state, first-time freshmen meet high school course prerequisites, compared to only 85.6% of out-of-state, first-time freshmen. The decrease in compliance for USC-Aiken can also be attributed to its out-of-state students with 96.8% of in-state, first-time freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites compared to only 77.4% of out-of-state, first-time freshmen. Similarly, USC-Beaufort's decrease in compliance can be attributed at least partially to its out-of-state states with a compliance rate of 76.4% compared to the in-state student compliance rate of 85.1%. By contrast, **Table 3A** shows that four institutions (USC-Columbia, The Citadel, USC-Beaufort, and USC-Upstate) report a decrease in their compliance rate for in-state, first-time freshmen for 2010 ranging from 0.1% to 2.0%.

As **Table 3B** shows five institutions improved their compliance rate for out-of-state students in 2010. Francis Marion (+4.0%), South Carolina State (+2.4%), and Winthrop (+9.5%) showed the greatest improvement. However, despite this improvement, seven of the ten comprehensive teaching institutions and one of the research institutions report a compliance rate for out-of-state students below the average of 95.0% for all institutions, ranging from 76.4% to 93.2%.

TABLE 3A
Percent of Applicable¹ First-Time Freshmen Meeting High School Course Prerequisites
In State Only (GEO-Origin = SC)

Institutions	2008 Applicable Freshmen	2008 Percent Meeting Prerequisites	2009 Applicable Freshmen	2009 Percent Meeting Prerequisites	2010 Applicable Freshmen	2010 Percent Meeting Prerequisites
Research Institutions						
Clemson	1,828	99.8%	2023	99.1%	1797	99.5%
USC-Columbia	2,194	97.5%	2191	98.7%	2508	98.6%
Sub Total	4,022	98.6%	4,214	98.9%	4,305	99.0%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities						
The Citadel	243	97.9%	272	97.4%	329	96.4%
Coastal Carolina	748	97.7%	776	96.0%	927	96.7%
College of Charleston	1,067	98.1%	1137	99.4%	996	99.5%
Francis Marion	646	92.9%	758	90.9%	696	91.4%
Lander	492	89.4%	533	88.3%	638	91.2%
SC State	673	97.3%	500	89.6%	577	96.7%
USC-Aiken	531	94.4%	564	96.5%	556	96.8%
USC-Beaufort	223	83.4%	295	87.1%	355	85.1%
USC-Upstate	638	92.0%	813	92.4%	800	91.8%
Winthrop	883	94.9%	937	94.8%	869	96.2%
Sub Total	6,144	94.2%	6,585	94.2%	6,742	94.8%
Total Sr. Institutions	10,166	95.9%	10,799	96.0%	11,047	96.4%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC						
USC-Lancaster ²	97	83.5%	108	93.5%	113	95.6%
USC-Salkehatchie ²	14	100.0%	4	75.0%	10	100.0%
USC-Sumter ²	95	97.9%	120	100.0%	109	100.0%
USC-Union ²	18	100.0%	19	100.0%	9	100.0%
Sub Total USC Two-Year	224	92.0%	251	96.8%	241	97.9%
Grand Total	10,390	95.9%	11,050	96.1%	11,288	96.4%

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

²At 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 Applicable¹ First-Time Freshmen Meeting High School Course Prerequisites
Out-of-State Only (GEO-Origin not = SC)

Institutions	2008 Applicable Freshmen	2008 Percent Meeting Prerequisites	2009 Applicable Freshmen	2009 Percent Meeting Prerequisites	2010 Applicable Freshmen	2010 Percent Meeting Prerequisites
Research Institutions						
Clemson	1,095	98.9%	1360	96.6%	1219	98.2%
USC-Columbia	1,580	92.7%	1627	93.7%	1860	93.2%
Sub Total	2,675	95.2%	2,987	95.0%	3,079	95.2%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities						
The Citadel	364	86.3%	319	89.7%	298	85.6%
Coastal Carolina	892	96.4%	985	94.8%	1060	96.4%
College of Charleston	882	97.4%	997	99.3%	1010	98.7%
Francis Marion	35	97.1%	36	88.9%	42	92.9%
Lander	43	74.4%	39	94.9%	38	89.5%
SC State	293	99.3%	223	96.4%	249	98.8%
USC-Aiken	51	88.2%	59	94.9%	62	77.4%
USC-Beaufort	65	63.1%	68	86.8%	55	76.4%
USC-Upstate	45	86.7%	43	90.7%	56	85.7%
Winthrop	168	81.5%	105	76.2%	77	85.7%
Sub Total	2,838	92.9%	2,874	95.1%	2,947	94.9%
Total Sr. Institutions	5,513	94.0%	5,861	95.0%	6,026	95.0%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC						
USC-Lancaster ²	4	75.0%	5	80.0%	3	66.7%
USC-Salkehatchie ²	0		0			
USC-Sumter ²	5	100.0%	2	100.0%	1	0.0%
USC-Union ²	0		0			
Sub Total USC Two-Year	9	88.9%	7	85.7%	4	50.0%
Grand Total	5,522	94.0%	5,868	95.0%	6,030	95.0%

