

**SC National Guard College Assistance Program (SCNG CAP)
Review/Evaluation Committee Meeting
Main Conference Room
November 15, 2016
10:00 a.m.**

SC Air National Guard

MSgt. Steven David
CMSgt. Gary Jackson
SMSgt. Michael Morris
Lt. Colonel Jim Roth

Guests

Ms. Julie Frick, USC Columbia

CHE Staff

Ms. Lorinda Copeland
Dr. Karen Woodfaulk

SC Army National Guard

Lt. Colonel Sean Egnew

Institutional Representatives

Mr. Jeff Dennis, Greenville Technical College
Mr. Hank Fuller, The Citadel
Ms. Cindy Peachey, USC Columbia
Ms. Michelle Upchurch, Limestone College

1. Introductions and Approval of Minutes

Introductions were made by everyone in attendance. Dr. Karen Woodfaulk asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the July 13, 2016, meeting. The motion was made (David) and seconded (Egnew) to accept the minutes as written. The minutes were accepted as written.

**2. SCNG CAP Awards Update
- Fall 2016**

Ms. Lorinda Copeland provided an update on the College Assistance Program (CAP) awards for fall 2016. The total request for fall 2016 as of November 15, 2016, was \$427,504. Of this total, 170 Army members were awarded \$361,692 and 20 Air members were awarded \$65,813. The fall 2016 deadline for institutions to submit a request for funds and/or return of funds is November 30, 2016. Ms. Copeland had disseminated a reminder to the institutions regarding the deadline. Additional reminders would be disseminated.

3. AY 2016-17 CAP Application Update (Additions/Deletions)

Lt. Colonel Sean Egnew reported as of November 13, 2016, the Army Guard had processed 737 CAP applications. The estimated funding for these applications is \$3.1 million. Lt Colonel Egnew provided an update (flagging actions, AIT failures, discharges, and the number of members who had reached the 130 attempted credit hour maximum). MSgt. Steven David reported that there were no changes for the Air Guard.

Dr. Woodfaulk stated the Army Guard approved “flagging actions” for their CAP members. Previously, the number of “flagging actions” for CAP members were limited. Although the process is going well, the impact of “flagging actions” is being monitored. Mr. Jeff Dennis asked the Guard what percentage of their members applied for CAP. Lt Colonel Jim Roth responded 10% for the Air Guard. Lt. Colonel Egnew responded 8% for the Army Guard.

4. SCNG CAP Program Evaluation

-Graduation Data

- Student Survey

Dr. Woodfaulk provided an overview of the graduation data generated by Ms. Camille Brown, CHE's Chief Information Officer (CIO). The National Guard file was matched with the CHE scholarship file and the CHE completions file. Mr. Dennis asked what was the beginning date of the data in the National Guard file. Dr. Woodfaulk responded fall 2007. The unduplicated numbers were presented for members who received an award and for members who never received an award. Duplicated numbers were presented for members who never received an award, and for members who received an award and graduated by degree level. Also, the total unduplicated number of members in the National Guard file, the unduplicated number and percentage of members who never received an award, and the unduplicated numbers and percentages for members who received an award and graduated by degree level were presented.

Dr. Woodfaulk asked Ms. Copeland to explain why there would be members who never received an award. Ms. Copeland responded some reasons are that members will complete an application but never enroll, a full ROTC scholarship makes the member ineligible, the member may already have a degree at their current level of enrollment, or the member may have discharged. Lt. Colonel Egnew and MSgt. David agreed with Ms. Copeland. CMSgt. Gary Jackson asked if a member enrolled as a freshman, was there a lag in the graduation rate. Dr. Woodfaulk responded yes. CMSgt. Jackson responded the lag could make the graduation rate appear lower. Dr. Woodfaulk stated members could have enrolled in CAP needing a few hours to graduate or many hours to graduate. CMSgt. Jackson stated the percentages, which would be an important statistic for amending legislation, are low. Lt. Colonel Roth stated the percentages gives the appearance that members are not continuing enrollment. Statistically, the member may still be enrolled but may have not graduated. CMSgt. Jackson stated the program is nine years old. Four years of data might not be valid. A 40% margin of error could be a perception problem for lobbying purposes.

