



South Carolina Commission on Higher Education

Brig Gen John L. Finan, USAF (Ret.), Chair
Dr. Bettie Rose Horne, Vice Chair
Ms. Natasha M. Hanna
Ms. Elizabeth Jackson
Dr. Raghu Korrapati
Ms. Leah B. Moody
Vice Admiral Charles Munns, USN (ret.)
Mr. Kim F. Phillips
Mr. Y. W. Scarborough, III
Dr. Jennifer B. Settlemyer
Mr. Rodney A. Smolla
Mr. Hood Temple
The Honorable Lewis R. Vaughn

Ms. Julie J. Carullo
Acting Executive Director

CHE
10-4-12
Agenda Item 7.02.E

October 4, 2012

MEMORANDUM

To: Chairman John L. Finan and Members, S.C. Commission on Higher Education

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

Annual Report on Admission Standards for First-Time Entering Freshmen, FY 2011-12

Act 629 of 1988, *The Cutting Edge*, requires that with respect to admission standards at the public colleges and universities:

- In consultation and coordination with the public institutions of higher learning in this state, the State Commission on Higher Education shall ensure that minimal admissions standards are maintained by the institutions.
- The Commission, with the institutions, shall monitor the effect of compliance with admission prerequisites that are effective in fall, 1988 (Section 59-104-10(A)).

In April 1988, the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs adopted a procedure that requires each institution to report annually on applications, acceptances, and enrollment and to specify the minimum approximate SAT score (combined math and verbal) that is required of most applicants for admission as freshmen.

In Act 359 of 1996, the General Assembly reiterated the importance of reporting admissions standards. Section 59-103-45(3) again directed the Commission to review minimum undergraduate admission standards.

Attached is the annual report on 2011 admission standards for first-time entering freshmen (**Attachment**) at South Carolina public senior colleges and universities. This document summarizes the results of five different reports related to admission standards and to measures of achievement of first-time entering freshmen for the fall of 2011.

The Report is presented in five parts:

Part I: Fall 2011 Applications, Acceptances, and Actual Enrollments

Part II: Fall 2011 Data Related to High School Course Prerequisites

Part III: Fall 2011 SAT and ACT Scores

Part IV: Fall 2011 Provisionally Admitted Students

Part V: Fall 2012-13 Minimum Admissions Requirements

The data for Parts II-IV, and the actual enrollment data included in Part I, were electronically supplied by the institutions via the Commission on Higher Education's Management Information System (CHEMIS).

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the Commission endorse this report for transmittal to the South Carolina Department of Education and the chairs of the House and Senate Education Committees.

Attachment

ANNUAL REPORT ON ADMISSION STANDARDS FOR FIRST-TIME ENTERING FRESHMEN, FALL 2009 SOUTH CAROLINA PUBLIC SENIOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

This document reviews the results of five different reports related to admission standards and measures of achievement for first-time entering freshmen. The results are presented in five parts:

- **Part I:** Fall 2011 Applications, Acceptances, and Actual Enrollments
- **Part II:** Fall 2011 Data related to high school course prerequisites
- **Part III:** Fall 2011 SAT and ACT scores
- **Part IV:** Fall 2011 Data related to provisional students
- **Part V:** Fall 2012 Minimum admission standards.

Part I: Applications, Acceptances, and Actual Enrollments

In Fall 2011, 84,366 applications were received for admission as first-time freshmen at the state's public senior colleges and universities. Of these, 55,419 (65.7%) met the minimum admission standards at one or more of the public senior institutions and were offered admission. Of those who were offered admission, 17,671 (31.9%) applicants actually enrolled.

Table 1 on the following page shows the number and percent of students who applied, were accepted, and actually enrolled at each public senior institution.

TABLE 1 APPLICATIONS, ACCEPTANCES, AND ACTUAL ENROLLMENTS S.C. PUBLIC SENIOR INSTITUTIONS, FALL 2011					
Institutions	Number of Applications ¹	Number of Applicants Offered Admission ¹	Percent of Applicants Offered Admission	Number who Actually Enrolled	Percent Accepted and Enrolled
Research Institutions					
Clemson	17,016	10,215	60.0%	2,933	28.7%
USC-Columbia	21,311	13,451	63.1%	4,636	34.5%
Sub Total	38,327	23,666	61.7%	7,569	32.0%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities					
The Citadel	2,523	1,940	76.9%	631	32.5%
Coastal Carolina	10,502	7,836	74.6%	2,137	27.3%
Coll. Of Charleston	11,280	7,896	70.0%	2,334	29.6%
Francis Marion	3,843	2,255	58.7%	743	32.9%
Lander	3,188	1,372	43.0%	595	43.4%
S.C. State	3,267	3,130	95.8%	829	26.5%
USC-Aiken	2,747	1,402	51.0%	607	43.3%
USC-Beaufort	1,434	1,070	74.6%	432	40.4%
USC-Upstate	3,140	2,037	64.9%	811	39.8%
Winthrop	4,115	2,815	68.4%	983	34.9%
Sub Total	46,039	31,753	69.0%	10,102	31.8%
Total Sr. Institutions	84,366	55,419	65.7%	17,671	31.9%

¹Reported manually by the institutions.

South Carolina State University offered admission to the largest percentage (95.8%) of students who applied and enrolled the smallest percentage (26.5%) of students who were offered admission. Four institutions (The Citadel, Coastal Carolina, College of Charleston, USC-Beaufort) offered admission to 70-80% of applicants. Four institutions (Clemson, USC-Columbia, USC-Upstate, and Winthrop) offered admission to 60-69% of applicants. Two institutions (Francis Marion, USC-Aiken) offered admission to 50-59% of applicants. Lander University offered admission to the lowest percentage (43%) of applicants and enrolled the largest percentage (43.4%) of students who were offered admission.