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

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

This year's report examines for the first time the Freshman-to-Sophomore retention rate of first-time freshmen in relationship to the prerequisite compliance data. Table 3C shows the retention rate of first-time freshmen who did not meet the recommended high school course prerequisites. Overall, the institutions showed a lower retention rate for students who did **not** meet the high school course requirements. Francis Marion University (-19.3%) and Coastal Carolina University (-20%) showed a large difference in retention rates between students who met the requirements compared to those who didn't meet them. The remaining institutions

showed a difference in retention rates of 3.5% to 15.5% between those who met the high school course prerequisites and those who did not.

Retention Rate of Fall 2009 First-Time Freshmen Meeting and Not Meeting the High School Pre-Requisites Retained at Same Institution in Fall 2010							
S.C. Public Colleges and Universities							
Institution	Applicable Freshmen	Applicable Freshmen Meeting Pre-Requisites.	Retained	%	Applicable Freshmen Not Meeting Pre-Requisites.	Retained	%
		#			#		
Clemson University	3,383	3,319	2,968	89.4%	64	55	85.9%
U.S.C. - Columbia	3,818	3,688	3,257	88.3%	130	102	78.5%
The Citadel	591	551	471	85.5%	40	28	70.0%
Coastal Carolina University	1,761	1,678	1,133	67.5%	83	46	55.4%
College of Charleston	2,134	2,119	1,733	81.8%	15	10	66.7%
Francis Marion University	794	721	534	74.1%	73	40	54.8%
Lander University	577	512	389	76.0%	65	43	66.2%
South Carolina State Univ.	723	663	447	67.4%	60	32	53.3%
U.S.C. - Aiken	623	600	431	71.8%	23	13	56.5%
U.S.C. - Beaufort	363	316	180	57.0%	47	20	42.6%
U.S.C. - Upstate	856	790	560	70.9%	66	42	63.6%
Winthrop University	1,042	968	717	74.1%	74	40	54.1%

The data shows that for Fall 2009 first-time freshmen who didn't meet the high school course prerequisites, there is a lower retention rate at all of the four-year institutions. On average there was a -13% difference in retention rates for students who did not meet the prerequisites as compared to those who did. Based on the data, students are more likely to remain in college and transition to their sophomore year if they have taken and successfully completed the high school course prerequisites. Additional data is needed to determine if meeting the high school course prerequisites contributes to degree completion. Colleges will need to develop programs to increase the retention rate of those students who were admitted to the institution without having met the prerequisites.

Part III: SAT and ACT Scores as Indicators of Academic Preparation, Fall 2010

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 SAT/ACT 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.

Beginning in 1995, the Commission began using a more inclusive standard of comparison for indicators of academic preparation of 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. 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 shows 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 are also shown in **Table 4**.

TABLE 4 SAT/ACT SCORES OF FIRST-TIME ENTERING FRESHMEN, FALL 2010 (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	1236	1231	28.1%
USC-Columbia	1190	1187	33.9%
Average Research Institutions	1209	1206	31.5%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities			
The Citadel	1059	1075	33.5%
Coastal Carolina	991	1008	32.5%
College of Charleston	1160	1194	42.7%
Francis Marion University	973	979	35.7%
Lander University	981	986	38.3%
S.C. State University	879	877	59.0%
USC-Aiken	991	994	34.1%
USC-Beaufort	940	939	27.6%
USC-Upstate	983	986	36.2%
Winthrop	1054	1057	35.3%
Average Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	1022	1035	38.0%
State Average, Senior Institutions	1103	1111	35.2%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC			
USC-Lancaster	870	911	41.0%
USC-Salkehatchie	805	859	41.6%
USC-Sumter	931	961	48.1%
USC-Union	802	879	50.0%
Average Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC	866	912	43.7%

¹ACT 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 2009 and 2010. Every institution except one (College of Charleston) reported an increase in students accepted with the ACT.