Dr. Woodfaulk stated the most recent completions data, academic year 2015-16, was included in the graduation percentages. Dr. Woodfaulk stated attention may need to be directed to members who received an award but did not graduate. The length of time to graduate was not reviewed. The students who did not graduate took advantage of post-secondary education. These students may have wanted to take advantage of post-secondary education without the intent to graduate. Ms. Copeland responded CAP has to be used for degree-seeking enrollment. Dr. Woodfaulk responded members may take degree-seeking courses without intending to graduate. Mr. Hank Fuller stated current eligible members in the database who are enrolled are still progressing. It is assumed these members plan to graduate. Mr. Fuller suggested the data be narrowed down to reflect those members who are actively enrolled. Mr. Fuller also suggested a graduation rate for members that entered CAP within a particular timeframe. Also, Mr. Fuller stated the percentages were off because members who did not receive an award were included in the graduation rate. Dr. Woodfaulk responded that members who did not receive an award were removed from the calculation. Mr. Fuller responded not according to the table headings. Ms. Cindy Peachey stated the number of members who graduated and received an award should be divided by the total number of members who received an award, not the total number of members in the database.

Mr. Dennis responded that Mr. Fuller's and Ms. Peachey's comments are applicable from a financial aid perspective. However, the Guard may not want to communicate that members applied for CAP but did not matriculate. Dr. Woodfaulk asked if there were questions that could be asked of the members who took advantage of CAP but did not graduate. Mr. Fuller suggested

that the data reflect graduated and still pursuing. Dr. Woodfaulk stated that the survey could possibly include a question regarding intent. Ms. Peachey stated during the early years of CAP, her eligibility list included members who never enrolled. Members who never enrolled have skewed the numbers. Ms. Michelle Upchurch stated she has members on her CAP eligibility list every year who do not enroll. Ms. Copeland responded most institutions have members on their eligibility list who do not enroll for various reasons. CMSgt. Jackson responded transportation issues or job conditions could prevent members from enrolling. MSgt. David stated it is more important that the educational component of CAP be rectified (130 attempted credit hour maximum, etc.). Other issues that may prevent members from enrolling may be life issues. Dr. Woodfaulk responded in many cases CAP recipients are not traditional students.

SMSgt. Michael Morris asked if the graduation percentages were skewed because post bachelor's numbers were included. Lt. Colonel Roth stated more problematic was that the graduation percentage is based on the total number of applicants, not the total that received an award. Dr. Woodfaulk stated that she thought the percentage of members that used the award was used in the methodology. Lt. Colonel Roth responded if the total that received the award was used, the Air Guard percentage would be higher. Dr. Woodfaulk responded she will invite Ms. Camille Brown to the next meeting. CMSgt. Jackson asked if the numbers presented have to be reported in a specified format. Dr. Woodfaulk responded no. CMSgt. Jackson asked if CHE determined the reporting format of their data. Dr. Woodfaulk responded CHE is legislatively required to track students who receive state funds. The graduation data presented was not a required format. SMSgt. Michael Morris responded the current percentages may not accurately reflect the effectiveness of the program. Mr. Jeff Dennis commented that although CAP does not award beyond the bachelor's degree, CHE still tracks these students. Dr. Woodfaulk stated students moving beyond the bachelor's degree may reflect a success story.

Dr. Woodfaulk provided an overview of the student survey. Some of the survey questions were revised based on suggestions received. Dr. Woodfaulk asked if an additional question should be added regarding the intent to graduate. Although life circumstances may happen, intent may reveal whether the member plans to graduate. The program goal is for the member to graduate. However, it may not be the member's goal to graduate. Some members may be taking advantage of post-secondary education. Lt. Colonel Roth suggested that the question regarding the degree completion be revised. The revised question would identify members who do not plan to receive a certificate or degree. Lt. Colonel Egnew asked Ms. Copeland if the regulation states CAP has to be used for degree seeking. Ms. Copeland responded yes. Mr. Fuller asked if the survey should include a question as to whether benefits ended prior to graduation. This type of question might help to determine if the maximum benefit should be increased. Mr. Fuller stated 30% to 50% of his students do not graduate within 8 semesters. Lt. Colonel Roth stated that Mr. Fuller's suggestion helps identify the need. CMSgt. Jackson asked what was the goal of the survey. Dr. Woodfaulk stated the goal is to ensure state dollars are used efficiently. Lt. Colonel Roth stated statistics may not be meaningful if the member is providing the data. CMSgt. Jackson stated a survey can hurt or help from a lobbying standpoint. Information can be gathered to make a point for lobbying without a survey. CMSgt. Jackson stated support from a few good people and statistics is all that is needed. Mr. Fuller responded he agreed with CMSgt. Jackson. Mr. Fuller suggested a question asking the member how many semesters remained for the member to complete their degree. SMSgt. Michael Morris stated if a member has not developed a degree plan with a counselor, the member may not know the number of semesters remaining. Mr. Fuller stated he would like to see the \$18,000 maximum increased to \$20,000 if the 130 maximum is removed.

