



South Carolina  
Commission on Higher Education

Commissioners' E-Alert

October 2009

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Dr. Garrison Walters, Executive Director

**Commission Highlights - *This E-Alert brings highlights from the October meeting.***

The Commission on Higher Education (CHE) meets each month on the first Thursday. This E-Alert contains highlights from the October meeting which was held on September 30. The Commission meets next on November 5. An agenda and materials are typically posted online approximately one week in advance of the meeting. For copies, [CLICK HERE](#). To access CHE's website, [www.che.sc.gov](http://www.che.sc.gov).

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

**SOUTH CAROLINA COURSE ALIGNMENT PROJECT  
COMMISSION RECEIVES UPDATE FROM DR. DAVID CONLEY**

Dr. David Conley, founder and Chief Executive Officer of the Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC), attended the Commission's September meeting, to discuss the South Carolina Course Alignment Project (SC CAP) facilitated by EPIC. Dr. Conley began his presentation by addressing college readiness in the national context and explained how South Carolina is among the leading states that have an active interest in college readiness and in partnering with secondary schools because of the SC CAP. He also described how college readiness is currently one of the hottest policy topics in education at the national, state, and local levels, citing the examples of the Common Core Standards Initiative; federal Race to the Top and Investing in Innovation grant opportunities; foundation investments such as those by the Gates Foundation; national initiatives by both the College Board and ACT; and recent policy actions in states such as Texas, California, Florida, and Massachusetts.

Dr. Conley then reviewed in detail SC CAP's goal to strengthen the alignment between high school and college to promote a smoother transition and provide students explicit information on the content and skills they need for success in college. He talked about the important activities of the project thus far, and described the current phase of the project: the pilot implementation of the paired, aligned courses by 32 high school, technical college, and four-year college faculty across the state.

To illustrate the concept of the paired courses, Dr. Conley discussed the courses in physics and English. For physics, he explained how the high school course and the algebra-based and calculus-based college courses are designed for students with varying backgrounds in math. He then discussed how lab analysis activities, homework assignments, and exams differed between the two college courses, but were aligned to the high school course. For English, Dr. Conley described the writing assignments and scoring rubrics used in the high school and college courses and demonstrated their alignment. Then, he provided examples of the discussions and activities of the implementers. He stated that there have been several requests for higher education faculty to speak with their cluster partners' high school classes about college expectations. He also noted that implementers have borrowed equipment across institutions. He mentioned that implementers have also engaged in philosophical debates about the best ways to approach teaching particular topics and in what order and that implementers have created and taken advantage of opportunities for professional development with colleagues across different types of institutions.

Dr. Conley concluded his presentation by addressing the project's next steps, including continuing to test the paired courses, evaluating the feedback on the paired courses and associated documents, and preparing to disseminate the paired courses statewide.

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SC CAP, PLEASE [CLICK HERE](#) OR ACCESS THE PROJECT WEBSITE AT [www.epiconline.org/south\\_carolina](http://www.epiconline.org/south_carolina).**

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Report of the Executive Committee:** Minutes from the Committee's monthly meeting at which the upcoming CHE meeting agenda is reviewed were shared for information.

### Report of the Committee on Finance &

**Facilities:** Commissioner Doug Forbes, vice chair of the Finance and Facilities Committee, brought forward recommendations to approve several interim capital projects including: a golf practice facility from Clemson University, an energy performance contract from the Medical University of SC, phase I construction for an athletic complex at Francis Marion University, and phase I Building 400 and phase II Speir Building Allied Health Expansion projects from Horry-Georgetown Technical College. CHE approved the projects and then received for information the monthly report for September on capital projects and leases approved at the staff level.

### Report of the Committee on Academic

**Affairs and Licensing:** On behalf of the Committee's chair, Commissioner Bettie Rose Horne, Commissioner Cyndi Mosteller brought forward recommendations to approve a variety of academic program requests including: (1) six new programs to be offered at various public colleges and universities; (2) an initial license for Education Affiliates, Inc., to establish a branch of Fortis College in Columbia to offer certain associates degree programs; (3) requests for amendments to existing licenses to add new sites to offer various associate and baccalaureate degree programs in Charleston and Conway for ITT Technical Institute of Carmel, IN; (4) requests to add new programs for ITT Technical Institute in Charleston, Columbia and Greenville; for Springfield College of Springfield, MA, to offer programs in Charleston; and for South University to offer a Doctor of Pharmacy program at its location in Columbia. The program requests were approved.