A comparison of the percent of students accepted and enrolled in Fall 2011 to Fall 2010 data shows that every institution with the exception of the College of Charleston (+4.1%) and Winthrop University (+0.5%) decreased. Lander University experienced the largest decrease in the percent accepted and enrolled (-7.6%).

Table 2 provides a five-year overview of applications, acceptances, and actual enrollments. The number of applicants has increased by 26,428 over the last five years, and the number enrolled has increased by 1,943 students. However, the percentage of applicants who were accepted and enrolled **has decreased** by approximately 8.4%.

TABLE 2 Applications, Acceptances, and Actual Enrollments S.C. Public Senior Institutions Five Year Comparison					
Year	Number of Applications	Number of Applicants Offered Admission	Percent of Applicants Offered Admission	Number who Actually Enrolled	Percent Accepted and Enrolled
2007	65,709	40,484	61.6%	16,168	39.9%
2008	71,317	43,817	61.4%	15,902	36.3%
2009	77,053	51,543	66.9%	16,861	32.7%
2010	80,289	53,333	66.4%	17,282	32.4%
2011	84,366	55,419	65.7%	17,671	31.9%

Part II: Extent to Which 2011 Freshmen Met the High School Course Prerequisites

Since Fall 1988, public senior colleges and universities in South Carolina have required that applicants who graduated from high school in 1988 or subsequent years must have completed certain high school courses before being admitted. Beginning Fall 2011, the recommended high school course prerequisites changed. The table below shows the comparison between the previous and new high school course prerequisites.

The required courses include the following:

High School Course Prerequisites 2003-2010	High School Course Prerequisites 2011
1. Four units of English: At least two units must have strong grammar and composition components, at least one must be in English literature, and at least one must be in American literature. Completion of College Preparatory English I, II, III, and IV will meet this criterion.	1. Four units of English: At least two units must have strong grammar and composition components, at least one must be in English literature, and at least one must be in American literature. Completion of College Preparatory English I, II, III, and IV will meet this criterion.
2. Three units of Mathematics: These units include Algebra I (for which Applied Mathematics I and II may count together as a substitute if a student successfully completes Algebra II), Algebra II, and Geometry. A fourth higher-level mathematics course is strongly recommended. The fourth course should be selected from among algebra III/trigonometry, pre-calculus, calculus, statistics, or discrete mathematics.	2. Four units of Mathematics: These include Algebra I (for which Applied Mathematics I and II may count together as a substitute, if a student successfully completes Algebra II), Algebra II, and Geometry. A fourth higher-level mathematics course should be selected from among Algebra III/trigonometry, precalculus, calculus, statistics, discrete mathematics, or a capstone mathematics course and should be taken during the senior year.
3. Three units of Laboratory Science: Two units must be taken in two different	3. Three units of Laboratory Science: Two units must be taken in two different

High School Course Prerequisites 2003-2010	High School Course Prerequisites 2011
<p>fields and selected from among biology, chemistry, or physics. The third unit may be from the same field as one of the first two units (biology, chemistry, or physics) or from any laboratory science for which biology and/or chemistry is a prerequisite. Courses in earth science, general physical science, or introductory or general environmental science for which biology and/or chemistry is not a prerequisite will not meet this requirement. It is strongly recommended that students take physical science (taught as a laboratory science) as a prerequisite to the three required units of laboratory science outlined in the section.</p>	<p>fields of the physical or life sciences and selected from among biology, chemistry, or physics. The third unit may be from the same field as one of the first two units (biology, chemistry, or physics) or from any laboratory science for which biology and/or chemistry is a prerequisite. Courses in earth science, general physical science, or introductory or general environmental science for which biology and/or chemistry is not a prerequisite will not meet this requirement. It is strongly recommended that students take physical science (taught as a laboratory science) as a prerequisite to the three required units of laboratory science outlined in this section. It is also strongly recommended that students desiring to pursue careers in science, mathematics, engineering or technology take one course in all three fields.</p>
<p>4. Two units of the same foreign language.</p>	<p>4. Two units of the same foreign language.</p>
<p>5. Three units of social science: One unit of U.S. History is required; a half unit of Economics and a half unit in Government are strongly recommended.</p>	<p>5. Three units of social science: One unit of U.S. History is required; a half unit of Economics and a half unit in Government are strongly recommended.</p>
<p>6. Four units of electives: Four college preparatory units must be taken from at least three different fields selected from among Computer Science, English, Fine Arts, Foreign Languages, Humanities, Laboratory Science (excluding earth science, general physical science, general environmental science or other introductory science courses for which biology and/or chemistry is not a prerequisite), Mathematics above the level of Algebra II, and Social Sciences. It is suggested that one unit be in Computer Science which includes programming (i.e., not just keyboarding) and one unit in Fine Arts (appreciation of, history, or performance).</p>	<p>6. One unit of elective: One unit must be taken as an elective. A college preparatory course in Computer Science (i.e., one involving significant programming content, not simply keyboarding) is strongly recommended for this elective. Other acceptable electives include college preparatory courses in English; fine arts; foreign languages; social science; humanities; laboratory science (excluding earth science, general physical science, general environmental science, or other introductory science courses for which biology and/or chemistry is not a prerequisite); or mathematics above the level of Algebra II.</p>
<p>7. One unit of physical education or ROTC.</p>	<p>7. One unit of physical education or ROTC.</p>
	<p>8. ONE UNIT OF FINE ARTS: One unit</p>

<i>High School Course Prerequisites 2003-2010</i>	<i>High School Course Prerequisites 2011</i>
	in Appreciation of, History of, or Performance in one of the fine arts.

NOTE: Each institution may make exceptions in admitting 1) students who do not meet all of the prerequisites, limited to those individual cases in which the failure to meet one or more prerequisites is due to circumstances beyond the reasonable control of the student or 2) students who have taken the Tech Prep (Applied Academics) courses rather than the required college preparatory curriculum described above and who meet all other institutional admissions criteria.

