



UNIVERSITY OF  
**South Carolina**  
UNION

*A Regional Palmetto College*

FO Minutes  
February 23, 2024 – 11:00 AM  
Whitener Building, Community Room

Online attendance:

Dr. Steve Lowe  
Dr. Katie Klik  
Professor Sandy Phillips-Long  
Professor Neill Hance  
Dr. Emily Schafer  
Dr. Tekla Johnson  
Professor Megan Collier-Bansil  
Professor Randy Ivey  
Susan Goebel

In-person attendance:

Dr. Steve Lownes  
Professor Courtney Pinnell  
Professor Lynn Edwards  
Dr. Andrew Pisano  
Dr. Avery Fouts  
Dr. Andrew Kettler  
Dr. Allan Charles  
Dr. David Mitra  
Dr. Randy Lowell  
Dr. Maggie Aziz  
Professor Gale Ashmore  
Dr. Lee Morris

FO Chair Dr. Andrew Pisano called the meeting to order at 11:05 AM.

**Minutes from January 19 meeting:**

Approved.

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

Dr. Lowell's report is attached to these minutes. He elaborated on Uwell services. Research club. Athletic academic awards. Most of the soccer and softball teams are on the academic list. Facilities projects. Two cleared grass lots on back corner behind Whitener will be graveled for overflow parking.

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

Dr. Aziz's report is attached. Specific items she mentioned include:  
Full semester progress reports are needed in Academic Suite  
Spring I course evaluations are now open and will close out on the 29<sup>th</sup>.  
PC Central is offering an advising workshop that will be available on line.

Amber needs awards night nominations ASAP

Awards night on Friday April 12 at 6 PM

Advising expected to begin on March 18 for summer and fall.

Dr. Aziz hopes to have fall schedule to everyone by the 4<sup>th</sup>.

Order books with Tanja immediately.

Academic bulletin gets revised every spring. It is 233 pages. This summer Dr. Aziz will begin working on that revision.

Advising: Texting or calling students works better to get in touch. It is possible to text through Avaya Cloud. (Dr. Morris reported that she had been issued a school phone to use.)

Convocation idea: A way to welcome students to campus and set up expectations for the year.

First Scholars Network.

Looking for grants to supplement funding for food pantry.

OSP grant coming up and we'll be applying for it.

### **Michael McGandy, Director of USC Press: Publishing Opportunities:**

He will be here for our April 26 meeting. He will stay for the graduation luncheon to meet with anyone interested in working with him.

### **Committee Reports**

Academic Affairs:

**Dr. Lownes:** Handbook updates

FYI because we had already approved changes. Just an update. We need to vote on Satisfactory Academic Progress committee update. Add one faculty staff member. Other items have been approved. We voted and approved adding the faculty staff member.

Approved deleting PC Values Statement 2018 Blueprint from handbook.

Faculty Welfare

**Dr. Pisano** reported that we need an additional person on this committee.

Professor Pinnell reminded him that she had replaced Dr. Maire-Afeli on this committee back in the fall.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

**Dr. Schafer** highlighted:

The African American Alliance event that happened this week, sponsored by Brandon Simpson

Unity Day coming up next week.

Remembrance Day coming up on April 4 sponsored by Dr. Johnson

Satisfactory Academic Progress

**Professor Lynn Edwards** will be added to this committee.

PC Peer Review:

**Dr. Pisano** will be added to this committee.

Scholarship Committee:

**Dr. Pisano** will be added to this committee.

PC Faculty Senate Systems Committee:

**Dr. Johnson** reported on a recommendation for a local Grievance Committee.

She proposed that we form an ad hoc committee to study the idea of implementing a grievance committee because Union is the only campus that does not have one. Dr. Johnson will forward to Professor Ashmore her statement that will be attached it to the minutes as well as sent out as an email to entire faculty.

This will be on the agenda for discussion at our next FO meeting.

**Dr. Kettler** reported:

- PC R&R committee is changing how senators are allocated. Currently every campus gets three automatically. Currently the number has been determined by the number of students on campus; proposed change will allocate senators based on size of faculty. Every campus will have between three and seven.
- P3 program looking for elite sophomores interested in medical school.
- Library: books are coming to campus.
- Provost meeting
- We need to talk about AI, especially in the humanities.

More details on all these items are attached to these minutes.

Future FO meetings:

- March 22 at 11:00
- April 26 at 9:00

At 1:07 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
- Dr. Johnson's Reports on
  - Remembrance Day - April 04
  - Systems Committee – Grievance Committee proposal
- Dr. Kettler's Report

Randy Lowell, USC Union  
Dean's Report  
February 23, 2024

- The City of Clinton is highlighting our USC Union Laurens Location, which recently relocated from the town of Laurens to the town of Clinton, as their business of the week.
- New SC CHE Statistical Abstracts have been recently released, which can be found here: [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). For Success Rate for first-time, full-time freshmen entering in Fall 2019, we remained high at 70.8%, which puts us at #4 in the state among the four PC campuses and 16 Technical Colleges. Graduation Rate ranks #3 in the state among those institutions, at 30.6%. Full list reflected in graphs at the end of the report.

