



*A Regional Palmetto College*

**FO Minutes**

**February 28, 2025 – 11:00 AM**

**Whitener Building, Community Room**

**In-person attendance:**

Maggie Aziz  
Sarah Carter  
Avery Fouts  
Neill Hance  
Sarah Heuss  
Andrew Kettler  
Katie Klik  
Steve Lowe  
Steve Lownes  
Randy Lowell  
David Mitra  
Liyi Noshi  
Sandy Phillips-Long  
Andrew Pisano  
Emily Schafer

**Online attendance:**

Joe Anderson  
Gale Ashmore  
David Hudson  
Randall Ivey  
Tekla Johnson  
Lee Morris  
Reginald O'Dell  
Courtney Pinnell  
Megan Rabanal  
Jennifer Triplett  
Caroline Wilson

Dr. Pisano called the meeting to order at 11:41 AM. The meeting started late due to an overrun of the Safety meeting and technical difficulties.

**Minutes from January 17 meeting:**

A motion was made to approve the January 17 minutes and was passed with all in favor.

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

Dr. Lowell gave his report. The report is attached to these minutes.

In addition to the report, Dr. Lowell mentioned news, made on the 27<sup>th</sup>, of a proposed budget amendment in the SC House.

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

Dr. Aziz gave her remarks. Highlights include:

- Awards day is to be held on April 11th. Faculty are to arrive by 5:15 at the latest. Final nominees and blurbs must be sent to Amber by March 6.
- Student athletes (non-club sports) have new requirements to meet starting in the Fall. They must take a minimum of three in-person classes. Also, they are to return after Thanksgiving and take the Final exams as officially scheduled.

Dr. Schafer raised a question concerning dual-enrollment students who miss the first few (or more) classes of a semester. It was remarked this is due to registration issues. Dr. Aziz advised that in such situations, faculty should let her and Ada know and to work with the schools as well.

Dr. Klik asked whom to refer a DE student to if they expressed interest in attending USCU full time. Dr. Aziz suggested Ada and/or Brad. She also said there was no problem with faculty meeting with interested students and parents to discuss coming to USCU (no grades are to be discussed, per FERPA).

## **Committee Reports and other Business:**

Dr. Kettler had two announcements:

- A job fair will be held on April 1st at the Junction. Suggestions for any businesses to participate in the fair are welcome.
- Dr. Kettler and Dr. Johnson are building a study lounge in the history suite. Any donations of books are welcome.

Dr. Lownes had several items to discuss:

- An ad-hoc committee for recruitment and retention with PC is to be made. Dr. Klik and Dr. Heuss will make up the committee with the charge of determining how to best recruit and retain students.
- An update regarding an ombudsman for the grievance committee was given: we have no access to an ombudsman and will have to create one at the PC level. If any local procedure requires an ombudsman, a pause needs to be made and the matter brought to the PC grievance committee.
- The faculty should be aware of the Feb. 14th "Dear Colleague Letter" from the Department of Education. Information on this is available through Steve for those who are interested.
- Results for Teacher of the Year will be determined Monday, March 3rd. A desire to move the voting procedure online was made, as off campus DE students cannot participate in the current process. Dr. Aziz mentioned that this might cause off-campus teachers to be overrepresented and perhaps a new award for such teachers could be made. Dr. Lownes mentioned that all full-time faculty members received a vote.

Dr. Kettler asked if USCU would be affected by recent federal funding cuts. Dr. Lownes stated we are not affected as no one here receives such funding.

Dr. Lownes announced that the proposed procedures for a Senior Instructor position will be voted upon later.

Dr. Schafer thanked Atty. Liyi Noshi for her visit and talks. Atty. Noshi expressed her gratitude for the opportunity.

Dr. Aziz announced that there will be no SESSE survey this semester.

Dr. Klik asked the faculty to give students the opportunity (in class) to fill out a survey concerning campus norms. The survey will be emailed later.

**Adjournment:**

A motion to dismiss was made and seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 12:44 pm.

Attachments: Dean's Report

Submitted by:

David Mitra, interim FO Secretary

Randy Lowell, USC Union  
Dean's Report  
February 28, 2025

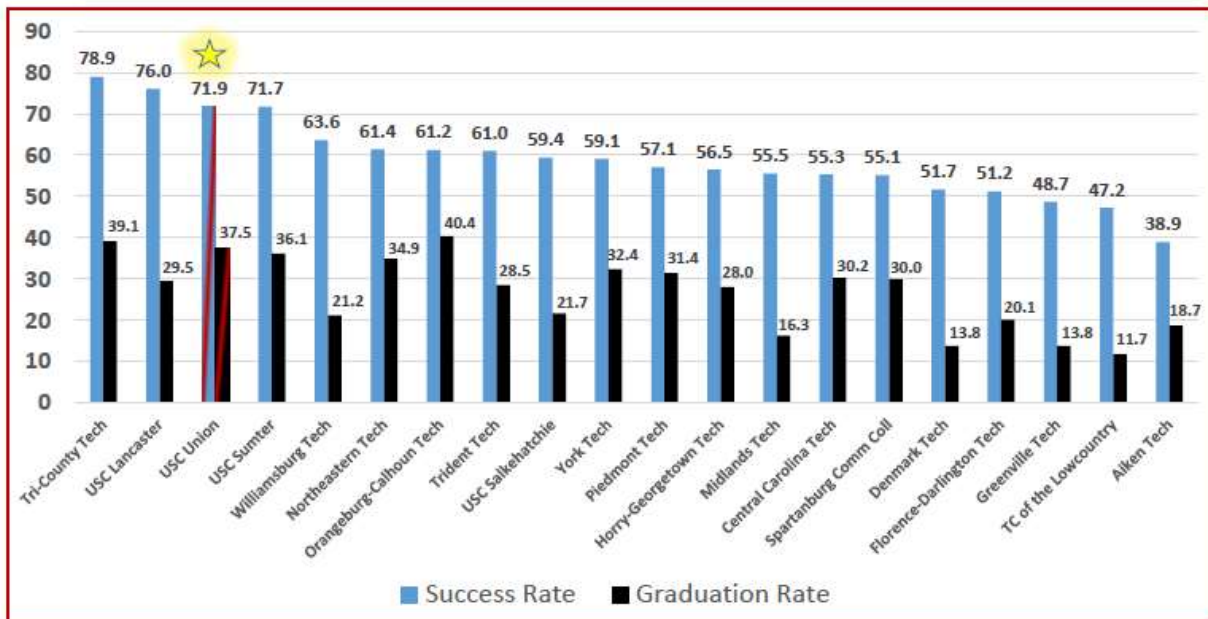
- Spring enrollment, as of yesterday, is well ahead of last year's record high headcount for a Spring semester, at 1,306 (compared to 1,244 at freeze last Spring, up 4.98%), and 5 ahead of last Spring's FTE, at 738 (compared to 733 at freeze last Spring, up 0.68%). Freeze this semester will be sometime in March, so we still have an opportunity to add to this enrollment number for Spring, primarily with any new students starting with us for the Spring II session.
- We have added some additional coaches to our staff, including a new Head Cross Country Coach, Chayney Whelchel, who will officially start with us in May; as well as alum Mark Kershaw, who is now an assistant coach for our Bass Fishing team.
- Congrats to Macy Petty, our PR & Development Assistant on campus, who sang the national anthem at a recent Gamecock Baseball game at Founders Park in Columbia. She has extensive opera training and experience and is looking forward to continuing to put that to use in Columbia at additional Gamecocks baseball and softball games this season, while also representing USC Union in the process. Macy's work with our Marketing/Development Director, Annie Smith, on our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations and launch of a new USC Union Alumni Association, has also been impressive to kick off the new year.
- As a higher education affiliate of the Western Piedmont Education Consortium of school districts, USC Union was able to support the annual Academic Challenge by providing funding for trophies for the winners of the WPEC region high school finals in November. That support will continue, as USC Union will assist with funding for trophies for the statewide middle and high school finals at Lander University in March. Our Education Coordinator, Cari Conley, and I will serve as judges for the middle- and high-school final rounds of that competition as well.
- Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System recently finished construction on a brand new hospital in Union, Union Medical Center, which officially opened its doors earlier this month, transitioning out of the much older Wallace Thompson facility in Union. Notably, on its opening day, four of its nurses across various hospital departments were recent BSN graduates of our USC Aiken BSN program here on the Union campus.
- A new industry was announced for Union County at this month's County Council meeting, Eaton, which will establish a centerpiece manufacturing presence in Jonesville to produce high-powered transformers. They are making an investment of around \$345 million in Union County for this project, which will feature around 700 new jobs. Their communications manager looks forward to getting to know more about our campus and how we might support their operations from a higher education standpoint.
- On 2/28 and on 3/14, from 10am until 2pm, we are partnering with United Way of the Piedmont and VITA to have them on campus in the Family Life building's Art classroom, where they will provide free tax preparation services for anyone from the campus or community who signs up for an appointment with them during those hours. There is a household income cap on this free service, which in the past has been around \$60,000. This may be a great resource for some of our students

who are looking to get some help with their taxes right here on campus. People who are interested in scheduling an appointment can call their 2-1-1 phone line.

- Some campus project updates include the following:
  - o Main Building renovation continues to make progress, with an updated completion date toward the end of this summer.
  - o The softball field also continues to make good progress, and should be ready for play sometime next month.
  - o Capital projects out at our Laurens Location in Clinton are going out to bid, after having more than a couple dozen contractors show up for pre-bid walkthroughs at the location, suggesting that there should be a number of competitive bids submitted for that work with the state capital project money that we had received from last year’s appropriations for that space.
  - o The Truluck Gym project has been working through the abatement process of the asbestos that was discovered beneath the old flooring, as they work toward being able to put the new floor down and get the lighting updated and other space reconfigured, with an anticipated completion sometime early summer.
  - o Preservation SC has had Huss working on the initial stabilization work at the Dawkins House, including installing temporary support walls and crawlspace supports to the house, as they work toward further stabilizing the walls and floors, and eventually getting a sturdier roof in place to accommodate additional repairs from there.
  - o The storage building where the new mural was painted on campus is in the process of being emptied and prepped for some work to convert it into an Art Studio classroom space.

## First-Time, Full-Time Undergraduates Entering in Fall 2020

Source: [https://che.sc.gov/sites/che/files/Documents/CHE%20Data%20and%20Reports/Statistical%20Abstracts/2024\\_Statistical\\_Abstract-WEB.pdf](https://che.sc.gov/sites/che/files/Documents/CHE%20Data%20and%20Reports/Statistical%20Abstracts/2024_Statistical_Abstract-WEB.pdf)



# First-Time, Full-Time Undergraduates, Fall 2022 to Fall 2023

Source: [https://che.sc.gov/sites/che/files/Documents/CHE%20Data%20and%20Reports/Statistical%20Abstracts/2024\\_Statistical\\_Abstract-WEB.pdf](https://che.sc.gov/sites/che/files/Documents/CHE%20Data%20and%20Reports/Statistical%20Abstracts/2024_Statistical_Abstract-WEB.pdf)