MSgt. David stated there could be more than one answer to the questions if the questions are not CAP specific. MSgt. David stated that members will respond to questions based on their CAP benefit. Dr. Woodfaulk stated whether CAP or another benefit is used, the goal is to graduate. Lt. Colonel Egnew agreed. Dr. Woodfaulk stated from an agency's point of view, the staff would want to know the user's perspective. Dr. Woodfaulk stated the goal is to finalize the survey in December. Suggestions should be forwarded to CHE staff. A dissemination plan will be discussed during the December monthly meeting with the Guard. The Guard will disseminate the survey to their CAP members. Also, institutional support in disseminating the survey will be appreciated.

5. SCNG CAP Proposed Regulations

- **Removal of the 130 attempted credit hour maximum (Section 62-252 B. and other sections referencing attempted or credit hours earned)**
- **Removal of the full annual benefit in the final semester (Section 62-252 A. 3)**
- **Exception to Policy Language (Section 62-256 A & 62-257)**

Dr. Woodfaulk reported the proposed regulation, approved by CHE, was forwarded to the Legislative Council and would be published in the State Register. Because the 130 attempted credit hour maximum is in State statute, the 130 attempted credit hour maximum could not be changed in the regulation. The Guard will need to secure a sponsor for the bill to strike the language from the statute. Once the bill is passed, the regulation can be changed. The change in statute would be guidance for the first year. The regulation could be amended for the second year. CMSgt. Jackson stated that he and the other Guard representatives were members of the National Guard Association of South Carolina. CMSgt. Jackson is the Legislative Committee Chair. He stated that finding a legislative sponsor will not be a problem.

CMSgt Jackson stated he is looking for selling points in the graduation data that was presented. Statistics supported by "feel good" stories can move legislation forward. Dr. Woodfaulk stated CHE staff would like to "walk" with the Guard on the proposed changes. Dr. Woodfaulk asked who would "prefile" a bill regarding the 130 maximum. CMSgt. Jackson stated he did not know who the new committee assignments were as a result of the most recent elections. Their normal focus is the Adjutant General's budget and CAP. There is no constant contact with education committees. However, the SC National Guard Association does employ lobbyists. Dr. Woodfaulk asked CMSgt. Jackson to let CHE staff know what assistance they could provide. CMSgt. Jackson developing the background along with supportive statistics. CMSgt. Jackson stated the reason he asked if CHE staff had a required reporting format is because information reported in a different format may arouse questions.

CMSgt. Jackson stated another component would be how much of the budget has been expended during previous fiscal years. This is important because the proposal to add the graduate level as an eligible program of study would be opening the eligibility pool. However, asking for an increased appropriation is a different matter and would be difficult. Dr. Woodfaulk suggested caution in communication about any "surplus" funds. A possible consequence could be that funds are transferred from the program. Two million dollars were previously identified and transferred from the program. CMSgt. Jackson stated the argument is that there is enough flexibility within the current appropriation. If the eligibility pool is expanded, disbursements can be controlled with existing policy as opposed to being restricted by the statute. If expanding the

eligibility pool starts to affect the undergraduate level, existing policy can be used to refocus. A prioritization order can be developed which is easier to do within policy versus a statute change.

