

Higher Education Study Committee - Advisory Groups Working Document, 9/25/2007

The Higher Education Study Committee (HESC) is charged with developing a multi-year statewide strategic plan for higher education to meet the needs of the state as can be addressed by higher education. In doing so, HESC is to consider five categories (Institutional Missions and Academic Programs and Planning, Enrollment, Funding and Institutional Cost, Buildings, Facilities and Information Technology, and Organization and Plan Implementation) as set forth previously by the Governor's Task Force on Higher Education, which was established through Executive Order 2006-01 and completed its work with a report released in September 2006. Additionally, HESC is charged with including recommendations for all state supported higher education scholarship and grant programs whether funded through the Education Lottery or the State General Fund.

In September, HESC determined it would establish advisory groups to provide more in-depth analysis and information for consideration by HESC. Membership of these groups would be a manageable size to include appropriate representation (twelve or fewer members), with one or more Study Committee members who would chair or co-chair the group. Other advisory group members would include appropriate institutional, state, and/or business representation suited to address the particular topic.

Charge / Overarching Advisory Group Considerations

The Primacy of a Plan

At the September 20 meeting, the HESC decided to closely follow the structure and approach set down in the final report of the Governor's Task Force on Higher Education and the subsequent Proviso passed by the General Assembly that established the new HESC. The Proviso calls for responses in six areas, and the HESC decided to create separate Advisory Groups for each of these.

In deciding how to organize and charge these Advisory Groups, it is important to note that, as set forth by the Governor's Task Force on Higher Education, the questions for five of these areas presuppose the existence of a statewide plan for higher education. For example, it is noted in the Task Force's Report that missions should be examined along various dimensions to ensure the academic offerings are established and maintained by each institution in support of each mission and the state's plan; enrollment is to be considered and recommended in line with the state's enrollment plan and needs; and funding is examined relative to consideration of existing resources and ability to carry out the Plan.

The September 20 meeting did advance a specific approach to goals. Dr. Helms cited the August, 2007, *CHE Discussion Draft: Action Plan for Higher Education in South Carolina* as worthy of consideration, noting that the three goals (see below), provided a clear, easily understandable framework for moving ahead. The goals are:

1. South Carolina to rank in the top xx% of states in educational levels, including priority areas;
2. South Carolina to rank in the top xx% of states in sponsored research and related measures of innovation; and

3. South Carolina to rank in the top xx% of states in workforce development and educational services.

For these goals, the HESC would determine not only the percentage level in which the state should rank, but also the composition of the measures. For example, educational levels would likely reflect a weighted matrix of associate, baccalaureate, graduate and professional degrees; sponsored research and innovation could be weighted toward specific areas; measures of innovation could include licenses of intellectual property, technology-based startups, etc.; workforce development might include certificate and specialized training; and educational services could include things such as medical residencies, cultural programs, etc.

The HESC will not only need to decide if these are the appropriate goals, it will need to do so fairly quickly, establishing at least a framework so that the various Advisory Groups can set about their fairly complex and demanding tasks in the most productive manner. Although some sequencing of tasks does appear to be necessary, it does not mean that all other Advisory Groups must wait until the plan framework is established—there are numerous issues of organization, problem definition, and so on that can be dealt with in the interim. That being said, the Advisory Group on Organization and Plan Implementation will surely need to take a leading role and as a consequence we suggest giving it #1 rather than #5.

Membership of Advisory Groups

The creation of Advisory Groups has the advantage of dividing the HESC's responsibilities into manageable chunks. Other benefits include the opportunity to draw in a range of expertise from the state's institutions of higher education as well as in securing the perspectives and insight of business and government leaders. Study Committee members will chair or co-chair the Advisory Groups. To ensure a balance of participation and workable size, the HESC might consider core membership for each Advisory Group to be along the following lines:

- Two or three HESC members serving as chairs/co-chairs/vice chairs
- Seven higher education representatives (e.g., trustees, faculty, staff and others), including two individuals each from the research, comprehensive and technical public college sectors and one from an independent institution;
- Two representatives from the legislature; and
- Two representatives from the business community.