Table 5 Comparison of the Percent of Students Reporting ACT Scores Academic Years 2009 and 2010		
Institutions	% First-Time Freshmen Including Foreign, Prov. & Age 22 & Above Reporting ACT in 2009	% First-Time Freshmen Including Foreign, Prov. & Age 22 & Above Reporting ACT in 2010
Research Institutions		
Clemson	24.2%	28.1%
USC-Columbia	28.3%	33.9%
Average Research Institutions	26.4%	31.5%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities		
The Citadel	27.2%	33.5%
Coastal Carolina University	30.5%	32.5%
College of Charleston	44.9%	42.7%
Francis Marion University	33.0%	35.7%
Lander University	35.9%	38.3%
S.C. State University	46.6%	59.0%
USC-Aiken	28.6%	34.1%
USC-Beaufort	23.5%	27.6%
USC-Upstate	33.7%	36.2%
Winthrop University	30.6%	35.3%
Average Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	35.2%	38.0%
State Average, Senior Institutions	31.4%	35.2%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC		
USC-Lancaster	38.3%	41.0%
USC-Salkehatchie	22.4%	41.6%
USC-Sumter	38.9%	48.1%
USC-Union	54.6%	50.0%
Average Two Year Regional Campuses of USC	36.1%	43.7%

Table 6 compares the SAT/ACT combined mean for each institution for 2008, 2009, and 2010. **Table 6** indicates that there was an increase in the average combined SAT/ACT mean for Clemson University (8 points), but a decrease at USC-Columbia (-3 points) between 2009 and 2010. The four-year comprehensive teaching institution sector shows mixed results. Seven of the institutions had increases over 2009 scores in 2010 and three had decreases. All four of the two-year campuses of USC had a decrease in 2010 from 2009 SAT/ACT combined scores.

TABLE 6				
SAT/ACT Scores of First-Time Entering Freshmen				
(Including Foreign, Provisional, and Students Age 22 and Above)				
Institutions	2008 SAT/ACT Combined Mean	2009 SAT/ACT Combined Mean	2010 SAT/ACT Combined Mean	2009- 2010 Change Combined Mean
Research Institutions				
Clemson	1227	1228	1236	8
USC-Columbia	1191	1193	1190	-3
Average Research Institutions	1207	1209	1209	0
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities				
The Citadel	1076	1073	1059	-14
Coastal Carolina	1027	1010	991	-19
College of Charleston	1169	1159	1160	1
Francis Marion	946	963	973	10
Lander	955	979	981	2
S.C. State	845	864	879	15
USC-Aiken	983	985	991	6
USC-Beaufort	971	938	940	2
USC-Upstate	1000	974	983	9
Winthrop	1071	1058	1054	-4
Average Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	1030	1028	1022	-6
State Average, Senior Institutions	1106	1107	1103	-4
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC				
USC-Lancaster	881	894	870	-24
USC-Salkehatchie	807	818	805	-13
USC-Sumter	938	932	931	-1
USC-Union	826	807	802	-5
Average Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC	876	882	866	-16

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 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 2010, Clemson University and Francis Marion reported that the institution does not admit provisional students, but may allow students to be enrolled with "conditions." Similarly, Coastal Carolina allows students to enroll with "probationary" status and take a maximum of 13 credit hours for one semester where the student must earn a grade of C or higher to be considered for regular admission. Lander University stated it allows some "discretion" on a limited case-by-case basis and admits a cohort of students each fall semester who do not meet admissions

requirements set by the university. 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.

Table 7 shows provisional freshmen as a percent of total first-time entering freshmen for Fall 2010 for each institution and overall.