Dr. Woodfaulk stated we have to be mindful how we proceed because we do not want to upend a good program. CMSgt. Jackson agreed. CMSgt. Jackson asked with the removal of the 130 maximum, would the \$18,000 maximum be struck. Eighteen thousand will not fund a graduate degree. Dr. Woodfaulk responded that increasing the \$18,000 maximum could be step two. Dr. Woodfaulk asked the Guard how far they wanted to proceed with the proposals because the intent is to serve undergraduate students. The initial proposal was that removal of the 130 maximum would help the undergraduate level. During the October monthly meeting, the possibility of expanding eligibility to the graduate level was suggested. Dr. Woodfaulk stated she is cautious because a question might be whether all undergraduate students have been served. Dr. Woodfaulk suggested a progression analysis as to why state funds should be used for the graduate level. Funding for the graduate level would be another arena and for further discussion.

Lt. Colonel Egnew agreed with Mr. Fuller's suggestion that the maximum award be increased which would help eliminate surplus funds. Tuition has increased but the maximum award has not. Dr. Woodfaulk responded that increasing the maximum award might be better versus adding the graduate level. CMSgt. Jackson stated, in his opinion, the group should not think that the program will not receive both in the same legislative year. Once sponsors are secured, communicate with the sponsors to determine what the sponsor feels can be moved through the legislative process. Dr. Woodfaulk agreed. However, CHE will want justification if additional language beyond what was agreed upon and approved by the Committee on Access & Equity and Student Services.

Dr. Woodfaulk stated the issue is how to navigate the removal of the 130 maximum and what is the course of action in January. Will the course of action be the removal of the 130 maximum? Or, will the course of action include the addition of the graduate level? CMSgt. Jackson asked if CHE staff had composed a paper on the rationale for the removal of the 130 maximum. Dr. Woodfaulk responded no. Communication was received from the Guard and discussed with the Chair of the Committee on Access & Equity and Student Services. The issue was that more members could take advantage of CAP if the 130 maximum was removed. Lt. Colonel Egnew stated the removal of the 130 maximum is not a funding issue. The removal will benefit the institutions who have to tract credit hours. Also, if a member exceeds the 130 maximum, who would be responsible for recouping funds from a member.

MSgt. David stated from a previous meeting discussion, the \$18,000 would serve as the maximum. Dr. Woodfaulk asked the institutions what were their concerns regarding the 130 maximum. Ms. Julie Frick responded manually calculating the credit hours is burdensome. Mr. Fuller responded because of required RPTC/REPD courses, the majority of his students exceed the 130 maximum before eight semesters. Mr. Fuller stated it is important to remove the 130 maximum and use the \$18,000 maximum. Dr. Woodfaulk stated a background paper along with statistics moves the issue beyond a simple strike. Dr. Woodfaulk stated she is hesitant because the goal was to use the \$18,000 maximum. MSgt. David responded remove the 130 maximum would eliminate a burden for the institution and the student. Lt. Colonel Egnew responded some

members have credit hours that prevent them from using all of the \$18,000 maximum. Dr. Woodfaulk asked the group to consider how they would like to proceed. If the desire is to proceed beyond the removal of the 130 maximum, Dr. Woodfaulk will have to communicate with the Chair of the Committee on Access & Equity and Student Services.

Dr. Woodfaulk stated that the Guard informed CHE staff that they do not have an appeals process. The Guard has an “exception to policy” process. During the public hearing in January, CHE staff will request that “exception to policy” language be inserted in the proposed regulation. Dr. Woodfaulk provided an overview of the “exception to policy” language. Lt. Colonel Egnew asked if the language includes an over award. Dr. Woodfaulk responded that her interpretation was that an over award was addressed in the “exception to policy” language. Mr. Dennis asked if an exception to policy would be allowed for an over award. Mr. Dennis stated that he is not in favor of a member exceeding the maximum funding. Lt. Colonel Egnew responded the member has the right to request an “exception to policy” and the Guard has the right to deny or approve. In this type of case, Lt. Colonel Egnew would deny an “exception to policy”. Dr. Woodfaulk stated that an “exception to policy” ruling would have to comply with the regulation, not override. CMSgt. Jackson recommended that the Adjutant General not be removed from the language. CMSgt. Jackson suggested the addition of a delegation statement to indicate the Adjutant General may delegate authority. The “exception to policy” language will be forwarded to the group for review.

Other Business, Comments, or Concerns

No other business was discussed. Ms. Copeland will contact the group to schedule the next meeting.

Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,

Lorinda Copeland
Recording Secretary