This list is given as a reference point—different Advisory Groups might have reasons for a different composition or size.

Staffing the Advisory Groups

CHE staff will assist each Advisory Group with appropriate state and local information, including the development of new reports and analyses. Legislative staff may be called on for various aspects. Should an Advisory Group want to develop information not readily available from the two staffs, the CHE will assist with potential consultants or outside sources. The CHE staff will also work to coordinate the interaction of the different Advisory Groups, and to that end one or more CHE staff members will be assigned to each group. **Group 1: Organization and Plan Implementation**

HESC Members: Marlowe and Helms (*co-chairs*)

Other Members: *To be determined*

Staff Support: *To be determined*

Description: This advisory group will take the lead in designing the overarching framework for statewide plan development and outlining an implementation strategy. The work of this group could be viewed in light of three phases carried out in coordination and consultation with other working groups and the HESC: 1) working to quickly establish a framework from which each of the advisory groups could focus and organize their work, 2) providing more in-depth analysis to outline a framework that would ensure ties between institutional missions and statewide goals, and 3) developing the outline or framework necessary for successfully implementing the statewide plan that is recommended by the HESC

(See Resources below for additional Governor’s Task Force Report considerations.)

Connections: This group’s work will assist in providing direction for the overarching statewide goals and a framework to inform each of the other groups’ considerations.

Resources:

Governor’s Task Force Report Considerations (EXCERPT):

Organization and Plan Implementation: The development of this initial Plan will be a pivotal and signal event in the state’s history. Considerable time, effort, and resources will have to be committed and devoted to its creation, resulting in unprecedented, comprehensive concurrence among the governor, General Assembly, higher education community, public education (K-12), and the state’s private sector and business leadership. Steps must be taken to ensure the Plan will be appropriately implemented and administered.

Depending upon the ultimate elements of the Plan, some of the measures necessary to ensure implementation may be currently placed, in view of authority vested, with CHE. However, CHE, or such other entity as may be charged with Plan implementation and enforcement, may not hold the authority necessary to implement and enforce all aspects of the Plan.

Because accountability and effective implementation are essential elements of any plan’s success, we recommend the Committee consider the following questions, as such apply to the implementation and administration of the adopted Plan:

- i. Should the system of higher education be organized such that there is a single, authoritative entity, responsible for the regular review, maintenance, implementation, and administration of the Plan in accordance with defined State needs?
- ii. Should the entity charged with Plan development, oversight, management, and administration hold authority sufficient to ensure that the missions, operations, and practices of each institution directly serve the Plan – particularly those operations and practices that most directly affect the Plan (enrollment, academic offerings, facilities, information technology services)?
- iii. Should the entity hold authority sufficient to enable it to ensure that each institution maintains admission criteria, enrollment headcount, a balance of in-state/out-of-state enrollment, growth plans, etc, that fit within and serve that Plan?
- iv. With regard to selection criteria and the method of selection, how should the entity be composed such that its membership is knowledgeable of the subject matter, sufficiently representative of higher education’s offerings in South Carolina, and familiar with the state’s needs of educational progression (i.e., K-12), private sector needs, and statewide economic development plans and goals?
- v. Does the method of selection and selection criteria for those in authority at each institution (administration and boards/commissions) ensure that they are accountable to the governor and/or General Assembly to ensure the respective entity’s faithful implementation of the Plan?
- vi. Should the entity be authorized to specifically approve a project/program/campus/institute before “below-the-line” or other allocation of state funding is made or may be received?
- vii. Should the entity hold authority to act unilaterally when such is necessary to ensure the Plan is appropriately implemented?