Also approved were several other items advanced by the Committee including: a report on academic program productivity at public colleges and universities for fall 2004 through fall 2008; revised guidelines for FY 2010-11 for the Centers of Excellence (Teacher Education) Competitive Grants program and for the Improving Teacher Quality Competitive Grants program; an annual report on the English Fluency Act for FY 2008-09; and the FY 2009-10 operating budget for the Centers of Economic Excellence.

CHE also received informational reports from the Committee concerning staff-approved institutional mission statement changes, a report for FY 2008-09 on approved and terminated academic programs, and a report on licensing activity for FY 2008-09.

### Report of the Committee on Student Services and Access and Equity:

Commissioner Cyndi Mosteller, chair of the Access and Equity and Student Services Committee, brought forward recommendations to approve FY 2010-11 appropriations requests from EIA-funded teacher recruitment programs, the SC Program for the Recruitment and Retention of Minority Teachers at SC State University and the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA) program at Winthrop University. Annual reports on these programs were included in the Committee's report and are accessible on-line from the link provided at the bottom of this page.

### Recommendations for FY 2010-11 CHE budget requests were also discussed and approved by CHE.

As part of the Executive Director's report, Dr. Garrison Walters discussed with Commissioners a draft letter that had been distributed for consideration along with the CHE meeting materials concerning FY 2010-11 budget priorities and requests.

In recognition of the state's economic condition, priorities are outlined with consideration of the constraints on available funding that is anticipated as South Carolina emerges from the dramatic downturn experienced last year and which continues to be of concern in the current fiscal year. As described in the letter, CHE budget priorities continue to focus on needed core support for the public colleges and universities and CHE, which also include the need for bond funding for facilities construction, repair, and renovation and regulatory reform to assist colleges and universities in operating as efficiently as possible with appropriate accountability. Priorities also continue to focus on initiatives that strengthen statewide higher education collaboration and assist students in successfully achieving college degrees, such as restoration of lost funding for the state's electronic higher education library or Partnership Among SC Academic Libraries (PASCAL), support for need-based grant funding, and the restoration of annual funding for the Centers of Economic Excellence (CoEE) program.

Dr. Walters also discussed with Commissioners on-going work with colleges and universities to develop a unified higher education strategy for budget requests over the next several years that are connected to achieving goals of the *Action Plan*.

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**For details on the items in this section, [CLICK HERE](#)**

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**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Commissioner Horne commented on the **SC Conference for Public and Independent Trustees** that was held on September 29. She noted the importance of the day for trustees and institutional leadership to discuss a unified approach for supporting higher education and meeting the needs of the state as can be served by higher education. The conference, which is held annually in the fall by CHE in conjunction with the SC Higher Education Foundation, brings together college and university trustees and leadership for a day of sharing and professional development. This year's conference was kicked-off with a panel discussion on the *Action Plan* for higher education that was released earlier in the spring. The session was moderated by CHE Chairman Ken Wingate and featured Senator Nikki Setzler, Representative B.R. Skelton, Winthrop Board of Trustees Chair Kathy Bigham, and SC Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Otis Rawl. Conference participants also learned more about leadership roles in student success and finance through concurrent sessions led by Dr. Cheryl Blanco of SREB, Mr. Craig Garner of the McNair Law Firm, Mr. Steve Blake of Cline Brandt Kochenhowe and Co., P.A., and Representative Tommy Stringer. Dr. Deno Curris, president emeritus of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, provided his perspective on areas of focus and action for working together in advancing higher education in South Carolina. The day concluded with messages from state legislative leadership, including Speaker of the House Bobby Harrell, Senate Finance Chairman Hugh Leatherman, and House Majority Leader Kenny Bingham. For more information about the *Higher Education Action Plan*, [CLICK HERE](#) or go to [http://www.che.sc.gov/HigherEd\\_ActionPlan.htm](http://www.che.sc.gov/HigherEd_ActionPlan.htm).

**NEWS AND UPDATES FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Dr. Garrison Walters, CHE's Executive Director, continues to meet with groups around the state to talk about the knowledge economy and advancing goals of the *Action Plan*. He shared information on recent engagements including: a presentation on the *New Front Door* adult education initiative with technical college presidents, a meeting of college representatives and CHE staff to explore the *DegreeSC* initiative to implement a statewide online degree program, a presentation before the Palmetto Business Forum, and speaking engagements at the University of Toledo and the Coalition of Academic and Scientific Reporting in Washington, DC.

**CALL TO INFORM AND WORK TOGETHER FOR SUCCESS**

Higher Education for all our citizens has never been as important as it is today in the Knowledge Economy. To change our State we must make sure our citizens have the work skills and education they need to compete in the new world economy. They also must know how to access this education.

We are sharing this message with Chambers of Commerce, civic organizations, business organizations, parent and school organizations, and others. If you are interested in a program, please call us today.

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