

**South Carolina Commission on Higher Education
Large Conference Room
1333 Main Street, Suite 200
Columbia, SC 29201**

**Committee on Access & Equity and Student Services
Minutes of the Meeting
January 19, 2006
11:45 a.m.**

Commission Members Present

Dr. Layton McCurdy, Commission Chairman
Mr. Dan Ravenel, Committee Chairman
Ms. Rosemary Byerly
Dr. Bettie Horne
Ms. Cynthia Mosteller
Dr. Mick Zais
Mr. James Sanders
Mr. Neal Workman
Dr. Conrad Festa

Staff Present

Dr. Karen Woodfaulk
Ms. Sherry Hubbard
Ms. Sandra Rhyne
Ms. Karen Wham
Dr. Tajuana Massie
Ms. Laverne Sanders
Ms. Arlene Criswell
Ms. Lynn Metcalf
Ms. Camille Brown
Ms. Julie Carullo

Guests

Mr. Russ Bumba, South Carolina Technical College System
Mr. Charlie FitzSimons, S.C. Independent Colleges & Universities

1. Introductions and Approval of Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dan Ravenel. Chairman Ravenel asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 1, 2005 meeting. The **motion** was made (Commissioner Cynthia Mosteller), **seconded** (Commissioner Bettie Horne) and **carried** to approve the minutes as written.

2. Review of Proposed Models

Dr. Woodfaulk explained the purpose of the models requested from the Committee's previous meetings.

Ms. Camille Brown explained the chart presented with the sixteen options. Ms. Brown stated that the fiscal impact included all levels of students.

Commissioner Mick Zais stated he thought the savings would increase with each freshman class over a four year period. Ms. Brown stated that this would not be the case because the award amount would increase for sophomores, juniors and seniors as well as for freshmen. She stated that based on her data, continuing eligibility would remain the same.

Dr. Woodfaulk explained that the last time the General Assembly increased the award amount for the LIFE Scholarship, sophomores, juniors and seniors were grandfathered in and received the new award amount, regardless of whether they met the new initial criteria. The Committee agreed the award amount should be raised for all grade levels.

Commissioner Zais stated that he felt that since a smaller number of freshmen would receive the LIFE Scholarship that there would be fewer students over a four year period maintaining the Scholarship. He said that over time this would provide the State with a savings, and the savings could be added to the Need-based Grant Program.

Dr. Woodfaulk stated that students who would receive the LIFE scholarship under the new criteria could also have very good retention rates.

Commissioner Mosteller asked why any student would lose all three scholarships under the new criteria. She thought all students who lost the LIFE Scholarship would receive the South Carolina HOPE Scholarship. She stated that the South Carolina HOPE Scholarship could be changed to a four year scholarship like LIFE.

Ms. Camille Brown explained that students who lost the LIFE Scholarship under the new criteria may not receive the South Carolina HOPE Scholarship if they earned the LIFE Scholarship based on the SAT and rank criteria and did not have a 3.0 GPA. In addition students at two-year institutions who did not meet the new criteria including a 3.5 GPA would lose the LIFE Scholarship. Commissioner Mosteller asked if students would receive the HOPE Scholarship. Ms. Brown responded that the South Carolina HOPE Scholarship is not available at two-year institutions.

Dr. Woodfaulk explained that students at two-year institutions who do not receive the LIFE Scholarship can receive Lottery Tuition Assistance and at four-year institutions, they can receive the South Carolina HOPE Scholarship during the freshmen year.

Mr. Russ Bumba stated that it cannot be assumed that students who lose the LIFE Scholarship at two-year institutions would receive Lottery Tuition Assistance. He further stated that Lottery Tuition Assistance can only be applied to the cost of tuition whereas the LIFE Scholarship is applied to the cost of attendance. Commissioner Mosteller asked if this could be changed. Mr. Bumba explained that this was considered a few years ago and data showed it would require a substantial increase in funding for the Program. Mr. Bumba indicated that the Technical College System completed a report that showed the neediest students benefited the least from Lottery Tuition Assistance. Commissioner Mosteller stated that the Commission should consider making the South Carolina HOPE Scholarship available at two-year institutions.

Commissioner Ravenel asked the Committee if they preferred a specific model. Commissioner Zais said he preferred Model 4-A which would provide savings and this savings could be used for the Need-based Grant Program. He noted that Model 4-A funding was \$7,000 for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship, \$5,000 for the LIFE Scholarship and \$3,000 for the South Carolina HOPE Scholarship. The Committee agreed to add to Model 4-A. Continued eligibility would also change the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship by increasing the GPA to 3.5, the LIFE Scholarship by increasing the GPA to 3.25 and the South Carolina HOPE Scholarship by increasing the GPA to 3.0.

Commissioner Zais moved to change the Need-based Grant distribution methodology. He moved that the distribution of the SC Need-based Grant be calculated by the number of Pell Grant recipients at an institution, rather than the full-time enrollment head count as it is currently calculated. In order to keep the scholarship, a student must meet the following:

- a. 3.5 Cumulative Palmetto Fellows GPA
- b. 3.25 Cumulative LIFE GPA
- c. 3.0 Cumulative HOPE GPA

Commissioner Bettie Horne moved that the Chair of the Student Services Committee talk to the Presidents of the research institutions privately prior to a vote by the General Assembly.

Data regarding distribution of Need-based Grant funds was discussed. Commissioner Ravenel asked Mr. Charlie FitzSimons his opinion on what the Need-based Grant Model would have on the General Assembly. Mr. FitzSimons responded that he felt the Need-based Grant distribution based on Pell Grant enrollment was the right move to make but it would be a hard sell politically.

3. Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Survey

Ms. Sherry Hubbard provided a summary of the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Survey. Ms. Hubbard stated that the results of the survey indicate most Palmetto Fellows upon graduation tend to seek employment or attend graduate school in South Carolina. She further stated that although half of the Palmetto Fellows recipients attend graduate school in South Carolina a large number are also enrolling in neighboring states' institutions. Ms. Hubbard expressed concern to whether South Carolina will be able to receive a return on investment for these students once they leave the State for graduate school, or will the benefits be captured by Georgia and North Carolina

Commissioner Mosteller stated that students do not find out that they have received the Scholarship until their senior year December at the earliest and June at the latest. She stated that students are pursued by out of state colleges and that South Carolina should consider courting their students. She noted that the Governor's School has a program in Charleston and that the State should consider courting these students as future Palmetto Fellows recipients.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laverne Sanders