- viii. Should the entity enjoy state funding allocations such that the entity might stimulate Plan-driven action within sectors via incentives?
- ix. Should the entity hold authority to eliminate programs/academic offerings/institutes/campuses which no longer advance the Plan, or serve the mission, as well as seek or require the offering of new programs at institutions uniquely positioned to address state needs and the Plan?
- x. Should the entity hold exclusive authority to review, approve, or require all aspects of an institution's physical growth and provision of services to ensure the Plan is implemented as intended?
- xi. What measures should be considered to ensure the entity is sufficiently and knowledgeably composed and staffed, and adequately funded, so that it may effectively and appropriately determine and monitor the quality of academic program offerings in the state?
- xii. Should the entity hold authority to ensure that the state's enrollment needs are being served by each institution's enrollment plan and practices?
- xiii. Should the entity hold authority to assess classroom utilization, adequate use of summer school, need for new classrooms/classroom buildings, and/or resource allocation to support the enrollment plan?
- xiv. If the legislature adopts a baseline commitment of fiscal support for higher education and this commitment and the cost of each institution are considered in the determination of the institution's tuition, should this entity hold authority to disapprove tuition increases if the tuition would exceed the Plan's method of tuition increase determination?
- xv. Should the entity hold authority to monitor each institution's execution of effective business practices, including the authority to award incentives to encourage each institution's exercise of effective business practices?
- xvi. Should the entity hold authority to assess the physical resource needs per institution, with such assessment tied to the Plan and/or institutional plans, thereby providing a baseline for the determination of the state's physical needs?
- xvii. Should the entity hold authority to approve/disapprove an institution's plans for physical resource development to ensure compatibility within the statewide Plan?
- xviii. Should the entity hold exclusive authority to advance to the legislature the arrangement and priority of the state's higher education physical resource capital needs and should the current method of physical funding and approvals be changed to ensure the vitality of the entity's recommendations?

Group 2: Institutional Missions and Academic Programs and Planning

HESC Members: Helms (*chair*), Eichelberger and Govan (vice chairs)

Other Members: *To be determined*

Staff Support: *To be determined*

Description: This advisory group will focus on institutional plans in the context of accomplishing statewide strategic needs. Among essential questions to be considered are the following:

- 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 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?

(See Resources below for additional Governor's Task Force Report considerations.)

Connections: It is expected that the work of this advisory group will help with questions addressed through group 3 (enrollment), group 4 (funding and institutional costs) and group 5 (building, facilities, and infrastructure needs).

Resources:

The Committee should review the current legislated statewide mission and goals and sector missions to ensure that they address state needs (Section 59-103-15 of the State Code of Laws, as amended).

Individual institutional missions, which are required to be approved by CHE, should also be reviewed.

Governor's Task Force Report Considerations (EXCERPT):

To establish a sound foundation for the development of a thoughtful, purposeful, and useful Plan, we recommend that as one of the Committee's principal considerations and starting points, the Committee should review the current higher education mission and goals as articulated by the legislature (e.g., §59-103-15, *et seq.*) See Appendix C). In doing so, the Committee should consider probing the following:

1. What are the state's needs and expectations of the higher education entities and system? Is the mission and are the goals current in terms of the state's condition, aspirations and needs, particularly as such apply to the educational needs of the state's citizens; the state's economy; economic plans, growth, and workforce needs to effectively compete nationally and internationally; degree production, research and development growth plans; postsecondary readiness and high school graduation rates and trends; state population growth and demographic developments; and other pertinent factors?
2. If this mission and these goals are not current, what specific changes should the legislature consider?

Institutional Missions and Academic Programs and Planning: The Plan will outline a strategic direction for the state's system of higher education. As an important foundation for this direction and to ensure orderly and efficient delivery of academic offerings to meet statewide needs, institutional missions must be in line with the state's desired strategic direction. To facilitate this essential alignment, we recommend the Committee review

each institution's mission to ensure that these missions – individually and considered together with all other institutions – are in alignment with the state's Plan for higher education.