TABLE 7			
Provisional Freshmen as a Percent of Total First-Time Freshmen			
Fall 2010			
Institutions	Total First-Time Freshmen	Provisional Freshmen	Percent Provisional
Research Institutions			
Clemson	3,016	0	0.0%
USC-Columbia	4,469	167	3.7%
Total Research Institutions	7,485	167	2.2%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities			
The Citadel	627	0	0.0%
Coastal Carolina	2,006	0	0.0%
College of Charleston	2,010	278	13.8%
Francis Marion University	737	0	0.0%
Lander University	686	0	0.0%
S.C. State University	826	67	8.1%
USC-Aiken	630	46	7.3%
USC-Beaufort	420	12	2.9%
USC-Upstate	894	70	7.8%
Winthrop University	961	92	9.6%
Total Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	9,797	565	5.8%
Total Senior Institutions			
Total Senior Institutions	17,282	732	4.2%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC			
USC-Lancaster	388	245	63.1%
USC-Salkehatchie	284	203	71.5%
USC-Sumter	260	141	54.2%
USC-Union	88	62	70.5%
Total Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC	1,020	651	63.8%
Grand Total	18,302	1,383	7.6%

Clemson University, The Citadel, Coastal Carolina, Francis Marion, and Lander reported accepting no provisional students in 2010. 3.7% provisional students were admitted to USC-Columbia. Of the comprehensive teaching institutions, the College of Charleston admitted the most provisional students (13.8%).

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 2010, 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 2006 - 2010					
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
The Citadel	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Coastal Carolina University	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
College of Charleston	9.6%	12.9%	8.4%	11.6%	13.8%
Francis Marion University	9.7%	14.6%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Lander University	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
S.C. State University	14.2%	7.4%	2.0%	0.0%	8.1%
USC-Aiken	0.3%	5.9%	6.7%	7.0%	7.3%
USC-Beaufort	6.9%	10.8%	5.6%	2.9%	2.9%
USC-Upstate	4.6%	2.9%	2.2%	7.3%	7.8%
Winthrop University	6.7%	8.1%	7.6%	7.2%	9.6%

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.

USC applies the same admissions standards used at its main campus to students who apply to a USC Regional (two-year campus) and who are classified by the institution as baccalaureate-ready students. When a student applies to a Regional Campus (RC), his/her application is compared to USC-Columbia’s admission standards. If the student could have been admitted to Columbia (but obviously desires admission to the local RC), s/he is “coded”, using long-established USC-specific (that is, not state-wide, common criteria) designations as an “HB” which is the same code used for a Columbia admit. If the student does not meet Columbia criteria (which could be any combination of high school prerequisites, standardized test scores, predicted GPA) the student is classified as an “HR” which is referred to as “branch” status (as in branch campuses, the original designation of the all campuses outside of Columbia). These students must earn a minimum 2.0 GPA and at least 30 hours in order to be able to change campuses to Columbia. No remediation is offered at the Regional Campuses. Information in the chart below indicates that 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 63.8% of the students admitted to the Regional Campuses are identified as provisionally admitted students with decreases since 2005.

TABLE 7B Provisional Freshmen as a Percent of Total First-Time Freshmen USC Two-Year Campuses Annual Percentage						
USC Two-Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Campuses	71.3%	69.1%	68.5%	64.9%	65.0%	63.8%

Part V: Fall 2010 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.

Many 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 methods in setting their approximate minimum scores.

The approximate SAT and ACT score requirements reported by each institution **using class rank** for Fall 2011 are shown in **Table 8**.

TABLE 8 ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS APPROXIMATE MINIMUM SAT SCORE (COMBINED) AND MINIMUM ACT SCORE REQUIREMENTS FOR FIRST-TIME ENTERING FRESHMEN 2011								
Institutions	High School Class Rank						Predictive Equation ¹	
	Top 20%		Top 50%		Top 80%		Equation	
	of Class		of Class		of Class			
	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		
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities								
The Citadel	950	20	950	20	950	20		X
Coastal Carolina University	960	20	960	20	960	20		X
College of Charleston	1050	21	1170	26	1350	30		X
Francis Marion University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
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		
USC Salkehatchie	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
USC Sumter	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
USC Union	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		

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 (The Citadel and South Carolina State University), reported changes in approximate minimum SAT/ACT scores in **Table 8** for 2011: The Citadel is **increasing** the required SAT/ACT for all students in the (920/20 to 950/20) for Fall 2011; South Carolina State University is **decreasing** the required SAT/ACT for all students in (850/18 to 830/18) for Fall 2011. All other institutions reporting data in **Table 8** kept the same minimum scores as in 2010.

