

**Higher Education Study Committee
Goal Group 1, Increasing Educational Levels
SC Commission on Higher Education, Main Conference Room
10:30 am – 12:30 pm**

September 5, 2008 Meeting Notes

Working Group Members Present:

Dr. JoAnne Anderson
Dr. Cheryl Cox
Dr. Tim Hardee
Dr. Debra Jackson
Adam Jordan
Wayne Landrith
Dr. Tom Moore
Dr. Suzanne Ozment, Chair
Dr. D. M. Parker (via phone)
Dr. Michael Parsons (via phone)
Dr. Mary Thornley (via phone)
Dr. Garrison Walters

CHE Staff Present:

Dr. Argentini Anderson
Camille Brown
Julie Carullo
Gerrick Hampton
Lorna Manglona-Williams
Dr. Gail Morrison
Dr. Mike Raley

Other Guests:

None

Dr. Garrison Walters introduced the chair, Dr. Suzanne Ozment, who asked that the members and those present introduce themselves. Following introductions, Dr. Walters provided background information on the Higher Education Study Committee (HESC), its charge, and work-process to date. He also described the purpose and charge of the working groups assisting the HESC in recommending implementation details for the proposed action plan.

Dr. Walters then distributed and reviewed the draft write-up for Goal 1. The following notes provide summary of the main points of the conversation.

The recommendation to limit baccalaureate programs to 120 hours was discussed. It was suggested that with this recommendation there appeared to be a suggested underlying philosophy that may affect certain disciplines and the liberal arts in particular. Discussion ensued about Clemson's review of baccalaureate programs and policy to limit hours to a range of 120-124 unless there was a specific reason to allow for a higher number of hours. Engineering and architecture were mentioned as two such programs needing increased hours, but even those did not go above 134 credit hours.

It was suggested that more linkages to outcomes and the value added are needed. The role of faculty in that process was discussed briefly. Also, it was suggested that we cannot afford to ignore the liberal arts graduates.

There was some discussion relating to the scholarship programs. A concern was expressed that students are coming in with the grades but many are not prepared to do well. Consequently, a need to focus on readiness exists, particularly in math and the hard sciences. Current efforts in this area were noted.

It was asked whether we had data to indicate whether students were graduating with more hours than the degree required. CHE did collect a measure through performance funding and it may also be possible to provide CHEMIS data to address this request.

The group discussed the need to gather data and set goals. Suggested data include retention, degrees awarded, Census educational attainment data, and information on the adult workforce pathway. Data on current enrollment, degrees awarded by major and productivity numbers were requested during the meeting.

A matrix of data was recommended with the inclusion of populations for each category or degree levels. The three A's as mentioned in the report (academic preparation, aspirational access and affordability) could then be applied to each.

It was noted that there are many on-going efforts focused on increased awareness and informing people about the need for education. We need a good understanding of efforts that are currently in place to increase the education pipeline and what we can do to tap into them.

There was discussion about the need to include in the projections a consideration of the large number of South Carolinians without a high school diploma. The Department of Commerce is working with the Employment Security System to explore what is happening to those not earning a high school diploma.

The importance of collecting anecdotes for use in talking with others was mentioned as being critical.

It was cautioned that, given the timeframe for making recommendations, the group needs to be careful about not losing its focus by getting too far into the data.

Goals and targets were discussed. One objective suggested was setting a goal and target first and then determining how to get there. Ultimately, the question is how do we arrive at the goal? Goal setting was discussed. It was suggested to the group that they should be bold but reasonable. The plan timeframe is six years. Issues relating to budgets and resources were then discussed. Also discussed was whether the capacity and resources would be available to enable higher education to take in additional students. It was mentioned that it is clear that participation in higher education has grown sharply without increased resources and it would be difficult to take on more. NC's Focused Growth Initiative was cited as an information resource.

The importance of retention of students was stressed. Efforts to focus solely on access won't accomplish the goals if students aren't retained to graduation. Retention strategies were discussed briefly. Retention of students in STEM disciplines was mentioned. The Palmetto Fellows/ LIFE enhancement initiative may help keep students in the disciplines but a need remains to make sure they are successful.

Cautions were expressed about watching what you reward. A discussion of unintended consequences of scholarship programs as students make choices that may help them retain the

awards ensured (e.g., leave certain disciplines, taking minimum hours). It was suggested as a possibility that a tiered retention system based on grades might help. For example, rather than a student losing the scholarship if the grade point average (GPA) is below an established criterion as is the case now, the system might enable students to retain a percentage of the scholarship depending on how far below the student's GPA is from the established criterion.

Issues relating to jobs and retention in SC were discussed – the need to match goals with growing industries, the ability to retain educated citizens and those who are in colleges here from other states and even countries, and whether the focus should be on doubling SC residents. The extent of the focus on the goals was discussed. Goals developed should evoke strategies to get to the goal and it was uncertain whether the group would be able to get to the specifics of this goal within the timeframe. Some specific known areas of need may be included whereas others may develop overtime. The group again discussed issues of resources in meeting any identified goals.

It was decided that the group would follow the outline provided in the draft write-up and will begin their work with a discussion of graduate/ professional degrees followed by baccalaureate degrees at the next meeting. Targets and the level of the goal were discussed broadly and the baccalaureate level was suggested as the focus since it encompassed degrees through the associates degree level and is the level discussed as most related to per capita income increases. Information was shared about the Kentucky plan which focuses on “doubling the numbers” of baccalaureate degree holders and is available at www.cpe.ky.gov . Other higher education plans that may be helpful to review were suggested including Texas, Minnesota, and Oklahoma.

CHE agreed to set up a webpage on its site so that members could share resources.

A schedule of meetings was set as follows:

Wednesday, September 17, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm, CHE

Friday, October 17, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm, CHE

Friday, November 14, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm, CHE