To ensure that the academic offerings are established and maintained by each institution in support of each mission and the state's Plan, we recommend the Committee examine the following:

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

Group 3: Enrollment

HESC Members: McCurdy (chair) and Marlowe (*vice chair*)

Other Members: *To be determined*

Staff Support: *To be determined*

Description: This advisory group's focus is to be on the various dimensions of higher education enrollment, particularly as enrollments affect the state's ability to compete in the 21st century economy. Among essential questions to be considered are the following:

- What are state-level demographic projections for future enrollments? What are state-level projections for work place demand for graduates by specific fields? How do the two sides of this equation balance?
- At the institutional level, what enrollment plans exist for the next five- and ten-year periods? How do these institutional plans interface with state-level projections?
- What programs are in place that will increase the pipeline of students seeking access to higher education and when will this increased access likely occur?
- What is the capacity of higher education (public and independent) to promote and absorb increased enrollments of traditional as well as adult students, assuming increased educational attainment is adopted as a primary goal of the new plan?
- What are appropriate measures of effectiveness and efficiency in terms of student retention within higher education from year-to-year and degree completion in higher education, and how can these be linked to state goals for increasing educational attainment?
- What programs exist or should be implemented to reduce disparities in higher education enrollment/retention/graduation by traditionally underserved (African-American; Hispanic in particular) groups and by gender (males)?
- Is there an optimal balance between in-state and out-of-state students? How should the retention in-state of out-of-state students affect this balance? Or the loss to out-of-state jobs of in-state students?
- Do state-level and institutional transfer policies and practices exist that ensure a seamless progression from two- to four- year institutions?

(See Resources below for additional Governor's Task Force Report considerations.)

Connections: Scaling up enrollments to increase educational attainment links to group 2 (missions, programs, and planning), group 4 (funding and institutional costs), group 5 (buildings, facilities, and information technology), and group 6 (scholarships and grants).

Resources:

Hitting Home: Quality, Cost, and Access Challenges Confronting Higher Education Today (Lumina, March 2007) http://www.collegecosts.info/wp-content/file_uploads/Hitting_Home_030107.pdf

More Student Success: A Systemic Solution (SHEEO, 2007)
<http://www.sheeo.org/k16/StudSucc2.pdf>

Public Accountability for Student Learning in Higher Education (ACE, April 2004)
http://www.bhef.com/publications/2004_public_accountability.pdf

Governor's Task Force Report Considerations (EXCERPT):

Enrollment: Enrollment (as the term includes all features of enrollment such as headcount, diversity, in-state/out-of-state ratio, accessibility, etc.) is an integral element of a comprehensive strategic plan. Unless enrollment growth and disbursement are carefully considered when developing the Plan, the Plan will be determined by each institution's individual enrollment pattern – whether planned or unplanned and potentially inconsistent with the goal of addressing the state's needs.

For those reasons, we recommend the Plan include a statewide, multi-year enrollment plan with the enrollment plans required of each institution to be specifically aligned with the state's enrollment plan and needs. We also recommend the enrollment plan be based upon statewide and institutional enrollment projections supported by credible demographic information to foster understanding of the state's future needs or demands for higher education.

Additionally, we recommend that in the development of the Plan, the Committee examine the following:

- i. Available private higher education offerings in SC; student market factors (cost and projected cost to the student); economic market factors (employment and economic demand); the state's current and future high school graduation rates.
- ii. K-12 plans for improvement of high school graduation rates.
- iii. In-state/out-of-state student ratios per sector and whether these ratios should be approved by the legislature and governor.
- iv. Classroom utilization; adequate use of summer school; the need for new classrooms/classroom buildings; resource allocation to support the enrollment plan.
- v. Standards to ensure the effective and efficient involvement of the state's teaching faculty.

Group 4: Funding and Institutional Cost

HESC Members: Ludlow (*chair*) and Montgomery (vice chair)

Other Members: *To be determined*

Staff Support: *To be determined*

Description: This advisory group will focus on the presence of existing fiscal resources and the likelihood and promise of the resources necessary to advance the strategic plan. Accordingly, much of the work of this group will be in response to the work of the remaining groups. Essential questions to be considered will address affordability of higher education as it affects students, parents, and the state.

