



UNIVERSITY OF  
**South Carolina**  
UNION

*A Regional Palmetto College*

FO Minutes  
March 22, 2024 – 11:00 AM  
Whitener Building, Community Room

**Online attendance:**

Professor Susan Goebel  
Dr. Maggie Aziz  
Dr. Steve Lowe  
Professor Sandy Phillips-Long  
Professor Neill Hance  
Professor Caroline Wilson  
Dr. Tekla Johnson  
Professor Monica Covan  
Dr. Joe Anderson  
Professor Randy Ivey

**In-person attendance:**

Dr. Andrew Pisano  
Dr. Andrew Kettler  
Dr. Steve Lownes  
Dr. Emily Schafer  
Dr. Sakyulae Matsuku (guest)  
Dr. Katie Klik  
Dr. David Mitra  
Professor Gale Ashmore  
Dr. Avery Fouts  
Dr. Randy Lowell  
Dr. Allan Charles

FO Chair Dr. Andrew Pisano called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM.

**Minutes from February 23 meeting:**

Approved.

**Dean's Report: Dr. Randy Lowell**

Dr. Lowell's report is attached to these minutes. Specific items he mentioned include:

- SC Nexus – there is nothing new since last meeting
- Spring enrollment
- Applications for fall enrollment are up
- Dr. Aziz was interviewed on radio station WBCU about two plus twos
- Many searches are underway for new faculty
- Facilities update
- The SC legislature is currently working on salary increases

### **Academic Dean's Report: Dr. Maggie Aziz**

Dr. Aziz's report is attached. Specific items she mentioned include:

- Awards night is April 12 – RSVPs are needed
- Advising for summer and fall 2024 – schedules are online
- Academic Bulletin has been updated and is online on Columbia's site
- Peer Reviews are being conducted
- Travel requests must be reviewed and approved before any arrangements should be made. Faculty should keep in mind that Ms. Adams can book many of these items for them, thus eliminating the wait for reimbursement.
- Dr. Aziz is working with Jean Carrano to standardize student resources list in Blackboard
- Blackboard Collaborate is being eliminated and will be replaced with Zoom

### **Committee Reports**

**Faculty Advisory Committee** – no report

#### **Academic Affairs Committee:**

Dr. Kettler reported that

- there is an effort to build up the food pantry and a move to recreate the garden that was started a few years ago
- PCAM 299 will be linked to the after-school alliance
- We currently have unhoused students on campus and Dr. Kettler is working with Caden Jackson to fill the gap.
- Flyers will be put up for the farmer's market that takes place in front of the YMCA on weekends during the summer.

Dr. Lownes reported on

- an effort to institute a position of Senior Instructor
- His desire to make the PC Senate more participatory. He is soliciting ideas and wants to create an agenda for the next two years.
- His desire to create a post-tenure review for the purpose of maintaining quality and to reward faculty members for what they do. He plans to talk with the senate and others about this issue.

**Student Affairs Committee** – no report

**Scholarship Committee** – no report

#### **Faculty Welfare Committee**

Dr. Klik reported on the Senate Faculty Welfare Strategic Plan initiative.

Data that was collected last spring is being used; Dr. Elkins is on board. Dr. Klik and Dr. Schafer are planning to re-collect data next spring. Dr. Elkins has a vision of connecting all PC campuses together. The past ten years were spent creating Palmetto College. Focus for the next ten years is creating some cohesion among the campuses. Currently each campus functions separately.

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee**

Dr. Schafer reminded us that the name of DEI has changed to AOE (Access, Opportunity and Engagement)

**Academic Intervention Committee** – no report

**Satisfactory Academic Progress Committee** – no report

**PC Tenure and Promotion Committee** – no report

**PC Faculty Senate Systems Committee:**

Dr. Johnson brought up in our last FO meeting a recommendation for a local Grievance Committee. There was follow-up discussion of this recommendation. Dr. Schafer asked if we could move on this issue today and the answer was that we could not but that we need to create an ad hoc committee to work on it. Dr. Pisano said that if anyone is interested in serving on this ad hoc committee they should contact him and that he would send out an email to solicit members for the committee.

