



# South Carolina Commission on Higher Education

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Ms. Julie J. Carullo  
Acting Executive Director

CHE  
05-03-12  
Agenda Item 8.02.A

May 3, 2012

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mr. Ken Wingate, Chair, and Members, S.C. Commission on Higher Education

**From:** Dr. Bettie Rose Horne, Chair, and Members, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

### Consideration of Francis Marion University Mission Statement Revision

#### Background

Francis Marion University (FMU) has requested that the Commission approve changes to its mission statement. Changes were submitted to Commission staff who determined that the requested changes were substantive and did not fall under the Commission guidelines for staff approval. A summary explanation follows with a staff analysis and recommendation for the requested changes. Francis Marion's current mission statement, revised mission statement, and markup copy with changes shown are attached as **Appendix I**.

The revised mission statement was approved by the Francis Marion Board of Trustees on March 2, 2012, and transmitted to the Commission on Higher Education the next day. Commission staff has reviewed the revised statement and found that changes requested are to:

- Add "nursing" to the list of program areas in which master's degrees are offered by the institution; and
- Add "for the people of the region and the state" to the end of the second sentence of the second paragraph.

#### Discussion

Francis Marion University is seeking to add a new program leading to a degree of Master of Science in Nursing, Family Nurse Practitioner to its catalog of programs. In order to do so, it must revise its mission statement to reflect the proposed new degree area being offered at the master's degree level and have that change approved by the Commission on Higher Education.

The change requested by FMU is specific to the program addition being proposed and does not convey broad approval to offer master's degrees in multiple unspecified areas. As such, it is the minimum change necessary to allow the institution to offer the proposed new program should it be approved by the Commission.

**Staff Recommendation**

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commends favorably to the Commission approval of the revised mission statement for Francis Marion University.

## **APPENDIX I**

- A) Francis Marion University Current Mission Statement**
- B) Francis Marion University Mission Statement As Approved by the Francis Marion University Board of Trustees, March 2, 2012**
- C) Proposed New Mission Statement with Changes Shown**

## **A) Francis Marion University Current Mission Statement**

### **PURPOSE – MISSION STATEMENT (FMU Catalog, 2011-2012)**

Francis Marion University is a four-year public institution established by the state of South Carolina. It is located in the northeastern part of the state near the city of Florence and has approximately 4,000 students. Its purpose is threefold: to provide students with an excellent education, stimulate inquiry and research, and serve the Pee Dee region of South Carolina.

Francis Marion University adheres to the primary purpose of its establishment as a college in 1970: to make available excellent undergraduate education in the liberal arts and selected professional programs. The University now offers bachelor's degrees in liberal arts disciplines, business, education, and nursing; master's degrees in business, education, and psychology; and a specialist degree in school psychology. While maintaining high standards, we serve students with a broad range of preparation and ability. We seek a wide variety of students, primarily from the Pee Dee region, but also from the entire state, other states, and foreign countries. We believe that a student body diverse in age, racial and ethnic background, and country of origin enriches the education of our students. To achieve its educational goals, the University has outstanding faculty members distinguished by high achievement and diverse academic background. We provide traditional and, when appropriate, non-traditional instruction, access to an excellent library as well as electronic resources, and staff members committed to the success of the individual student. A low student-faculty ratio and faculty concern for the individual student help us to achieve our goal. In addition, the University provides students with special learning opportunities, such as an honors program, internships, study abroad, and cooperative degree programs.

Since our highest priority is excellence in teaching and learning, we believe that intellectual inquiry and analysis by students and faculty members are essential. We encourage all scholarly pursuits, including student research for courses and faculty research for presentation and publication as well as the classroom. The University provides faculty members with support for academic development, such as research funds. Our goal of an academic experience built on inquiry and research as well as the transmission of information allows students to develop their ability to think and communicate, to gain the knowledge and skills to pursue a career or further study, to appreciate the creativeness of the human mind, to be aware of the human and natural environment of the world, and to have the capacity to pursue a life of learning and understanding.

The University also attempts to serve the needs of Florence and the surrounding area in ways beyond formal education. Our numerous cultural activities and athletic programs benefit not only students, but also the community. To foster the economic development of the region, we offer consulting services to business, industry, and government. Academic and practical assistance to area schools is basic to our endeavors. Faculty and staff members participate in and contribute to a great variety of community activities.

Francis Marion is a unique university. It focuses on traditional liberal arts and new academic programs. It is small enough to provide individualized attention to each student, but large enough to offer much variety in academic and cultural resources. It thus combines the advantages of a small liberal arts college with the resources of a public university.

## **B) Mission Statement As Approved by the Francis Marion University Board of Trustees, March 2, 2012**

Francis Marion University is a four-year public institution established by the state of South Carolina. It is located in the northeastern part of the state near the city of Florence and has approximately 4,000 students. Its purpose is threefold: to provide students with an excellent education, stimulate inquiry and research, and serve the Pee Dee region of South Carolina.

Francis Marion University adheres to the primary purpose for which it was established as a college in 1970: to make available excellent educational programs for the people of the region and the state. The University offers bachelor's degrees in a wide range of liberal arts disciplines, as well as in the health sciences, education, and business. The University also offers master's degrees in business, education, nursing, and psychology, as well as a specialist degree in school psychology. While maintaining high standards, we serve students with a broad range of preparation and ability. We seek a wide variety of students, primarily from the Pee Dee region, but also from the entire state, other states, and foreign countries. We believe that a student body diverse in age, racial and ethnic background, and country of origin enriches the education of our students. To achieve its educational goals, the University has outstanding faculty members distinguished by high achievement and diverse academic background. We provide traditional and, when appropriate, non-traditional instruction, access to an excellent library as well as electronic resources, and staff members committed to the success of the individual student. A low student-faculty ratio and faculty concern for the individual student help us to achieve our goal. In addition, the University provides students with special learning opportunities, such as an honors program, internships, study abroad, and cooperative degree programs.

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### **C) Proposed New Mission Statement with Changes Shown (additions underlined)**

Francis Marion University is a four-year public institution established by the state of South Carolina. It is located in the northeastern part of the state near the city of Florence and has approximately 4,000 students. Its purpose is threefold: to provide students with an excellent education, stimulate inquiry and research, and serve the Pee Dee region of South Carolina.

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