(See Resources below for additional Governor’s Task Force Report considerations.)

Connections: Work of this group is directly associated with that of groups 2 (missions, programs, and planning), group 5 (buildings, facilities, and information technology), and group 6 (scholarships and grants).

Resources:

South Carolina’s Mission Resource Requirements Model (MRR)

<http://www.che.sc.gov/Finance/Fin/MRRManual/2007-08MRRBooklet.pdf>

Status of South Carolina Funding Relative to MRR, FY 2007-08

Tuition & Required Fees for Full-Time Undergraduate Students, AY 2007-08

http://www.che.sc.gov/Finance/Fin/2007-08_Tuition&FeesSummary_Web.pdf

State Higher Education Finance FY 2006, State Higher Education Executive Officers, 2007 http://www.sheeo.org/finance/shef_fy06.pdf

Survey of State Tuition, Fees, and Financial Assistance Policies For Public Colleges And Universities, 2005-06, State Higher Education Executive Officers

<http://www.sheeo.org/finance/tuitionfee06.pdf>

Governor’s Task Force Report Considerations (EXCERPT):

Funding and Institutional Cost: Funding and institutional cost are vital considerations for the Plan’s development as these factors directly affect the existence and quality of academic programs as well as enrollment. Any plan that does not consider the presence of existing fiscal and physical resources and the likelihood and promise of future resources to be provided throughout the Plan’s span of implementation is a plan founded solely upon hope, with instantly uncertain reliability.

To address these issues, we recommend that in the development of the Plan the Committee examine the following:

- i. What is the meaning of “affordability,” and who could and should define the term and criteria for its consideration so that the meaning is accepted by the legislature, governor, higher education institutions, and the state’s citizens?
- ii. Should the determination of “affordability” include consideration of student debt, all sources of a student’s financial and other support, and the availability of scholarships?
- iii. As the legislature has articulated the state’s higher education mission, should the legislature also declare its support for the Plan and the vitality of the planning process by expressing the degree to which it is prepared to support the institutions, as its vehicles of implementation, through declaration of an amount (percent of cost) it deems as necessary and appropriate?

- iv. Should the legislature's declaration of support serve as the baseline for tuition increase determinations, and should this declaration of support include or exclude lottery funds currently distributed through scholarships?
- v. What is the legislature's intention regarding lottery scholarships? Are lottery funds considered as institutional operating funds, augmenting state appropriations to the institutions, or are these funds considered as tuition discounts, directly benefiting the student?
- vi. Should a universal method or formula of tuition determination be established as based upon a criteria of consideration, accepted by the governor, General Assembly and institutions?
- vii. As "affordability" is also affected by an institution's observation of "Best Practices" for effective business and academic activities, then should certain standard practices be expected and should greater private sector services and academic alternatives, such as distance education and improved articulation between sectors and K-12, be employed where savings and efficiencies can be achieved?
- viii. Should incentives be established to encourage each institution's exercise of effective business and academic practices so that elimination of unnecessary costs and practices are rewarded, and efficiencies and savings are realized?
- ix. Should regulatory and required administrative practices be systematically reviewed to identify opportunities for "relief" from certain regulations and practices if such steps would aid in the determination of opportunities for greater affordability through heightened efficiencies and greater cost reductions (particularly for capital projects)?

Group 5: Buildings, Facilities, and Information Technology

HESC Members: Montgomery (*chair*), Ludlow and Eichelberger (vice chairs)

Other Members: *To be determined*

Staff Support: *To be determined*

Description: This advisory group will focus on the state's higher education facilities and their capacity to support future needs. Essential issues to be considered are:

- The academically adequate and efficient use of existing facilities
- The absence of consistent state support for facility and maintenance needs
- The use/expansion of alternative delivery of academic programs to improve efficiency

(See Resources below for additional Governor's Task Force Report considerations.)