**Announcement:**

Dr. Schafer introduced our distinguished guest of honor – Dr. Sakyulae Matsuku, a doctor of public health from the Kingdom of Eswatini. She is a visiting scholar sponsored by the Hubert Humphrey Foundation. Dr. Matsuku will make a presentation on Monday at a Lunch and Learn on campus and another on Tuesday evening at the Carnegie library. She will be joined by another Hubert Humphrey scholar, Dr. Florence Akara from Kenya.

Final FO meeting of the semester:

- April 26 at 9:00 AM

At 12:35 PM there was a motion to adjourn. It was seconded and unanimously approved.

Submitted by:

Gale Ashmore, FO Secretary

Attachments:

- Dean's Report
- Academic Dean's Report

Randy Lowell, USC Union  
Dean's Report  
March 22, 2024

- USC Columbia recently submitted a Commitment Letter seeking additional federal SC NEXUS Phase 2 funding for the Regional Technology and Innovation Hub Program, which aims to help SC build a globally leading, end-to-end resilient, sustainable energy and power ecosystem, in partnership with other institutions around the state. Among the 6 commitments identified in the letter, commitment 5 describes USC Union as a pivotal “spoke” in the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Exchange (eiX) project model, providing ground-level support for advanced energy entrepreneurship in Union County, expecting to undertake this commitment starting in Q1 2025 and maintaining this commitment through the 5-year program. Specific actions/activities will include endorsing the eiX hub by promoting and aiding regional entrepreneurs in Union County; hosting in-person and virtual events that encourage collaboration among advanced energy entrepreneurs; sharing information about eiX resources, programming, and services with local entrepreneurs; maintaining an open line of communication with SC NEXUS eiX to share feedback, data, and success stories from implemented programs; regularly assessing and reporting on the impact of the programs and services offered to ensure they meet the needs of the regional entrepreneurs; and participating actively in the state-wide EIX conference. More details to come on the specifics of these activities and potential funding to support it as it comes in.

#### **Students**

- Spring enrollment numbers for this semester have reached the freeze. This includes the Spring record high headcount of 1,244 (up 26.42% over last Spring's 984), and FTE of 733 (up 27.92% over last Spring's 573). This includes being up both in traditional student and dual enrollment student populations. Additionally, Fall applications and admits for new freshmen are well up over what they were at this time last year for the coming Fall semester.
- The USC Union Bass Fishing Team continues to excel out on the trails. As of March 19, the team ranks #27 in the country in the Bass Pro Shops School of the Year standings, managed by the Association of Collegiate Anglers (ACA), out of over 400 teams nationwide. Six of our anglers have already qualified for national championship competition this summer, including the duo of Tanner Hadden and Caleb Hudson, who finished in 7<sup>th</sup> place earlier this month at Douglas Lake, which made for three consecutive top-10 finishes and triple-qualifying them for the National Championship at Lake Hartwell in August.
- The Research Club raised \$220 with our Valentine's Day Bake Sale, and another \$340 with our Car Wash fundraiser yesterday. These funds will help offset some of the costs of an upcoming educational trip down to the Penn Center in Beaufort, SC, in May.
- We took a group of students to the State House in Columbia on February 13 for the annual Carolina Day event, where they did a great job representing the campus and thanking our legislators for their continued support.