As shown in **Table 3**, the proportion of all applicable first-time freshmen meeting all of the prerequisites decreased from 96.0% in 2009 to 87.8% in 2011, which is expected because of the new high school course prerequisites that went into effect Fall 2011. The percentage of students meeting all of the prerequisites continues to be below the 1999 average of 98.15%. In Fall 2011 only College of Charleston meets or exceeds the 1999 average.

TABLE 3
Percent of Applicable¹ First-Time Freshmen Meeting High School Course Prerequisites

Institutions	2009		2010		2011			Percent Change from 2010 to 2011
	Applicable Freshmen	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	Applicable Freshmen	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	Applicable Freshmen	Number Meeting Prerequisites	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	
Research Institutions								
Clemson	3383	98.1%	3016	99.0%	2933	2,457	83.8%	-15.2%
USC-Columbia	3818	96.6%	4368	96.3%	4542	3,782	83.3%	-13.0%
Sub Total	7,201	97.3%	7,384	97.4%	7,475	6,239	83.5%	-13.9%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities								
The Citadel	591	93.2%	625	91.5%	630	559	88.7%	-2.8%
Coastal Carolina	1761	95.3%	1987	96.5%	2128	1,964	92.3%	-4.2%
College of Charleston	2134	99.3%	2006	99.1%	2332	2,309	99.0%	-0.1%
Francis Marion	794	90.8%	738	91.5%	743	667	89.8%	-1.7%
Lander	577	88.7%	676	91.1%	588	520	88.4%	-2.7%
SC State	723	91.7%	826	97.3%	829	809	97.6%	0.3%
USC-Aiken	623	96.3%	618	94.8%	593	481	81.1%	-13.7%
USC-Beaufort	363	87.1%	410	83.9%	416	305	73.3%	-10.6%
USC-Upstate	856	92.3%	856	91.4%	785	646	82.3%	-9.1%
Winthrop	1042	92.9%	946	95.3%	963	872	90.6%	-4.7%
Sub Total	9,464	94.3%	9,687	94.8%	10,007	9,132	91.3%	-3.5%
Total Sr. Institutions	16,665	95.6%	17,071	95.9%	17,482	15,371	87.9%	-8.0%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC								
USC-Lancaster ²	113	92.9%	116	94.8%	105	89	84.8%	-10.0%
USC-Salkehatchie ²	4	75.0%	10	100.0%	17	1	5.9%	-94.1%
USC-Sumter ²	122	100.0%	110	99.1%	94	93	98.9%	-0.2%
USC-Union ²	19	100.0%	9	100.0%	14	3	21.4%	-78.6%
Sub Total USC Two-Year	258	96.5%	245	97.1%	230	186	80.9%	-16.2%
Grand Total	16,923	95.6%	17,316	96.0%	17,712	15,557	87.8%	-8.2%

¹Not applicable to foreign students, GED students, and students who graduated prior to 1988.

²At the USC two-year campuses, the prerequisites are applicable only to those students classified by the institution as baccalaureate-ready and accepted as such.

Institutional Issues

The lowest compliance for the last three years continues to be at USC-Beaufort. Although USC-Beaufort's compliance rate has steadily increased each year since becoming a four-year institution in Fall 2004, there was a 3.2% decrease in compliance from Fall 2009 to Fall 2010 with an additional decrease of 10.6% in Fall 2011 with the new requirements. An annual change of this magnitude, either increase or decrease, is not unusual, however.

All senior institutions, with the exception of SC State University (+0.3%), showed a decrease in compliance rates from Fall 2010 to Fall 2011. Seven (USC-Aiken, USC-Upstate, USC-Columbia, Clemson, Lander, The Citadel, and Francis Marion) show a compliance rate between 80%-90%. Five institutions (Winthrop, Coastal Carolina, SC State, and College of Charleston) show a compliance rate between 90%-99.3% for Fall 2011.

Overall, the institutions indicated that lab science and foreign language continue to be the areas where prerequisites were not met. The addition of Fine Arts contributed to 9 of the 12 senior institutions not meeting the high school prerequisites. Even though there was an additional math credit recommended for Fall 2011, only 4 of the 12 senior institutions identified this as an area of concern.

The percent of applicable first-time freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites is broken down further into "In-State Only" (**Table 3A**) and "Out-of-State Only" (**Table 3B**) to determine if out-of-state students were responsible for the overall decrease from the 1999 average in the percentage of first-time freshmen meeting the high school course prerequisites.

As **Table 3A** and **Table 3B** show, the decrease in compliance reported in **Table 3** for all but one of the institutions (SC State) can be attributed to its out-of-state students. Seven institutions (Clemson, The Citadel, Coastal Carolina, College of Charleston, Francis Marion, Lander, and USC-Beaufort) show a decrease of 0%-10% between in-state, first-time freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites, compared to out-of-state, first-time freshmen. The decrease in compliance for three institutions (USC-Columbia, USC-Upstate, and Winthrop) can also be attributed to its out-of-state students with a decrease of 11%-20% of in-state, first-time freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites compared to out-of-state, first-time freshmen. Similarly, USC-Aiken's decrease in compliance can be attributed largely to its out-of-state students with a compliance rate of 53.5% compared to the in-state student compliance rate of 84.9%.

As **Table 3B** shows no institutions improved their compliance rate for out-of-state students in 2011. This can be attributed to the new high school course prerequisites of fine arts and an additional mathematics course. Additionally, eight of the twelve senior institutions report a compliance rate for out-of-state students below the average of 87.8% for all institutions, ranging from 53.5% to 85.4%.