The approximate SAT and ACT score requirements reported by each institution **using core GPA for Fall 2011** are shown in **Table 9**. This year is the eighth 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 2011: Coastal Carolina University is **increasing** required minimum scores (SAT/ACT) for the admission of students with a 3.0 and 4.0 core GPA from 900/19 (3.0 GPA) and 850/18 (4.0 GPA) to 960/20; Francis Marion University is **decreasing** the required minimum scores for the admission of students with a 3.0 and 4.0 core GPA from 800/17 to 780/16; South Carolina State University is **decreasing** the required minimum scores (SAT/ACT) for the admission of all students from 850/18 to 830/18.

TABLE 9 ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS APPROXIMATE MINIMUM SAT SCORE (COMBINED) AND MINIMUM ACT SCORE REQUIREMENTS FOR FIRST-TIME ENTERING FRESHMEN 2011								
Institutions	High School Core GPA and Minimum SAT/ACT score						Use Predictive Equation	
	Core GPA 2.0		Core GPA 3.0		Core GPA 4.0		Yes	No
	SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT		
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	N/A	N/A
Coastal Carolina University	960	20	960	20	960	20		X
College of Charleston	N/A	N/A	1200	26	1050	22		X
Francis Marion University	880	19	780	16	780	16		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	18		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. Coastal Carolina, South Carolina State University, and USC-Beaufort determine eligibility based upon a single minimum SAT/ACT score. 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, College of Charleston, 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 was not a requirement for admission to any institution in South Carolina for Fall 2010, 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 2011

Institutions	Yes/No	Additional Information
Research Institutions		
Clemson	No	Supplemental information in a student's application. Research if Writing become part of the predictive formula.
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	YES	Looked at as its own separate score & used as another source when making admission decisions.
Francis Marion University	No	
Lander University	No	
S.C. State University	No	Collect and review for future planning and enrollment strategies.
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 1st Writing Course.

Table 11 shows the number of first-time freshmen aged 25 or older in the South Carolina public colleges and universities for the past five years. The number of first time entering freshmen aged 25 and older has decreased slightly in the four-year institutions since Fall 2008 and has increased in the two-year institutions since Fall 2007.

Table 11
Number of First-time Freshmen Aged 25 and Older by Year
South Carolina Public Colleges and Universities
Five-Year Comparison

Institutions	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Grand Total
Research Institutions						
Clemson University	0	0	0	0	0	0
U.S.C. - Columbia	3	3	3	1	5	15
Medical Univ. of S.C.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Research Institutions	3	3	3	1	5	15
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities						
The Citadel	2	0	1	1	1	5
Coastal Carolina University	2	1	2	3	4	12
College of Charleston	1	0	2	1	0	4
Francis Marion University	2	2	5	5	5	19
Lander University	2	0	3	2	1	8
South Carolina State Univ.	2	2	10	7	6	27
U.S.C. - Aiken	4	3	1	1	2	11
U.S.C. - Beaufort	7	6	7	6	5	31
U.S.C. - Upstate	14	8	11	7	4	44
Winthrop University	4	2	2	0	0	8
Total Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	40	24	44	33	28	169
Total Senior Institutions	43	27	47	34	33	184
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC						
U.S.C. - Lancaster	18	22	24	12	26	102
U.S.C. - Salkehatchie	28	23	36	41	59	187
U.S.C. - Sumter	12	13	4	14	8	51
U.S.C. - Union	10	12	8	14	13	57
Total Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC	68	70	72	81	106	397
Grand Total	111	97	119	115	139	581

Conclusion

In general, students applying for college are becoming slightly better prepared for postsecondary education as 96% of applicable first-time freshmen meet all of the high school course prerequisites in 2010; however, there is considerable variability among institutions with six four-year institutions showing increases in the percentage of freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites for all freshmen and six showing decreases. Institutions continue to have freshmen who do not meet the lab science, foreign language and the elective requirements of the high school course prerequisites. Based on the data, students who are admitted and have not met the high school course prerequisites tend to have a lower retention rate after the first year at

the institution than those students who did meet the prerequisites. Institutions need to be aware of this difference in freshman to sophomore retention and allow for it when making decisions.

Institutions continue to adjust admission requirements for first-time entering freshmen as indicated in the proposed minimum admission standards for Fall 2011. The required minimum SAT/ACT scores are lower for those students with a higher GPA and high school class rank at most but not all institutions.

Finally, institutions are not using the new Writing Component of the SAT as a requirement for admission. However, six of the institutions are using the scores for research. These institutions are analyzing the data to determine whether the Writing Component should become part of the admission requirements and/or be used for supplemental information as part of a holistic review of the student's application.