#### **Faculty/Staff News**

- A special thank you to Susan Jett and everyone who helped to plan and execute the Founders Day event at the Main Street Junction. It was a great crowd and great event to honor Col. Denton and Brenda Childers.
- Thanks to Dr. Aziz for working with Columbia faculty on some of the new course offerings that will be available to our students this Fall, include ENTR 201: Entrepreneurism and Free Enterprise, HTMT 275: Introduction to Beverage Management, and HTMT 375: Wine, Beverage, and Culture. The ENTR 201 class is courtesy of the McNair Institute for Entrepreneurship in Columbia that is

tasked with expanding those types of opportunities and initiatives across the system. We are working with them to eventually make an Entrepreneurship Minor available to our Palmetto College students here. The HTMT courses are courtesy of the College of Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management in Columbia. These will serve as entry level online courses to begin to grow interest in those degrees as we work on building 2+2 pathways for our students and eventually begin to offer some of their hands-on courses out at Bell Street. In case you haven't already seen it, Dr. Aziz had a great interview on WBCU radio recently with Superintendent Haney, Dr. Byrd, and Dr. Bismarck, talking about the new 2+2 bachelor's degrees in Education in partnership with USC Upstate. A press conference regarding this initiative will also take place at Union County High School on April 11<sup>th</sup>, with Chancellor Harris from USC Upstate and Chancellor Elkins joining us for that.

- Full-time searches continue for Palmetto College Coordinator, Financial Aid Counselor, Psychology, Art, Mathematics, Spanish, Sociology, English, Statistics, and Chemistry. Candidates were recently on campus for the Sociology and English searches, and campus visits are on the calendar coming up for Art and Mathematics.

### **Facilities**

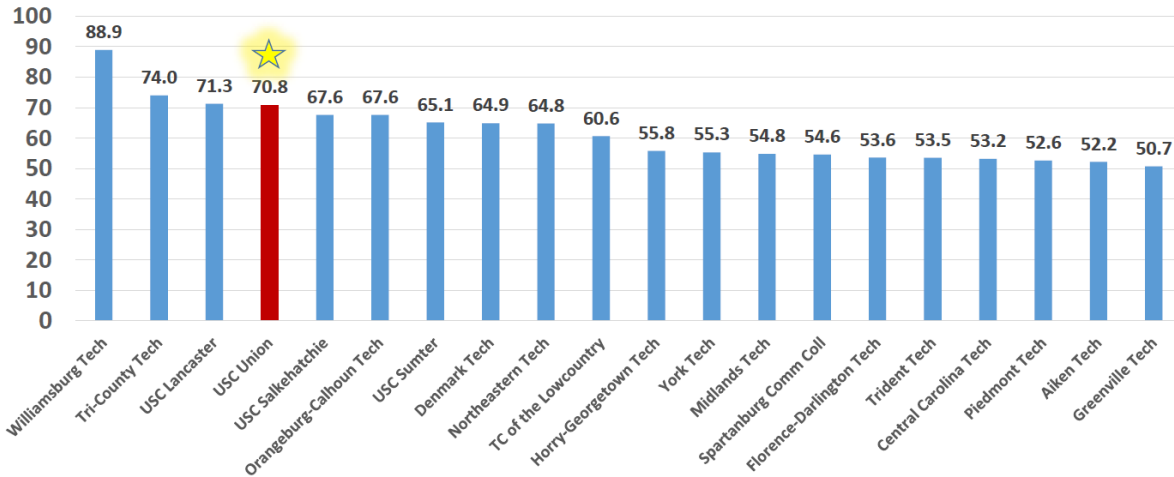
- FY24 Current Projects:
  - o Jonesville Gym roof replaced – Hired architect and engineer
  - o Student Services Building roof replaced – Hired architect and engineer
  - o Main Building Phase 1 – Elevator replacement 90% complete, HVAC demo in progress
  - o Baseball Field Phase 1 – Drawings in progress, parking lot in progress
  - o Softball Field Phase 1 – Final contract paperwork is in, ready for bid (groundbreaking event at the field scheduled for Tuesday, March 26, at 2:00pm)
  - o Wet lab and Truluck projects completed

### **Budget**

The campus met budget projections for FY23 and ended the year with a positive fund balance. For FY24, tuition and fees are once again frozen, with no increases for the 5th year in a row. Budget requests for additional deferred maintenance and operating funding from the legislature for FY25 have made it through the House deliberations and now sit with Senate Finance for consideration, including continued tuition mitigation funds so that tuition and fees can remain the same next year. The current version of the budget for next year includes a General Increase of \$1,000 for FTE employees earning \$66,667 and under, and 1.5% increase for FTEs over \$66,667. We'll see if the Senate changes that or keeps it as is. Fall 2023 tuition revenue from both Union/Laurens and Palmetto College programs is on target.