TABLE 3A
Percent of Applicable¹ First-Time Freshmen Meeting High School Course Prerequisites
In-State Only (GEO-Origin = SC)

Institutions	2009		2010		2011			Applicable Freshmen
	Applicable Freshmen	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	Applicable Freshmen	Percent Meeting Prerequisites		Applicable Freshmen	Percent Meeting Prerequisites	
Research Institutions								
Clemson	2023	99.1%	1797	99.5%	1841	1585	86.1%	-13.4%
USC-Columbia	2191	98.7%	2508	98.6%	2598	2300	88.5%	-10.1%
Sub Total	4,214	98.9%	4,305	99.0%	4,439	3,885	87.5%	-11.5%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities								
The Citadel	272	97.4%	329	96.4%	283	265	93.6%	-2.8%
Coastal Carolina	776	96.0%	927	96.7%	967	920	95.1%	-1.6%
College of Charleston	1137	99.4%	996	99.5%	1166	1158	99.3%	-0.2%
Francis Marion	758	90.9%	696	91.4%	702	632	90.0%	-1.4%
Lander	533	88.3%	638	91.2%	563	498	88.5%	-2.7%
SC State	500	89.6%	577	96.7%	566	551	97.3%	0.6%
USC-Aiken	564	96.5%	556	96.8%	522	443	84.9%	-11.9%
USC-Beaufort	295	87.1%	355	85.1%	332	250	75.3%	-9.8%
USC-Upstate	813	92.4%	800	91.8%	729	609	83.5%	-8.3%
Winthrop	937	94.8%	869	96.2%	863	791	91.7%	-4.5%
Sub Total	6,585	94.2%	6,742	94.8%	6,693	6,117	91.4%	-3.4%
Total Sr. Institutions	10,799	96.0%	11,047	96.4%	11,132	10,002	89.8%	-6.6%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC								
USC-Lancaster ²	108	93.5%	113	95.6%	103	88	85.4%	-10.2%
USC-Salkehatchie ²	4	75.0%	10	100.0%	17	1	5.9%	-94.1%
USC-Sumter ²	120	100.0%	109	100.0%	92	91	98.9%	-1.1%
USC-Union ²	19	100.0%	9	100.0%	13	3	23.1%	-76.9%
Sub Total USC Two-Year	251	96.8%	241	97.9%	225	183	81.3%	-16.6%
Grand Total	11,050	96.1%	11,288	96.4%	11,357	10,185	89.7%	-6.7%

¹Not applicable to foreign students, GED students, and students who graduated prior to 1988.

²At the USC two-year campuses, the prerequisites are applicable only to those students classified by the institution as baccalaureate-ready and accepted as such.

TABLE 3B
Percent of Applicable¹ First-Time Freshmen Meeting High School Course Prerequisites
Out-of-State Only (GEO-Origin = Not SC)

Institutions	2009		2010		2011			Percentage Change from 2010 to 2011
	2009 Applicable Freshmen	2009 Percent Meeting Prerequisites	2010 Applicable Freshmen	2010 Percent Meeting Prerequisites	2011 Applicable Freshmen	2011 Number Meeting Prerequisites	2011 Percent Meeting Prerequisites	
Research Institutions								
Clemson	1360	96.6%	1219	98.2%	1092	872	79.9%	-18.3%
USC-Columbia	1627	93.7%	1860	93.2%	1944	1482	76.2%	-17.0%
Sub Total	2,987	95.0%	3,079	95.2%	3,036	2,354	77.5%	-17.7%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities								
The Citadel	319	89.7%	298	85.6%	347	294	84.7%	-0.9%
Coastal Carolina	985	94.8%	1060	96.4%	1161	1046	90.1%	-6.3%
College of Charleston	997	99.3%	1010	98.7%	1166	1151	98.7%	0.0%
Francis Marion	36	88.9%	42	92.9%	41	35	85.4%	-7.5%
Lander	39	94.9%	38	89.5%	25	22	88.0%	-1.5%
SC State	223	96.4%	249	98.8%	263	258	98.1%	-0.7%
USC-Aiken	59	94.9%	62	77.4%	71	38	53.5%	-23.9%
USC-Beaufort	68	86.8%	55	76.4%	84	55	65.5%	-10.9%
USC-Upstate	43	90.7%	56	85.7%	56	37	66.1%	-19.6%
Winthrop	105	76.2%	77	85.7%	100	81	81.0%	-4.7%
Sub Total	2,874	95.1%	2,947	94.9%	3,314	3,017	91.0%	-3.9%
Total Sr. Institutions	5,861	95.0%	6,026	95.0%	6,350	5,371	84.6%	-10.4%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC								
USC-Lancaster ²	5	80.0%	3	66.7%	2	1	50.0%	-16.7%
USC-Salkehatchie ²	0				0			0.0%
USC-Sumter ²	2	100.0%	1	0.0%	2	2	100.0%	100.0%
USC-Union ²	0				1	0	0.0%	0.0%
Sub Total USC Two-Year	7	85.7%	4	50.0%	5	3	60.0%	10.0%
Grand Total	5,868	94.0%	6,030	95.0%	6,355	5,374	84.6%	-10.4%

¹Not applicable to foreign students, GED students, and students who graduated prior to 1988.

²At the USC two-year campuses, the prerequisites are applicable only to those students classified by the institution as baccalaureate-ready and accepted as such.

This year's report examines for the second time the Freshman-to-Sophomore retention rate of first-time freshmen in relationship to the prerequisite compliance data. Table 3C shows the retention rate of first-time freshmen who did not meet the recommended high school course prerequisites. All senior institutions showed a lower retention rate for students who did **not** meet the high school course requirements. Francis Marion University and Coastal Carolina University showed the largest differences in retention rates between students who met the

requirements compared to those who didn't meet them, with Clemson showing the smallest difference.

