

Minutes of
HIGHER EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
April 4, 2008, 1:00 p.m.
Meeting with Public Institution Presidents/Representatives
SC Commission on Higher Education Offices
Columbia, South Carolina

In attendance:

Study Committee Members Present

Mr. Daniel Ravenel, *Chair*
Mr. Boone Aiken
Col. Claude Eichelberger
Representative Jerry Govan
Mr. Scott Ludlow
Dr. Layton McCurdy
Mr. Bobby Marlowe
Dr. John Montgomery

Study Committee Members Absent

Dr. Doris Helms

Presidents/Representatives Present

Research Universities:

Clemson University, Angie Leidinger
Medical University of SC, Dr. John Raymond
University of SC, Dr. Andrew Sorensen

Comprehensive Universities:

Citadel, Lt. Gen. John Rosa
College of Charleston, President George Benson
College of Charleston, Mr. Steve Osborne
Francis Marion University, Dr. Fred Carter
Lander University, Dr. Dan Ball
SC State University, Dr. Rita Teal
Winthrop University, Ms. Rebecca Masters
University of SC Aiken, Dr. Tom Hallman
University of SC Beaufort, Dr. Jane Upshaw
University of SC Upstate, Dr. John Stockwell
University of SC Sumter, Dr. Anthony Coyne

Technical Colleges:

Aiken Technical College, Dr. Susan Winsor
Denmark Technical College, Dr. John Waddell
Northeastern Technical College, Dr. Dorr Depew
Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College,
Dr. Ann Crook
Piedmont Technical College, Dr. Rayburn Brooks
Tri-County Technical College, Dr. Ronnie Booth
Williamsburg Technical College, Dr. Cleve Cox
S. C. Technical College System, Ms. Joren Bartlett

Graduate Centers:

Dr. Skip Godow

CHE Staff

Dr. Garrison Walters, Executive Director
Ms. Rita Allison
Ms. Laura Belcher
Ms. Julie Carullo
Mr. Gary Glenn
Dr. Lynn Kelley
Dr. Gail Morrison
Dr. Mike Raley
Ms. Beth Rogers
Ms. Karen Wham
Dr. Karen Woodfaulk

Guests:

Ms. Beth McGinnis, Clemson University
Ms. Robin Moseley, Senate Education Committee

Agenda Item 1, Call to Order and Introductions

Mr. Daniel Ravenel called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m. All committee members, guests, and Commission on Higher Education staff in attendance introduced themselves and their names were recorded.

Agenda Item 2, Discussion, Study Committee Update and Proposed Timeline

Chairman Ravenel invited one person from each of the sectors to provide comments on the work of the HESC to date as well as on the proposed timeline for future activities. It was the general consensus of the group that the Presidents would like to have time to more thoroughly review the materials which had been distributed to them by e-mail on April 1, 2008. They agreed that each of their sectors would convene a meeting of their

Presidents to consider this information, after which they would bring their comprehensive reaction to the HESC. President Ball will coordinate this effort on behalf of the comprehensive sector, and President Sorensen will coordinate on behalf of the research sector. President Ball also volunteered to serve on one of the to-be-formed task forces which will further consider the topic of state scholarships and grants. President Crook stated she would be attending a meeting of technical college presidents on April 14 and 15, at which time she would initiate discussion of the HESC's draft plan with the presidents from South Carolina.

In response to President Ball's question about whether the dates of this timeline were firm, Chairman Ravenel stated that they would have to be adhered to closely in order to comply with the time constraints mandated by the legislature. Chairman Ravenel then provided more detail on the progression of the timeline, a copy of which may be found in **Attachment I**.

President Ball expressed concern that raising the GPA requirement of Palmetto Fellows and Life Scholarship eligibility in order to release more money for Need-based Grants would place unfair responsibility on the Palmetto Fellows and Life Scholarship programs.

Agenda Item 3, Discussion, Goal Outlines

Before addressing this item, Mr. Ravenel called on the Chairs of the HESC Advisory Groups to review their reports

Agenda Item 4, Discussion, Advisory Group Reports

The Chairs of each the HESC Advisory Committees then provided brief descriptions on the recommendations they had developed. Details on each of those recommendations may be found in **Attachment I**.