Connections: Work of this group is directly associated with that of groups 2 (mission, programs and planning), group 3 (enrollment), and group 4 (funding and institutional costs).

Resources:

FY 2007-08 Space Utilization & SC & National Standards,

http://www.che.sc.gov/New_Web/ForInstitutions/Facilities.htm

History of Capital Improvement Bond (CIB) funding and requests

An Assessment of South Carolina Higher Education Facilities Conditions & Measuring Deferred Maintenance(2007 report in progress)

2007 Higher Education Statistical Abstract, CHE,

<http://www.che.sc.gov/Finance/Abstract/Abstract2007web.pdf>

Higher Education Facilities Statistical Abstract South Carolina Public Colleges & Universities, Fourth Edition, July 2007, CHE

<http://www.che.sc.gov/Finance/FacilitiesInformation/2007FacilitiesAbstract.pdf>

CHEMIS Course Data (for Distance Education offerings)

Governor's Task Force Report Considerations (EXCERPT):

Buildings, Facilities, and Information Technology: Buildings, facilities, and information technology resources ("physical resources") are essential instruments of academic delivery in support of the Plan. As such, the Plan must include careful consideration of the current state of the higher education's facilities and other physical assets as well as future needs as associated with the Plan.

For those reasons, we recommend that in the development of the Plan, the Committee examine the following:

- i. Does the state have facilities sufficient to support the Plan and is adequate and efficient use being made of these facilities?
- ii. Are the state's higher education facilities (including coordination of duplicative administrative information systems) being shared adequately among the institutions to enhance affordability?
- iii. Should space utilization standards be a part of the Plan?
- iv. Should institutional requests for new or renovated buildings be compatible with the statewide Plan?
- v. Should the Plan include recommendations for the improvement of the current capital resources (facilities) approval and delivery processes to ensure greater efficiency and cost effectiveness focused upon the reduction of institutional costs?

Group 6: Scholarships and Grants:**HESC Members:** Govan and Aiken (*co-chairs*)**Other Members:** *To be determined***Staff Support:** *To be determined*

Description: This advisory group will assist in reviewing the state's higher education scholarship and grant programs and developing recommendations for all such programs whether funded through the Education Lottery Account or through the State General Fund. Questions to be addressed might include:

- What are the objectives of South Carolina's current financial aid programs?
- Assuming an overall state goal of increasing educational access and achievement, how could these programs be optimized to have the greatest effect?
- What is the effect of aid programs on retaining graduates in South Carolina?
- What is an appropriate balance between merit-based and need-based aid?
- What are the criteria of affordable higher education in South Carolina?
- Should the determination of "affordability" include consideration of student debt, all sources of a student's financial and other support, and the availability of scholarships?

Connections: Considerations of this group are also most closely related with group 4 (funding and institutional costs) as well as with group 2 (missions, program and planning) and group 3 (enrollment).

Resources:

See also above Governor's Task Force Report considerations listed under Resources for Group 4, Funding and Institutional Costs.

Summary Report on South Carolina Scholarships and Grants 1988 – 2005, revised May 1, 2005

<http://www.che.sc.gov/StudentServices/ScholarshipsandGrantsReport.pdf>

Indicators of Opportunity in Higher Education, Fall 2005 Status Report, The Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education http://www.pellinstitute.org/files/6_Indicators.pdf
Should college board reports on student aid or the NASGAAP report on student aid be listed?

Trends in College Pricing, 2006, and Trends in Student Aid, 2006, College Board reports,

<http://www.collegeboard.com/press/releases/150634.html>

The 37th Annual Survey Report on State-Sponsored Student Financial Aid, 2005-06 Academic Year, National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs,

http://www.nassgap.org/viewrepository.aspx?categoryID=3#collapse_275

The Investment Payoff: A 50-State Analysis of the Public and Private Benefits of Higher Education, 2005 Institute for Higher Education Policy

<http://www.ihep.org/Pubs/PDF/InvestmentPayoff2005.pdf>