



UNIVERSITY OF
South Carolina
UNION

A Regional Palmetto College

FO Minutes
September 22, 2023 – 1:30 PM
Room C102

In person attendance:

Dr. Maggie Aziz
Dr. Steve Lownes
Professor Randy Ivey
Dr. Randy Lowell
Professor Sandy Phillips-Long
Professor Gale Ashmore
Professor Courtney Pinnell
Dr. Andrew Kettler
Dr. David Mitra
Dr. Avery Fouts
Professor Neill Hance
Dr. Lee Morris
Dr. Dave Hudson
Dr. Katie Knox

On-line attendance:

Dr. Deb Hudson
Dr. Emily Schafer
Professor Kevin Torres
Professor Caroline Wilson
Dr. Joe Anderson
Dr. Tekla Johnson
Professor Monica Covan
Professor Megan Collier-Bansil
Professor Greta Bailey
Professor Susan Goebel
Dr. Steve Lowe

FO Vice-Chair Dr. Avery Fouts called the meeting to order at 1:33 PM

Approval of minutes from August meeting

Approved.

Dean's Report: Dr. Randy Lowell

Dr. Lowell's report is attached.

Specifically, he mentioned:

- Enrollment is excellent
- Senior nursing students who graduated during the summer all did well and all are working as full-fledged nurses
- There was a dedication hand ceremony for new junior nursing student
- Over 200 students, faculty and staff attended Fresh Check Day
- The Constitution Day Celebration was held on September 18

- The University is looking at a new LMS. Blackboard license is expiring this year and will be renewed as a 3-year rather than 5-year license. Blackboard will sunset Classic Bb and by next fall everything will be Bb Ultra. Faculty can go through the IT service page to switch over the Ultra to try it out.
- Yesterday two ladies were here from Christie campus help which is a Wellness hub.
- The iCarolina lab at Carnegie is being publicized to get the most out of Apple products. Two-hour classes are being offered.
- Facilities: Upstairs work in Whitener is still going on and is expected to be finished by middle to late October.
- Wet lab close to being finished.

Academic Dean's Report: Dr. Maggie Aziz

Dr. Aziz reported that:

- New hire descriptions have been sent to chairpersons of committees.
- A committee has been formed to study the Community College Survey of Student Engagement.
- The First-Generation Celebration is scheduled for November 08.
- Advisor Orientation this morning was successful with many in attendance.

There ensued a discussion of the hiring process with many questions about the details.

Dr. Lownes spoke about changes to the Handbook regarding the Faculty Advisory Committee and Scholarship Committee. He proposed eliminating mention of the family fund because that no longer exists. He explained other changes he was proposing and took questions from those present. There will be a vote on the changes at the next FO meeting.

Committee Reports

Faculty Advisory – no report
 Academic Affairs – no report
 Student Affairs – no report
 Scholarship – no report

Faculty Welfare –

- Dr. Schafer reported that they have selected date for T&P workshop – sometime in January.
- Dr. Klik mentioned that she would like to have a celebration for those who have tenure as well as newly tenured faculty. She suggested a faculty barbecue to celebrate all tenured folks and said she will figure out a type of celebration and report later.
- Faculty Welfare survey report will come within a week to administration.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) –

Dr. Schafer reported that:

- Latin American Film Festival currently going on
- DEI is being rebranded to use different language for budgetary reasons. This brought on a discussion of what to do about job descriptions. Dr. Johnson suggested that we stand our ground and not change just because the wind has changed.

Academic Intervention – no report

Satisfactory Academic Progress – no report

PC Tenure & Promotion – no report

PC Peer Review – no report

PC Faculty Senate – no report

Dr. Steve Lowe, chairperson of **PC Academic Advisory Committee** reported that the committee is looking for an additional member with BOL/BLS familiarity. Looking to get another Union person on the committee.

Adjournment

At 2:37 PM there was a motion to adjourn. It was seconded and unanimously approved.