TABLE 3C
Retention Rate of Fall 2009 First-Time Freshmen Meeting and Not Meeting the High School Pre-Requisites Retained at Same Institution in Fall 2010
S.C. Public Colleges and Universities

Institution	Applicable Freshmen	Applicable Freshmen Meeting Pre-Requisites			Applicable Freshmen <u>NOT</u> Meeting Pre-Requisites		
		#	Retained	%	#	Retained	%
Clemson University	3,383	3,319	2,968	89.4%	64	55	85.9%
U.S.C. - Columbia	3,818	3,688	3,257	88.3%	130	102	78.5%
The Citadel	591	551	471	85.5%	40	28	70.0%
Coastal Carolina University	1,761	1,678	1,133	67.5%	83	46	55.4%
College of Charleston	2,134	2,119	1,733	81.8%	15	10	66.7%
Francis Marion University	794	721	534	74.1%	73	40	54.8%
Lander University	577	512	389	76.0%	65	43	66.2%
South Carolina State Univ.	723	663	447	67.4%	60	32	53.3%
U.S.C. - Aiken	623	600	431	71.8%	23	13	56.5%
U.S.C. - Beaufort	363	316	180	57.0%	47	20	42.6%
U.S.C. - Upstate	856	790	560	70.9%	66	42	63.6%
Winthrop University	1,042	968	717	74.1%	74	40	54.1%

The data shows that for Fall 2009 first-time freshmen who didn't meet the high school course prerequisites, there is a lower retention rate at all of the four-year institutions. On average there was a -13% difference in retention rates for students who did not meet the prerequisites as compared to those who did. Based on the data, students are more likely to remain in college and transition to their sophomore year if they have taken and successfully completed the high school course prerequisites. Additional data is needed to determine if meeting the high school course prerequisites contributes to degree completion. Colleges will need to develop programs to increase the retention rate of those students who were admitted to the institution without having met the prerequisites.

Part III: SAT and ACT Scores as Indicators of Academic Preparation, Fall 2011

Act 629 of 1988, *The Cutting Edge*, and Act 359 of 1996 require public senior colleges and universities in South Carolina to report annually to the Commission on the admissions standards for first-time entering freshmen students. Act 359 also requires that the Commission review admissions standards. This report includes the average SAT/ACT scores for all first-time entering freshmen, including those admitted under the regular admission policies of the institution and those who are admitted on a provisional basis (admitted under exceptions to the regular admission policies), foreign students, and students aged 22 and above.

The majority of students attending South Carolina institutions take the SAT rather than the ACT as a college entrance examination. The scores of students who report only ACT scores have been converted to SAT equivalencies using the ACT-SAT concordance tables developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). The converted scores are then averaged with the SAT scores to arrive at an SAT/ACT combined mean.

When ACT scores are converted into SAT equivalents and combined into the mean, the SAT/ACT combined mean is slightly lower than the SAT combined mean excluding ACT scores (except for the research institutions). In general, this lowered mean results because more than one SAT combined score (verbal and math) converts into the same ACT score, whereas only one ACT composite score converts to an SAT combined score except at the lowest end of the range. Depending on where students' scores fall within a range (including ACT/SAT equivalencies in the calculation of the mean), they could either increase or decrease the combined mean at that institution.

Table 4 shows institutions by institution type and SAT/ACT combined mean. In addition, the combined mean for SAT scores only and the percentage of students reporting ACT scores only are also shown in **Table 4**.

TABLE 4 SAT/ACT SCORES OF FIRST-TIME ENTERING FRESHMEN, FALL 2011 (INCLUDING Foreign and Provisional Students and Students Age 22 and Above) SOUTH CAROLINA PUBLIC SENIOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITIES			
Institutions	SAT & ACT Combined Mean ¹	SAT (Only) Combined Mean	% Reporting Only ACT Score
Research Institutions			
Clemson	1236	1230	36.2%
USC-Columbia	1200	1198	38.1%
Average Research Institutions	1214	1211	37.4%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities			
The Citadel	1085	1089	32.0%
Coastal Carolina	999	1013	33.7%
College of Charleston	1147	1183	50.0%
Francis Marion University	945	952	45.5%
Lander University	966	968	41.0%
S.C. State University	866	858	56.9%
USC-Aiken	988	993	37.6%
USC-Beaufort	943	939	30.1%
USC-Upstate	984	981	41.1%
Winthrop	1059	1059	39.5%
Average Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	1023	1030	41.8%
State Average, Senior Institutions	1105	1109	39.9%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC			
USC-Lancaster	870	889	41.9%
USC-Salkehatchie	807	829	44.0%
USC-Sumter	934	952	44.5%
USC-Union	820	890	39.4%
Average Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC	866	894	42.9%

¹ACT scores converted to SAT equivalencies using the ACT/SAT Concordance Tables.

Table 5 presents a comparison of the number of students accepted with ACT scores for 2010 and 2011. Every senior institution except two (The Citadel and South Carolina State) reported an increase in students accepted with the ACT.

Table 5		
Comparison of the Percent of Students Reporting ACT Scores		
Academic Years 2010 and 2011		
Institutions	2010	2011
	% First-Time Freshmen Including Foreign, Prov. & Age 22 & Above Reporting ACT	% First-Time Freshmen Including Foreign, Prov. & Age 22 & Above Reporting ACT
Research Institutions		
Clemson	28.1%	36.2%
USC-Columbia	33.9%	38.1%
Average Research Institutions	31.5%	37.4%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities		
The Citadel	33.5%	32.0%
Coastal Carolina University	32.5%	33.7%
College of Charleston	42.7%	50.0%
Francis Marion University	35.7%	45.5%
Lander University	38.3%	41.0%
S.C. State University	59.0%	56.9%
USC-Aiken	34.1%	37.6%
USC-Beaufort	27.6%	30.1%
USC-Upstate	36.2%	41.1%
Winthrop University	35.3%	39.5%
Average Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	38.0%	41.8%
State Average, Senior Institutions	35.2%	39.9%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC		
USC-Lancaster	41.0%	41.9%
USC-Salkehatchie	41.6%	44.0%
USC-Sumter	48.1%	44.5%
USC-Union	50.0%	39.4%
Average Two Year Regional Campuses of USC	43.7%	42.9%

Table 6 compares the SAT/ACT combined mean for each institution for 2009, 2010, and 2011. **Table 6** indicates that there was an increase in the average combined SAT/ACT mean for USC-Columbia (10 points) between 2010 and 2011. The four-year comprehensive teaching institution sector shows mixed results. Five of the institutions had increases over 2010 scores in 2011 and five had decreases. Three of the two-year campuses of USC had an increase in 2011 from 2010 SAT/ACT combined scores.

