

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Dan Ravenel, Chairman, and Members of the Higher Education Study Committee

FROM: Dr. Doris R. Helms, Chairperson, Institutional Missions and Academic Programs and Planning Advisory Group; Representative Jerry Govan, Vice Chair; Representative BR Skelton and Drs. Fred Baus, Mark Becker, Betsy Fleming, Elise Jorgens, DeWitt Stone, Sonny White

DATE: March 1, 2008

SUBJECT: Report of the Institutional Missions and Academic Programs and Planning Advisory Group of the Higher Education Study Committee

The Institutional Missions and academic Programs and Planning Advisory Group was charged with considering the following questions raised by the *Final report of the Governor's Higher Education Task Force*.

- Are institutional strategic plans aligned with a statewide plan to ensure state needs are met?
- Do the individual institutional missions considered collectively align so as to facilitate the accomplishment of statewide strategic needs?
- Are individual institutional missions sufficiently clear in purpose?
- In the context of state planning and in consideration of the aforementioned goals, are the type and breadth of academic offerings sufficient to ensure that an appropriate array of high quality, accessible programs are available to meet statewide needs?

The Advisory Group held two meetings on November 30, 2007 and January 18, 2008 to consider the purpose and breadth of institutional missions that support the Higher education system in the state of South Carolina. Minutes for the meetings are attached (*Attachments 1 and 2*) The following recommendations are the result of Advisory Group discussions:

***Are institutional strategic plans aligned with a statewide plan to ensure state needs are met?***

The Advisory Group determined that this question could not be answered until a statewide plan is created. A review of current strategic plans led to the conclusion that most plans are generally aligned with the broad goals for the state. These include:

1. South Carolina to rank among the top states in educational levels, including priority areas,
2. South Carolina to rank among top states in sponsored research and related measures of innovation, and
3. South Carolina to rank among top states in workforce development and educational services.

South Carolina institutions are invested in improving education levels including priority areas; growing and improving sponsored research and innovation; and improving workforce development and educational services. These broad general goals are found in institutional strategic plans across the state.

***Recommendation:*** The Advisory Group agreed that institutions should be asked to revise their respective strategic plans once the statewide plan for higher education is established. These should be reviewed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHE) staff to ensure that plans are aligned with the strategic plan.

***Do the individual institutional missions considered collectively align so as to facilitate the accomplishment of statewide strategic needs?***

The Advisory Group reviewed Institutional missions available for all public institutions (*see Attachment 3*) and found that missions are aligned with institutional types, including research institutions, comprehensive four-year colleges and universities, two year institutions and the state technical colleges as described in the SC Code of Laws, Section 59-103-15. (*Attachment 4*) The committee concurred that including specific state goals or needs in institutional mission statements would be contrary to the mission criteria of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). According to SACS criteria regarding mission statements, “the institution has a clearly defined and published mission statement specific to the institution and appropriate to an institution of higher education, addressing teaching and learning and, where applicable, research and public service.”

The Study Group discussed the need for the state to understand the differences in support needs, including budget, facilities, information technology and human resources, among the three institutional sectors- research, comprehensive and two year/technical colleges.

***Recommendation:*** The Advisory Group recommends that institutional missions remain specific to their respective institutions and not specific to statewide goals. It is further recommended that each institution create a separate statement regarding adherence and acceptance of a statewide plan once a plan is established.

The Study Group recommends that the CHE give greater definition to the three higher education sectors in terms of staffing the CHE with individuals prepared to understand and advise the diversity of institutions within the different sectors.

***Are individual institutional missions sufficiently clear in purpose?***

The CHE *Policy and Procedures for Approval of New or Revised Mission Statements* provides a template to ensure that institutional missions contain common elements while remaining specific to individual institutional goals. The Advisory Group found that individual mission statements were clear in their purpose for each institution and identified, by institution, specific areas of emphasis for the educational programs at that institution.

**Recommendation:** The Advisory Group concluded that institutional mission statements should remain true to the purpose of the institution and again supported the use of a second statement to align missions with a state plan for higher education.