# Success Rate (%)

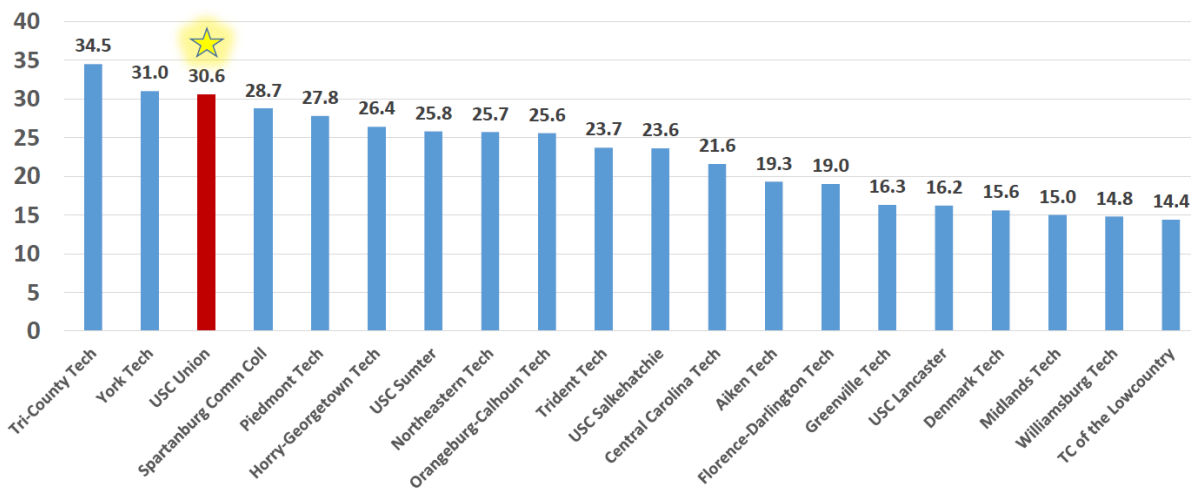
First-Time, Full-Time Undergraduates Entering in Fall 2019



CHE success rate, in addition to graduates included in graduation rate cohort, includes as part of the completion group students who are still enrolled at the same institution during Fall term following 150% of program time and students who transfer to other institutions before 150% of program time. **SOURCE:** [https://che.sc.gov/sites/che/files/Documents/CHE%20Data%20and%20Reports/Statistical%20Abstracts/2023\\_Statistical\\_Abstract.pdf](https://che.sc.gov/sites/che/files/Documents/CHE%20Data%20and%20Reports/Statistical%20Abstracts/2023_Statistical_Abstract.pdf)

# Graduation Rate (%)

First-Time, Full-Time Undergraduates Entering in Fall 2019



**Academic Dean's Report  
March 2024**

**Office of Academic and Student Affairs –**

**Awards Night:**

- Awards Night – Tuesday, April 12 @ 6:00pm.
- If you haven't done so yet, please RSVP to Amber Ivey ASAP.
- If you are attending and haven't done so already, please send a short write-up about your nominee to Amber ASAP. Samples were emailed to everyone.
- I'd like us to eventually sit down and discuss some of the awards, particularly the All-Around Palmetto and PC Distinguished Scholar Awards. This year, there was a low response rate for award voting for those, as well as for the All-Around Bantam (approximately 5 people voted). I noticed that since we no longer advise PC students, very few people knew any of those students and couldn't make nominations. Additionally, it has been difficult to obtain blurbs regarding some of those students. Should we consider changing those awards to something else that could directly benefit Union students?