TABLE 6				
SAT/ACT Scores of First-Time Entering Freshmen				
(Including Foreign, Provisional, and Students Age 22 and Above)				
Institutions	2009 SAT/ACT Combined Mean	2010 SAT/ACT Combined Mean	2011 SAT/ACT Combined Mean	2010- 2011 Change Combined Mean
Research Institutions				
Clemson	1228	1236	1236	0
USC-Columbia	1193	1190	1200	10
Average Research Institutions	1209	1209	1214	5
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities				
The Citadel	1073	1059	1085	26
Coastal Carolina	1010	991	999	8
College of Charleston	1159	1160	1147	-13
Francis Marion	963	973	945	-28
Lander	979	981	966	-15
S.C. State	864	879	866	-13
USC-Aiken	985	991	988	-3
USC-Beaufort	938	940	943	3
USC-Upstate	974	983	984	1
Winthrop	1058	1054	1059	5
Average Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	1028	1022	1023	1
State Average, Senior Institutions	1107	1103	1105	2
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC				
USC-Lancaster	894	870	870	0
USC-Salkehatchie	818	805	807	2
USC-Sumter	932	931	934	3
USC-Union	807	802	820	18
Average Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC	882	866	866	0

Part IV: Provisionally Admitted Students

Two types of admission may be offered to a degree-seeking student upon admission to an institution. Applicants who meet the institution's minimum admission criteria and who are offered admission are classified as regular students. Applicants who do not meet the institution's regular admission requirements but who are offered admission using alternative criteria are classified as provisional students. Several institutions reported students who had not met the recommended high school course prerequisites, yet reported 0% provisional students. In response to a staff request for additional information about provisional students in 2011, Clemson University and Francis Marion reported that the institution does not admit provisional students, but may allow students to be enrolled with "conditions." Similarly, Coastal Carolina allows students to enroll with "probationary" status and take a maximum of 13 credit hours for one semester where the student must earn a grade of C or higher to be considered for regular admission. Lander University stated it allows some "discretion" on a limited case-by-case basis and admits a cohort of students each fall semester who do not meet admissions requirements set by the university. The Citadel does not label any student as provisional, but

may limit the number of hours taken or provide specific academic expectations for those students who do not meet the recommended high school course prerequisites.

Table 7 shows provisional freshmen as a percent of total first-time entering freshmen for Fall 2011 for each institution and overall.

TABLE 7			
Provisional Freshmen as a Percent of Total First-Time Freshmen			
Fall 2011			
Institutions	Total First-Time Freshmen	Provisional Freshmen	Percent Provisional
Research Institutions			
Clemson	2,933	0*	0.0%
USC-Columbia	4,636	743	16.0%
Total Research Institutions	7,569	743	9.8%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities			
The Citadel	631	0*	0.0%
Coastal Carolina	2,137	0*	0.0%
College of Charleston	2,334	283	12.1%
Francis Marion University	743	6	0.8%
Lander University	595	27	4.5%
S.C. State University	829	20	2.4%
USC-Aiken	607	29	4.8%
USC-Beaufort	432	29	6.7%
USC-Upstate	811	73	9.0%
Winthrop University	983	98	10.0%
Total Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	10,102	565	5.6%
Total Senior Institutions	17,671	1,308	7.4%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC			
USC-Lancaster	427	288	67.4%
USC-Salkehatchie	327	215	65.7%
USC-Sumter	229	128	55.9%
USC-Union	99	67	67.7%
Total Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC	1,082	698	64.5%
Grand Total	18,753	2,006	10.7%

*See additional explanation on page 16 on this report.

Clemson University, The Citadel, and Coastal Carolina reported accepting no provisional students in 2011. 16.0% provisional students were admitted to USC-Columbia. Of the comprehensive teaching institutions, the College of Charleston admitted the most provisional students (13.8%).

At its meeting on August 25, 1997, the Commission approved several recommendations for the institutions to consider regarding provisional students. Among these recommendations were two which relate to the data presented in **Table 7**:

- Research universities should limit provisional admissions to no more than 10% of the first-time entering freshman class.
- Four-year teaching universities should limit provisional admissions to no more than 15% of the first-time entering freshman class.

As can be seen from the data presented in **Table 7**, in 2011, USC-Columbia, from the two research universities is not in compliance with the recommended 10% guideline. All of the four-year comprehensive institutions are in compliance with the recommended 15% guideline.

Trend data for provisional admissions for the last five years for the four-year comprehensive teaching institutions are shown below:

TABLE 7B					
Provisional Freshmen as a Percent					
Total First-Time Freshmen					
Research Institutions	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Clemson University	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
USC-Columbia	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.7%	16.0%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities	2007	2008	2009	2010	2010
The Citadel	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Coastal Carolina University	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
College of Charleston	12.9%	8.4%	11.6%	13.8%	12.1%
Francis Marion University	14.6%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
Lander University	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%
S.C. State University	7.4%	2.0%	0.0%	8.1%	2.4%
USC-Aiken	5.9%	6.7%	7.0%	7.3%	4.8%
USC-Beaufort*	10.8%	5.6%	2.9%	2.9%	6.7%
USC-Upstate	2.9%	2.2%	7.3%	7.8%	9.0%
Winthrop University	8.1%	7.6%	7.2%	9.6%	10.0%

These data indicate that the percentage of provisional students admitted to the four-year comprehensive institutions has fluctuated at several institutions over the last five years. College of Charleston continues to have a large percentage of provisional students, but remains below the recommended 15%.