Submitted by:

Gale Ashmore, FO Secretary

Students

- Fall enrollment has already surpassed last year's final totals and represents a Fall semester record high, and an overall record high. As of yesterday, September 21, our headcount is at 1,356 (up 26.49% over last Fall's total at freeze of 1,072), and our FTE is at 770 (up 21.26% over last Fall's total at freeze of 635). This exceeds the previous Fall record of 1,218 from the Fall 2021, as well as the previous overall record of 1,228 from Spring 2022. Particularly exciting is that this includes increases in traditional student headcount (especially new freshmen), as well as increases in dual enrollment student headcount, with more time remaining ahead of the start of Fall II session in October to enroll additional students.
- Our first senior cohort of B.S.N. students here on the Union campus completed all of their coursework over the summer and all passed their first attempt at the NCLEX licensing exam to be able to officially work fully as nurses. Four of them will be staying local and working in the hospital here in Union (2 will work in the Emergency Room), while the other two will work nearby in the Spartanburg Regional system and up in Chester. A 100% first-time pass rate on the NCLEX is a great accomplishment for this first cohort of Union nurses, and for the faculty and staff who have supported them along that journey here, especially our great nursing faculty here in Union. The Dedication of Hands ceremony for our newest group of Upper Division junior cohort nursing students was on Wednesday this week, as they head into their hands-on clinical experiences.
- We had another great Fresh Check Day event earlier this month in Patron's Park, coupled with a Blood Connection blood drive. Well over 200 students, faculty, and staff turned up for it, along with a number of community vendors/organizations, with games, food, activities, and valuable information for students about mental health awareness and suicide prevention.
- Research Club hosted a Constitution Day event on Tuesday, featuring a presentation by Dr. Tekla Johnson and student, Jessica Dawkins, on women and the Constitution. This presentation was streamed on the Research Club Instagram page (@uscu.research), where it can still be viewed as a recording. The presentation was also recorded by Macy Petty, also posting that recording on a new USC Union YouTube page. Following the presentation, we had some fun with some trivia, food, and prizes for those in attendance in the room.
- The state legislature recently allocated funds to help support internships in the state of SC for the following industries: Manufacturing, Aerospace, Automotive, Energy, Health and Life Sciences, and Financial Services. Students who are doing in-person internships for a company in SC are eligible to apply, and if selected, will receive a \$3,000 award at the completion of the internship and the SkillSurvey assessment. In April, President Amiridis allocated \$1M in funding to pilot the SC Internship Program on the Columbia campus. That was up and running by May. Since then, with the new state funding, they were asked to expand this program to the entire system, including to our USC Union students. They have this extended out at least through summer 2024. For more details you can visit <https://go.sc.edu/scinternship>

Faculty/Staff News

- Our iCarolina Lab at the Carnegie Library has launched some new free courses that are open to the campus and the community, overseen by our new Coordinator in that role, Sarah Wilson. This includes an Intro to MacOS course, and a Getting the Most Out of Your iPhone/iPad. These are free 2-hour courses that are running throughout the Fall.
- Dr. Tekla Johnson, Assistant Professor of African American Studies:
 - o Book contract finalized by USC Press for *African American (Urban) Removal*.