**Advising:**

- Summer and Fall 2024 schedules are live.
- Summer and Fall 2024 advising began **March 18**. Please be sure to review your courses on these schedules and reach out to your advisees to schedule advising appointments.

**Important advising reminders:**

- Review each advisee's transcript to ensure they are on track to earn their AA/AS degrees.
- Pay particular attention to courses coded as Carolina Core. Not all courses are coded as Carolina core and if they are not coded this way then they won't count towards the Carolina Core requirement for graduation.
- Courses on transcripts coded as 001t count only as electives and do not count as Carolina Core Courses.
- Students must earn a grade of C in English 101 to advance to 102.
- To maintain the LIFE scholarship, students must maintain a 3.0 and complete 30 credit hours per year (15 in the fall, 15 in the summer to avoid needing summer classes).
- Ask students if they have taken any courses for college credit outside of USC Union. Students should not repeat courses they have already successfully completed. Pay particular attention to transfer work. Check their transcripts for any transfer work. Also ask advisees if they have any transfer work/AP credit/dual enrollment credit (even if it is not posted in self-service). They may have taken courses elsewhere and their transcripts may not have been uploaded by the time that advising begins. Students can check with Blake Wilson if they need to get transfer work submitted to us.
- Ask students what they want to major in and where they want to transfer. Locate the program plan of study and register students in courses that will count towards AA/AS plus BA/BS.
- Please check with your advisees regarding location of classes, and if it would be more convenient for them to take classes out at Bell Street in Clinton.

**Academic Bulletin:**

- Has been updated: <https://academicbulletins.sc.edu/union/>

**Course Materials and Syllabi:**

- Be sure to get information about any required course materials for your summer and fall courses to Tanja Black as soon as possible, ideally using the online submission portal to submit textbook information. If you are not requiring students to purchase any materials for your class, also let her know so they can convey that to the students as well.

**Peer Reviews:**

- Peer reviews are currently being conducted on several courses. I have reached out to several of you to help conduct those reviews. Thank you to all who have agreed to assist. Please have the reviews completed by the end of this semester.
- FIFs have been sent to the peer review committee and T&P committees for review.

**Travel Requests:**

- Travel requests must be reviewed and approved before any travel arrangements are made. Please submit your travel request well in advance of your intended travel date and ensure that it has been approved by me before making any arrangements. Do not assume that funds are available; simply informing me about a conference is not sufficient. I need to review the actual travel amount requested and assess the budget for the year.
- Additionally, reimbursements can only be processed after the travel has taken place. Please remember that Teresa can pay for the conference registration fee on her credit card, as well as some other travel expenses. However, she will not do so without a signed and approved Travel Request Form in hand.

**PURE Grants:**

- The applications will open on April 29th and close on June 7th this year. Applications will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis, so it's best for students to apply early to maximize their chances of securing funds. Further details and the application will be sent in the coming weeks.

**Dr. Kettler:**

- Working with RobinHood and Live Healthy Union Coalition to Access a Grant from the SC Physicians Cancer Charity to help with the Food Pantry
- Searching out Other Food Pantry Connections at Federal and State Level; Portals for Applications Re-Open in the Summer
- Submitted for Review at First Scholars to Support First Generation Students on Campus – Review Under Way – Would Include Monthly Meetings if Accepted.
- Working With Caden Jackson to Figure out How to Close the Gap that Created an Unhoused Student Situation On Campus
- E-Mailing With Union County Schools to Set Up More Internships for Afterschool Alliance for PCAM 299 Students
- Possibly doing the same with Healthy U, although waiting on their reply currently
- Continuing to Work with P3 – Hopefully Planning a P3 Visit to Campus for the Fall, Possibly on First Generation Day
- Possibly Informal Set-Up for a Tailgate Day in Columbia for Union Professors; Team building for Professors – Linking With Randy and Maybe, Then, Susan, to Coincide with other PC Tailgate that Occurs Yearly
- Bringing in Library Books from Columbia
- E-Mailing on Possible Garden for the area between the Family Life Center and the Old Art Building

**Departmental Updates –****Admissions:**

- Freshman applications are up 50% and Freshman Admits are up 25% for Fall 2024 compared to Fall 2023.
- Amy and Brad are still recruiting at Community Events and High School college fairs for Fall 2024
- Ada has scheduled dual enrollment application nights at our partner schools to help students complete applications.
- Bobby and Christen are doing FAFSA Days at local high schools.
- Planning our orientation sessions for Fall 2024. Dates to be determined (mid-June, early/mid-July, early August).
- Blake is working on graduation and degree audits.
- We are still looking for a PC Admissions Rep to replace Michael.