Mr. Marlowe reported for the Organization and Plan Implementation Advisory Group. Following Mr. Marlowe's report the following comments were shared.

With regard to proposed recommendation 3, which suggests that the composition of the CHE be changed to allow that 6 of its Commissioners be elected by the General Assembly, Dr. Carter recommended that one candidate from each district be presented to the legislature for their approval. Discussion took place in which the possibility of striking residency requirements for Commissioners was proposed in order to develop a board which has true statewide interests. Mr. Marlowe asked that all Presidents and/or representatives in attendance provide the HESC with ideas on areas where the CHE's authority might be enhanced for the benefit of higher education.

In the place of Dr. Helms, who was unable to attend, Dr. Morrison reported on behalf of the Institutional Missions and Academic Programs and Planning Advisory Group. Following Dr. Morrison's report, the following comments were shared.

With regard to the proposed recommendation 7, which advocates addressing the absence of higher education institutions in certain areas of the state, especially along the I-95 corridor, Dr. Carter cautioned against targeting specific areas. He stated that an impoverished area does not necessarily mean that it does not have institutional coverage. Dr. Booth recommended that better communication take place between faculty members throughout the state with regard to articulation. Dr. Hallman stated that another important aspect is to make sure greater definition is given to each of the three sectors. He noted that the comprehensive institutions should get more recognition and a better marketing plan should be developed for all institutions. Dr. Winsor advocated that the perspective of recommendation 7 should be totally reworked. She stated that the issue is not that of program availability, but rather the lack of a population ready for and able to get to higher education. Dr. Carter stated that higher education opportunities are present along the I-95 corridor, but the lack of adequate preparation and financial resources prevents students from pursuing higher education. Dr. Upshaw stated that getting students to the level where they are eligible to attend and succeed is

the issue, not gaps in coverage and programs. She noted that there are institutions in South Carolina who are currently working to get students to that level.

Dr. McCurdy reported on behalf of the Enrollment Advisory Group. Following Dr. McCurdy's report, the following comments were shared.

With regard to proposed recommendation 4, which advocates creating a tax credit incentive program for non-residents who remain in the state after completing their degrees, Dr. Carter commented that although no fiscal impact statements have been done on any of the advisory group recommendations, the recommendations would most likely not be of financial benefit to institutions. He stated further that he believed that the legislature would not be in favor of the tax credit proposal and that the proposal gives the impression that the HESC is apologizing for bringing more out-of-state students into South Carolina. Dr. Booth suggested we need a mind-set change and that it seems the recommendations are only "nibbling around the edges". He suggested asking students what they think about an educational model for the state. Dr. McCurdy initiated conversation about adult students who have the potential to enroll in institutions of higher education after some remediation. Dr. Hallman stated that collaborative work on this issue needs to take place between K-12 and higher education. He also stated that recommendation 5, which recommends creating a surcharge for students taking excessive coursework, is unnecessary. Dr. Winsor stated that these recommendations do not display a connection to activities under the EEDA legislation. She recommended that tax rebates be linked to critical education categories. Dr. Booth noted that the recommendations do not address fundamental topics of what the problem is and what we are doing about it. He noted that there must be a willingness on the part of all those involved in developing them to make sure the changes are made, and that the influence of strong business men and women in developing the recommendations is needed. Dr. Brooks commented on the adult literacy program in Georgia in which a \$500 college scholarship is provided to people who complete their GED. In response to Chairman Ravenel's question about whether technical colleges should drive enrollment increases as opposed to the comprehensive and research institutions, Dr. Carter replied that the comprehensive institutions should be able to provide funded remedial support and that flexibility should exist.

Mr. Scott Ludlow reported on behalf of the Funding and Institutional Costs Advisory Group. Following Mr. Ludlow's report, the following comments were shared.