USC applies the same admissions standards used at its main campus to students who apply to a USC Regional (two-year campus) and who are classified by the institution as baccalaureate-ready students. When a student applies to a Regional Campus (RC), his/her application is compared to USC-Columbia's admission standards. If the student could have been admitted to Columbia (but obviously desires admission to the local RC), s/he is "coded", using long-established USC-specific (that is, not state-wide, common criteria) designations as an "HB" which is the same code used for a Columbia admit. If the student does not meet Columbia criteria (which could be any combination of high school prerequisites, standardized test scores, predicted GPA) the student is classified as an "HR" which is referred to as "branch" status (as in branch campuses, the original designation of the all campuses outside of Columbia). These students must earn a minimum 2.0 GPA and at least 30 hours in order to be able to change campuses to Columbia. No remediation is offered at the Regional Campuses. Information in the chart below indicates that a little less than two-thirds of the entering freshmen at the USC two-year campuses are classified as provisional students. The trend data for five years is

presented below and shows a general pattern of approximately 64.5% of the students admitted to the Regional Campuses are identified as provisionally admitted students with decreases since 2006.

TABLE 7B Provisional Freshmen as a Percent of Total First-Time Freshmen USC Two-Year Campuses Annual Percentage						
USC Two-Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Annual Percentage	69.1%	68.5%	64.9%	65.0%	63.8%	64.5%

Part V: Fall 2011 Minimum Admission Standards

A component of Act 629 of 1988 requires the Commission to work with public institutions of higher learning in the state to ensure that minimal admission standards are maintained by the institutions. *The publication and dissemination of minimal admission standards was recommended by external consultants who argued that unless students had a clear sense of what institutional expectations are, they could not rise to meet these expectations.* In 1988, each institution was required to specify annually the minimum approximate SAT score (combined math and verbal) that is required of most applicants for admission as freshmen. In 1993, the Commission approved the collection of additional data to include minimum ACT scores if these were submitted in lieu of SAT scores.

It is important to note that these minimum admissions standards are approximate. Some institutions use a predictive equation to determine which students to admit. At these institutions, the minimum required scores will vary somewhat depending on the value and weight of the other elements in the admissions formula. For this reason, the minimum SAT and ACT scores reported by the institutions as required for admission are to be used as guideposts for students aspiring to admission to any given institution.

Many institutions have been reporting that they no longer use class rank to set the approximate minimum SAT/ACT score, but instead use the Grade Point Average (GPA) of the core high school college prep curriculum. In order to report more accurately the approximate minimum SAT/ACT score for the institutions, the Commission requested information on which method an institution used to set the minimum score and to report this information for this report. These data are separated into two tables indicating institutions that use class rank (**Table 8**) and those that use core GPA (**Table 9**). Clemson University, College of Charleston, Lander University, South Carolina State University, USC-Aiken, USC-Beaufort, and USC-Upstate report using both methods in setting their approximate minimum scores.

The approximate SAT and ACT score requirements reported by each institution **using class rank** for Fall 2011 are shown in **Table 8**.

TABLE 8
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS
APPROXIMATE MINIMUM SAT SCORE (COMBINED) AND
MINIMUM ACT SCORE REQUIREMENTS FOR
FIRST-TIME ENTERING FRESHMEN
2012

Institutions	High School Class Rank						Use Predictive Equation ¹	
	Top 20% of Class		Top 50% of Class		Top 80% of Class		Yes	No
	SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT		
Research Institutions								
Clemson University	1050	23	1290	30	1580	36	X	
USC-Columbia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities								
The Citadel	950	20	950	20	950	20		X
Coastal Carolina University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
College of Charleston	1050	22	1170	26	N/A	N/A		
Francis Marion University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lander University	820	17	975	20	1050	23	X	
S.C. State University	830	18	830	18	830	18		X
USC-Aiken	800	17	800	17	N/A	N/A	X	
USC-Beaufort	800	17	800	17	800	17	X	
USC-Upstate	850	18	900	19	900	19	X	
Winthrop University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		X
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC								
USC Lancaster	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
USC Salkehatchie	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
USC Sumter	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
USC Union	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		

1. Some institutions use predictive equations, formulas which combine elements such as high school class rank and/or high school grade point ratios and/or SAT or ACT scores, to determine which students to admit. At these institutions, the minimum required scores will vary somewhat depending on the value and weight of the other elements in the formula.

Two institutions (Coastal Carolina and College of Charleston), reported changes in approximate minimum SAT/ACT scores in **Table 8** for 2012: Coastal Carolina is deleting high school class rank as one of the admission requirements and College of Charleston is deleting consideration of class rank for the top 80% of the Class for Fall 2012. All other institutions reporting data in **Table 8** kept the same minimum scores as in 2011.

The approximate SAT and ACT score requirements reported by each institution **using core GPA for Fall 2012** are shown in **Table 9**. This is the ninth year that institutions reported the use of the core GPA rather than class rank in reporting minimum SAT/ACT scores. Institutions reporting SAT/ACT with core GPA in **Table 9** indicated some changes for Fall 2012: Coastal Carolina University is **decreasing** required minimum scores (SAT/ACT) for the admission of students with a 3.0 and 4.0 core GPA from 960/20 (3.0 and 4.0 GPA) to 900/19 (3.0 GPA) and 850/18 (4.0 GPA); Francis Marion University is **deleting** the required minimum scores for the admission of students with a 2.0 core GPA; Lander University is **increasing** the

required minimum scores (SAT/ACT) for the admission of all students from 800/16 to 1050/23 (4.0 GPA), 875/18 to 975/20 (3.0 GPA), and 1050/22 to 1050/23 (2.0 GPA).