***In the context of state planning and in consideration of the aforementioned goals, are the type and breadth of academic offerings sufficient to ensure that an appropriate array of high quality, accessible programs are available to meet statewide needs?***

To ensure that the academic offerings are established and maintained by each institution in support of each mission and the state's plan, the Governor's Higher Education Task Force also suggested that the following be explored:

1. Academic offerings, academic quality, and the existence and future likelihood of adequate resources to support and ensure the provision of high quality academic offerings.
2. Access (distance and cost).
3. Institutional diversity.
4. Clarity of purpose in undergraduate and graduate program offerings and the purpose of program location throughout the state.
5. The obsolescence or continuing vitality of existing programs.
6. Realistic facility use and campus growth opportunities to support these programs and offerings.
7. Programs not currently offered but which should be offered to effectively implement the Plan.
8. Alternatives for delivery of core educational needs in a cost effective and efficient manner.

Questions 2,3, 6 and 8 are being explored further by additional Advisory Groups of the Higher Education Study Committee

The Advisory Committee reviewed the following documents in order to determine whether the necessary breadth of educational offerings exists among institutions and whether or not significant duplication or gaps in educational offerings exist among programs offered by South Carolina institutions of higher education.

- South Carolina Course Alignment Project Environmental Scan
- Inventory Report of all Degree Programs in SC
- Degree Program Bar Graphs
- New Carolina Industry Cluster List
- Report: *America's Forgotten Middle-Skill Jobs: Education and Training Requirements in the Next Decade and Beyond*
- Institutional Emphasis Area responses
  - "State Population Changes by Race and Ethnicity" excerpt from the *USA Today*
- SC Institutional Map

The Advisory Group also reviewed the CHE program *Inventory Report* to determine whether or not course offerings support South Carolina's economic development initiatives aligned with Michael Porter's industry clusters and the emerging clusters identified by New Carolina's October 2007 Annual Report.(see *Attachment 5*) Representative Govan initiated discussion about future workforce needs of the state, asking the question, "Are we producing enough graduates in the right fields to meet the workforce needs of South Carolina's future and to ensure economic growth and stability in the state?"

The Advisory Group concluded that additional data and information are needed to study questions raised during group discussions.

The Study Group also discussed the need for additional funding for all higher education institutions (not just for research centers at research institutions) in order to increase academic offerings and to support increases in enrollment in higher education institutions.

***Recommendations:***

The Advisory Group recommends that additional analysis of program offerings be conducted to answer the following questions.

1. How many graduates have been produced in Associates, Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral Programs during the past five years across all SC institutions? Are programs appropriate? Is there unnecessary duplication? Are program offerings aligned with emerging industry clusters? Are there gaps in program offerings that might negatively affect workforce development or production of graduates in middle management fields?
2. Are institutional emphasis areas outlined by institutional strategic plans aligned with program productivity results?
3. What is the retention rate for out-of-state students in specific disciplines?
4. Does the breakdown of graduate degrees by race and gender for the past five years indicate patterns of preferential study or problems of access?

*The Advisory Committee further recommends that:*

- the CHE increase efforts to support the core academic missions of the colleges and universities that are being compromised by increasing allocation of state resources to economic development priorities.
- the CHE support the funding of a bond bill needed to enhance facilities necessary for core teaching functions in colleges and universities

- a solution be sought, through the use of university collaborations, bridge programs and/or distance education, to address the absence of higher education institutions in certain areas of the state, especially along the I-95 corridor (*see map Attachment 6*)
- consideration be given to partnering all public and private higher education institutions with low-performing K-12 schools in their districts such that institutions are responsible for the quality of teacher preparation and student success.

The Study Group concluded its work by indicating that additional time would be needed to gather and analyze data pertinent to the questions raised above. The following proposal was accepted by the Study Group as a means to expedite the work of the Higher Education Study Committee:

1. Using recent population and education trend data, predict South Carolina's overall higher education needs for the year 2020.
2. Decide upon the appropriate contribution to be made by each sector in meeting this need.
3. Decide upon the appropriate contribution to be made by each institution in meeting this need.
4. Require institutional mission statements to be rewritten to conform to the plan.
5. Given South Carolina's educational needs for 2020, predict the infrastructure needs of each institution.
6. Given South Carolina's educational needs for 2020, predict the operating budget needs of each institution.
7. Fully support each institution that meets its obligations under the plan.
8. Assist each institution that needs help in meeting its obligations under the plan.
9. Hold accountable each institution that does not attempt to meet obligations under the plan.
10. After the Statewide strategic Plan has been in effect for five years, use the knowledge gained to propose changes in the governance system at state, system and institutional levels