- Invited Paper “Un Random Acts: A Theory of State Violence” in Third NCBS Annual Report
 - “You are cordially invited to contribute an article or essay to the National Council for Black Studies Annual Report on the State of Affairs for Africana Communities in 2023 and beyond. The report is scheduled to be released in Spring 2024.”
- Paper “African American Removal” Chapter, accepted at Association for Study of African American History and Life Conference, June 2023, (for 9/24 presentation in Jacksonville, Florida).
- Represented USC Union at Union County Juneteenth Celebration with Michael Sumner (6/17/2023).
- African American History Committee (Charlotte) serves to evaluate progress of “A Virtual Sense of Place” Virtual Rebuild of the African American Community of Brooklyn, NC (6/28/2023).
- Edited Quarterly Issue of *Black Power Archive Collective Digital Newsletter*. (August 10, 2023).
- “Prison Writings of Mondo We Langa” (131) and “He Said She Said” (111) in “Let the Walls Come Tumbling Down” Issue of *New Observations* 143, Ed by Mia Feroletto and Paulette Dauteuil-Robideau. (May, 2023).
- Second Ward Alumni House Adoption of a Permanent Member (9/3/2023).
- Dr. Andrew Kettler, Assistant Professor of History:
 - Received a Fellowship from Helmerich Center for the Study of the American Revolution, University of Tulsa, Fellowship for Short-Term Research in Tulsa, Oklahoma, May, 2024.
 - Received and Completed a University of South Carolina-Palmetto College, Palmetto Undergraduate Research Experience (PURE) Grant, Summer 2023 for a project on “History of Dentistry and Rural Odontology in South Carolina.”
 - Signed a Contract for second monograph: *Disenchanted Senses: Sulfur and the World System* (Cambridge University Press, Contracted) Forthcoming, 2024.
 - Published Book Reviews in:
 - *Journal of American Culture*: Review of *Conquistador’s Wake: Tracking the Legacy of Hernando De Soto in the Indigenous Southeast*, by Dennis Blanton. 2023, Vol. 46: 173-174.
 - *Renaissance Quarterly*: Review of *Africans in East Anglia, 1467-1833*, by Richard C. Maguire. 2023, Vol. 76, Issue 2: 711-712.
 - Published Article in Smell Studies Blog, “Massive Alienation and the Secrets of the Earth: Olfactory Resistance for Ohio” (April 2023) <https://www.smellstudies.com/blog/blog-post-title-three-cj3mr>
 - Presented in May, “Dispersing the Devi’s Stench: Shifting Perceptions of Sulfuric Miasma in Early Modern English Literatures,” Presented at Uncommon Senses IV, Concordia University, Centre for Sensory Studies, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
- Dr. Steven Lownes, Associate Professor of World Languages
 - Received grant funds from the PRAGDA organization to put on the Latin Film Festival again this year, one of 32 grant recipients out of an international pool of applicants, and one of only two two-year schools to receive these funds.
- Dr. Lee Morris, Assistant Professor of Biology:
 - “Biases towards and against specific groups of organisms in more than 45 years of biodiversity surveys in South Carolina” – LG Morris, e-poster presented at the CitSci 2023 Annual Meeting (Citizen Science Association) (May 2023)

- “Multiple biases distort biodiversity records of freshwater aquatic invertebrate indicator species” – LG Morris and TA Wendel, poster presentation abstract accepted for the Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology meeting in Seattle, January 2024.
- Integral in setting up the Anatomy & Physiology Laboratory and other spaces in the newly opened USC Union Laurens Location.
- Dr. Andrew Pisano, Associate Professor of English:
 - Continuing guest editor for the peer-reviewed journal *Humanities*.
- Dr. Emily Schafer, Associate Professor of Psychology:
 - Two mentored students from last summer’s PURE grant presented our findings at SEPA in New Orleans, entitled, “Adverse Childhood experiences and mental health on two-year college campuses.” (also partially funded by a RISE grant)
 - Awarded a PURE grant with 2 students this summer. Collecting data now for a conference presentation in the Spring. Project entitled, “Adverse childhood experiences and young adult attachment: A mixed methods study.”
 - Led multi-cultural psychology class with 8 Union students – study abroad/service learning in Guatemala this summer.

Facilities

- The Whitener Central Building second floor project is still progressing, with crews currently working on removing some traces of asbestos that were discovered underneath the carpet in some places, and prepping that floor for the installation of the new carpet after it is scheduled to come in the first week of October. It is anticipated that the move back into that space will occur sometime in mid-October.
- Renovation of the restrooms in Truluck gym are complete, and those bathrooms look great.
- Creation of the new wet lab space in the Nursing Simulation Lab building is near completion, scheduled to wrap up in mid-October.
- The new site of the Laurens Location in Clinton at the Bell Street School continues to develop, including the driving range space outside for the new golf team based there, and an indoor golf simulator that is in operation for them now. Latest timeline from Segra and DoIT in Columbia on when the university network will get moved for us from the old location to the new location, is possibly mid-October, at which point the full beaming technology setup will be able to be installed there to use for our beaming classes between Union and that location.
- Preparations for other major capital projects are underway in various stages, such as the Main Building project, the new roof and painting of Truluck gym, and the athletic fields.

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. The campus will receive \$5 million in critical care & maintenance funds to address deferred maintenance and facility needs on campus. These state capital funds are managed by the main campus’ facilities department with guidance from the campus. We have submitted budget requests to the Governor’s Office for additional deferred maintenance and operating funding for FY25, as well as continued tuition mitigation funds so that tuition and fees can remain the same next year.