TABLE 9 ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS APPROXIMATE MINIMUM SAT SCORE (COMBINED) AND MINIMUM ACT SCORE REQUIREMENTS FOR FIRST-TIME ENTERING FRESHMEN 2012								
Institutions	High School Core GPA and Minimum SAT/ACT score						Use Predictive Equation	
	Core GPA 2.0		Core GPA 3.0		Core GPA 4.0		Yes	No
	SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT		
Research Institutions								
Clemson University	1580	36	1270	29	950	22	X	
USC-Columbia	1250	28	950	20	700	15	X	
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities								
The Citadel	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		X
Coastal Carolina University	960	20	900	19	850	18		X
College of Charleston	N/A	N/A	1200	26	1050	22		X
Francis Marion University	*	*	780	16	780	16		X
Lander University	1050	23	975	20	1050	23	X	
S.C. State University	830	18	830	18	830	18		X
USC Aiken	910	19	800	17	800	17	X	
USC Beaufort	800	17	800	17	800	17	X	
USC Upstate	900	19	900	19	850	18	X	
Winthrop University	N/A	N/A	900	19	850	18		X
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC								
USC Lancaster	1250	28	950	20	700	15	X	
USC Salkehatchie	1250	28	950	20	700	15	X	
USC Sumter	1250	28	950	20	700	15	X	
USC Union	1250	28	950	20	700	15	X	

* A new freshman applicant who has a high school GPA of 2.3 or below may be presented to the Admissions, Advising, and Retention Committee for possible admittance if they have an SAT of at least 1000 or an ACT of at least 22.

1. Some institutions use predictive equations, formulas which combine elements such as high school class rank and/or high school grade point ratios and/or SAT or ACT scores, to determine which students to admit. At these institutions, the minimum required scores will vary somewhat depending on the value and weight of the other elements in the formula.

Table 9 indicates variability among reports of minimum SAT/ACT scores in conjunction with a core GPA, which is attributable to patterns used by institutions for assessing student qualifications. SC State and USC-Beaufort determine eligibility based upon a single minimum SAT/ACT score. Francis Marion uses a single minimum SAT/ACT score for students entering with a 3.0 and 4.0 core GPA. Clemson University, USC-Columbia, Coastal Carolina, College of Charleston, Lander University, USC-Aiken, USC-Upstate, and Winthrop University report different minimum SAT/ACT scores required for entering students with a core GPA of 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0.

In 2005, the SAT added a mandatory Writing section. **Table 10** shows that the Writing section was a requirement for admission to USC-Columbia and College of Charleston, but several institutions (Clemson, Coastal Carolina, South Carolina State University, USC-Upstate, and Winthrop University) use the Writing component for research or for planning services and placements. The College of Charleston reports that it uses either the SAT or ACT Writing score.

Table 10

Requirement of SAT Writing Component for Admissions in Fall 2012

Institutions	Yes/No	Additional Information
Research Institutions		
Clemson	No	Supplemental information in a student's application. Research to see if Writing may be part of the predictive formula.
USC-Columbia	Yes	Currently required for study & possible use in holistic review.
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities		
The Citadel	No	
Coastal Carolina University	No	Not required but collected for future assessment of new student success.
College of Charleston	Yes	Looked at as its own separate score & used as another source when making admission decisions.
Francis Marion University	No	
Lander University	No	
S.C. State University	No	Use data to access entering freshmen as part of QEP's primary objective for SACS.
USC-Aiken	No	
USC-Beaufort	No	
USC-Upstate	No	Uses for appropriate placement in freshman English courses.
Winthrop University	No	Collecting for review of correlation between our freshman student's performance in 1st Writing Course.

Table 11 shows the number of first-time freshmen aged 25 or older in the South Carolina public colleges and universities for the past five years. The number of first time entering freshmen aged 25 and older has decreased slightly in the four-year institutions since Fall 2008 and has increased in the two-year institutions since Fall 2007.

Table 11
Number of First-time Freshmen Aged 25 and Older by Year
South Carolina Public Colleges and Universities
Five-Year Comparison

Institutions	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Total Fall 2007-2011
Research Institutions						
Clemson University	0	0	0	0	1	1
U.S.C. - Columbia	3	3	1	5	3	15
Total Research Institutions	3	3	1	5	4	16
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities						
The Citadel	0	1	1	1	1	4
Coastal Carolina University	1	2	3	4	4	14
College of Charleston	0	2	1	0	3	6
Francis Marion University	2	5	5	5	3	20
Lander University	0	3	2	1	0	6
South Carolina State Univ.	2	10	7	6	1	26
U.S.C. - Aiken	3	1	1	2	0	7
U.S.C. - Beaufort	6	7	6	5	4	28
U.S.C. - Upstate	8	11	7	4	6	36
Winthrop University	2	2	0	0	1	5
Total Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	24	44	33	28	23	152
Total Senior Institutions	27	47	34	33	27	168
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC						
U.S.C. - Lancaster	22	24	12	26	16	100
U.S.C. - Salkehatchie	23	36	41	59	81	240
U.S.C. - Sumter	13	4	14	8	3	42
U.S.C. - Union	12	8	14	13	15	62
Total Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC	70	72	81	106	115	444
Grand Total	97	119	115	139	142	612

Conclusion

In general, students applying for college are prepared for postsecondary education. However, because of the new high school course prerequisite for Fall 2011, only 87.8% of applicable first-time freshmen met all the prerequisites compared to 96% in 2010. All but one of the four-year institutions showed decreases in the percentage of freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites for all freshmen. Institutions continue to have freshmen who do not meet the lab science, foreign language and the elective requirements of the high school course prerequisites, but the additional requirements of a fourth mathematics course and a fine arts course contributed to the decrease. Based on the data, students who are admitted and have not met the high school course prerequisites tend to have a lower retention rate after the first year at the institution than those students who did meet the prerequisites. Institutions need to be aware of this difference in freshman to sophomore retention and allow for it when making decisions.

Institutions continue to adjust admission requirements for first-time entering freshmen as indicated in the proposed minimum admission standards for Fall 2012. The required

minimum SAT/ACT scores are lower for those students with a higher GPA and high school class rank at most but not all institutions.

Finally, two institutions are now using the new Writing Component of the SAT as a requirement for admission. Five institutions are using the scores for research, analyzing the data to determine whether the Writing Component should become part of the admission requirements and/or be used for supplemental information as part of a holistic review of the student's application.