**Nursing:**

- Next cohort of upper-division nursing students – 11 accepted 3 returning, 2 denied. None waitlisted.
- Courtney Pinnell was accepted to the USC Doctor of Nursing Practice in Executive Healthcare Leadership in Columbia. (DNPEHL) She will begin this fall. Congratulations!
- The tentative date for Pinning is July 30<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup>.
- The tentative date for the upper division orientation is August 15.
- Dedication of Hands is scheduled for September 18<sup>th</sup>.

**iCarolina Lab:**

- The spring iCarolina classes are going well. Offerings include: MacOS, Getting the Most Out of Your iPhone/iPad, Intro to Apple Numbers, Intro to Apple Pages, and Apple Photos. I can send the course descriptions and times if anyone is interested.
- Sarah is working on a program for a summer youth program that will tie the iCarolina Lab to the library's makerspace (creating 3D objects on Tinkercad.com that will be printed on the library's 3D printer).
- Developed agreement for lending the iPads and MacBooks to USC Union students and faculty.

**Athletics:**

- Softball and baseball are both sitting at .500 for their records.
- Soccer is 1-1 for the spring semester and will be competing against NGU and Newberry college this coming weekend.
- Bass Fishing has three teams that have qualified for the National Championship this Summer. Also broke the top 25 poll this past week.
- Volleyball competed at USC Sumter this past week losing in the fifth set.
- Rifle team has competed in three different competitions with both of our female shooters coming in second and third at the last competition they competed at in Griffin GA.
- We are in the process of hiring two new coaches one for Women's soccer and one for Men and Women's cross country. These Sports will not start competing at the NJCAA level until August of 2025.
- Golf team has competed in one Club tournament this Spring finishing 4<sup>th</sup> and is planning to compete again this coming weekend.

**Student Academic Success Center:**

- As of 3/18/24, we have had 71 student sign-ins for tutoring, and computer and printer access. To date, we have had 357 athlete sign-ins for study hall.
- This spring, the SASC has hosted two workshops, with another on April 16<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Klik presented at our time management workshop on 2/20/2024. 36 students attended this workshop. Professor Hance provided our students with a workshop for online presentation skills on 3/13. This workshop had 25 student sign-ins.
- On April 16<sup>th</sup>, Jeremy Black will be presenting a technical support workshop to help our students learn how to navigate Blackboard, Self-Service, and student email.

**Student Activities:**

- March 25-28 SGA Voting in Central Lobby 10am-2pm every day
- March 28, March Madness with SASC, Tailgate party Family life center 6pm-8pm We will be watching the game of the night. All are welcome to join.
- April 1, Eggstravaganza Easter Egg Hunt, 30 golden eggs (24 prize and 6 April fool duds) 11:00am at Gazebo
- April 2<sup>nd</sup> Blood Drive, flyer sent out (10am-3pm) please use QR code sent in email.
- April 19 – Spring Fling, 11:00am-2:00pm, check in at Gazebo for lunch ticket. flyer sent out by email Wednesday

- April 22-25 – Exam Week Finals fest with SASC (In planning stages)

**Disability Services:**

- Disability Services now has 48 students enrolled and receiving services.
- Brandon is maintaining a relationship with our community partners: Alcohol & Drug, Mental Health, Voc Rehab, & DJJ to let them know that if they have clients with a disability that are interested in taking classes then the appropriate accommodations can be provided.