It was indicated that recommendation 3 which pertains to the development of an inclusive funding formula, was a skillful skirting of the issue, and was suggested that the problem with funding is that the MRR has not been fully implemented and that it should be strictly adhered to. Dr. Hallman noted that the average FTE expenditure in South Carolina is lower than neighboring states and that this must be addressed when dealing with the overall issue of funding. In response to Dr. McCurdy's statement that higher education in South Carolina might be well served if all components spoke with a solid voice with regard to funding, Dr. Hallman suggested that perhaps a better plan could be developed over the next 10-20 years. Dr. Carter stated that recommendation 1 which pertains to the development of a multi-year integrated planning and budgetary process, will not work in this state as higher education has not been high on the legislature's list of funding priorities. He stated further that the argument must be made for a dedicated source of funding for higher education which will at least address base needs from year to year. With such a source in place, the development of a multi-year budget plan may become more possible.

Mr. Ravenel emphasized the importance of getting the legislature to recognize that higher education is an engine to improve the overall condition of South Carolinians.

Representative Govan stated that there has been some negligence on the part of the General Assembly in the past in terms of higher education. Competition for funding exists between K-12 and higher education and the emphasis has traditionally gone to K-12. Lottery funding has only provided partial assistance to higher education funding. Disparities exist in higher education funding in terms of the distribution of funds to the various sectors. Growth in the budgets of the comprehensive and technical institutions has been minimal in comparison to those of the research institutions. The General Assembly has been reactionary in they have provided funds for special projects when approached by various entities. The real issue is to set priorities and

move beyond the needs of individual institutions to consider addressing higher education need in such a way that it will be beneficial to the state as a whole. Representative Govan concluded by stating that the citizens of the state want solutions to higher education issues and still perceive that an education is a ticket to a better life.

President Ball noted that, though the three sectors don't often agree, they did show unified support of a bond bill last year, though the legislature did not support it. Representative Govan replied that there is a core base of support in the legislature, though it currently in the minority. He noted that there will be a large population of newly elected legislators when the General Assembly comes back in session in January 2009 and a newly elected Governor in 2010. This should provide a good opportunity for the birth of change.

Dr. Montgomery reported for the Buildings, Facilities and Information Technology Advisory Group. In a brief overview of this groups' work, he stated that deferred maintenance of buildings and facilities is a huge problem which must be dealt with in order to provide for increased capacity as enrollments increase. Working collaboratively on facilities and technology needs will be of great assistance in dealing with issues of growth, not only in terms of instructional needs but also to those pertaining to the administrative aspects related to higher education.

Representative Govan reported for the State Scholarships and Grants Advisory Group. He reviewed the eight questions addressed by the group and the recommendations they developed.

Comments during the course of this presentation included a question from President Brooks about whether the group had considered the topic of cost per credit hour. Dr. John Raymond stated that the majority of MUSC students are ineligible for any type of state aid and he asked if the advisory had considered that as a topic. Ms. Rebecca Masters, who attended the meeting for President DiGiorgio of Winthrop University, stated that Dr. DiGiorgio had concerns about recommendation 4 which pertains to increasing the GPA requirements for continued eligibility for the Palmettos Fellows and LIFE scholarships. She expressed that an increase may be counter-productive and advocated for allowing students two years to maintain their GPAs to allow for adjustments of becoming accustomed to college during freshman year. She suggested that penalizing these students to possibly provide for need-based was ill-advised. Dr. Carter agreed with the idea of allowing students two years to maintain their GPA's. In light of scarce resources, it was suggested that children of families with incomes above a certain level should not be eligible for LIFE and HOPE scholarships and that there be a means test for scholarship eligibility. Dr. Ball suggested that perhaps the standards to initially receive the scholarships should be raised as opposed to raising the standards to retain it. Dr. Carter suggested lowering the SAT requirement for scholarship eligibility. Dr. Crook requested that the Presidents have an opportunity to look at all the numbers of the various scholarship distribution scenarios.

Mr. Ravenel then invited additional comments on the four overarching goals. Dr. Brooks stated that he takes issue with Goal 4 which pertains to increasing efficiency and effectiveness. He stated that institutions are already working very hard with the resources they have available. He stated that a structural issue which needs to be addressed is the fact that South Carolina's tuition rates are so much higher than those of neighboring states.

Agenda Item 5, Other Business

Mr. Ravenel stated that this meeting had provided an opportunity for the beginning of good dialogue. He asked that each sector call their respective meetings as soon as possible, and added that he would do his best to be present at some, if not all, of those meetings.

Agenda Item 6, Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.