#### Students

- Spring enrollment numbers for this semester remain ahead of last year's final Spring numbers, with another month until the freeze date to add to those. This includes a Spring record high headcount of 1,245 as of today (up 26.52% over last Spring's 984), and FTE of 730 (up 27.4% 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 still well up over what they were at this time last year for the coming Fall semester.
- I sent updated information out last week about the new mental health platform, Uwill (<https://app.uwill.com/>), that has replaced the Christie Campus Health Here4U@USCU site. This new version provides a quicker, more streamlined option for students to register and schedule their free telehealth appointments through their site, while giving them a number of provider filter options to indicate their preferences for in the process. It will still feature the 24/7 crisis phone number for them to use, as well as a wealth of online self-guided resources on their Wellness page of the website.
- The Research Club, in partnership with the African American Alliance and SGA, hosted Dr. Devon Carter earlier this month for a series of presentations and meetings on campus and with K-12 students from around the Union County School District. Dr. Carter has a background in Special Education and Psychology and is an Assistant Professor of Practice, Intervention Specialist in the LeBron James Family Foundation School of Education at the University of Akron, where he has developed an educational intervention program called REAL (Recognize Education and Learning) that aims to increase the awareness of the value of education for all ages. His college night event on campus had a great turnout and can be viewed back on the Research Club's Instagram page (@uscu.research). He also did a great job with the Achievement Academy group from the school district, and in talking with the champion Sims Middle School girls basketball team. If anyone is interested in collaborating with him on research related to the K-12 achievement/engagement data his group is collecting where his REAL programming is in place, let me know and I can connect you with him to explore those possibilities. The school district here in Union is interested in further collaboration with him as well.
- NJCAA Region 10 has released its official All-Academic honors list for Fall 2023 student-athletes, which requires students to achieve at least a 3.0 GPA while passing 12 credit hours. Many of our Bantams fall semester student-athletes are on this list, including:
  - o Men's Soccer: Carlo Gonzalez, Maximillian Diebold, Michael Murphy, Maximus Moriarty, Jay Brunson, Matheus Mateus, Nico Steinweg, Tim Groenenberg, Adrian Williams, Josue Mejia, Ben Roder, Mila Mzamane, Chris Neilson, Luke Hopewood, Matteo Chittaro, Rogelio Contreras, Jedidiah Omoghan, and Donovan Cobb
  - o Women's Volleyball: Audrey Stacks, Hannah Johnson, Cadence Clayton, Holly Thames, Lapri Cromer, Amber Cooklin, and Kierra Martin

- Bantam Baseball player, Michael Adams, was honored earlier this week by Palmetto State Baseball as their Player of the Day for 2/19/2024, after going hitting 3 for 5, with 3 runs, 4 RBI, and 2 stolen bases. This comes amidst a current 7-game winning streak for the Bantams that puts them at an overall record of 8-2 to start the Spring season.

#### Faculty/Staff News

- Congrats to Dr. William Royce on accepting the permanent Head Softball Coach position, to Brandon Simpson for the full-time Disability Services Coordinator position, and to Annalee Solesbee for the new Bursar position, as those three searches recently concluded. Additional full-time searches continue to progress for Palmetto College Coordinator, Financial Aid Counselor, Psychology, Art, Statistics, Sociology, Chemistry, Mathematics, English, and Spanish.
- Michael McGandy, Director of the USC Press, is interested in joining our 4/26 FO meeting to share opportunities with our faculty for publishing your work through that outlet, so we will work on working him into that agenda.
- At a recent SC CHE Council of Presidents meeting, Lander's president mentioned that they are opening a new institute looking at sexual violence prevention on campus best practices, and that there will likely be some small grant funding opportunities for faculty to apply for from other institutions, so we'll keep an eye out for updates on that.
- Recent faculty accomplishments include:
  - o Randy Ivey, Senior Instructor of English:
    - Tribute to the late NC poet laureate Fred Chappell appeared on the Abbeville Review of Books website.
    - Story "The Precious Head of Junie Ray Byrd" has just been accepted by STILL: THE JOURNAL.
  - o Dr. Andrew Kettler, Assistant Professor of History:
    - Submitting contracted manuscript, *Disenchanting the Senses: Sulfur and the World System*, to Cambridge University Press.
    - Submitting manuscript for review at Verso, entitled: "Deny the Future: Artificial Intelligence, Epistemological Imperialism, and the Return of the Bicameral Mind."
    - Publishing "Dispersing the Devil's Stench: Shifting Perceptions of Sulfuric Miasma in Early Modern English Literatures," *Partial Answers: Journal of Literature and the History of Ideas*. Volume 22, Number 1 (January 2024): 27-53.
    - Publishing for the *Journal of World History*. "Graphic Worlding: Radical Histories and the Narrative Form in Recent Works from Graphic Mundi," Volume 34, Number 4 (December 2023): 651-660.
    - Publishing for the *Journal of World History*: a review of *The Deepest Dye: Obeah, Hosay, and Race in the Atlantic World*, by Aisha Khan. Volume 34, Number 4 (December 2023): 661-663.
    - Submitting for the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Sensory Criminology*, "I'll Make You Shit!': Olfactory Othering, Bourgeois Percepticide, And the Necropolitical Regime of the Colonialists," forthcoming 2024.
    - Provided comments for panels at the Southern Historical Association and the Southern Conference on British Studies in November, and Chaired a Panel at the Modern Language Association in January.
  - o Dr. Steve Lowe, Professor of History:
    - Currently a judge for the George C. Rogers award for the best book of South Carolina history for the SC Historical Society.
    - Reviewing a manuscript on former SC Attorney General Daniel McLeod for Clemson University Press.

- Dr. Andrew Pisano, Associate Professor of English:
  - Continuing Guest Editor and reviewer for the peer-reviewed journal, *Humanities*, currently reviewing manuscripts for: Special Issue: “Gothic American Imaginaries: The Gothics of Race in American Literature and Film.” Publication is expected in Spring 2024.
- Dr. Emily Schafer, Associate Professor of Psychology:
  - Traveling with two students to present research they participated in over the summer via the PURE grant, presenting “Adverse Childhood Experiences and Young Adult Attachment on a rural two-year campus” at the International Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences conference in San Francisco in April.
  - Applied for, and was awarded, the Humphrey Community College Residency Program Fellowship. This grant affords the travel, lodging, and board expenses plus a small grant for two international scholars to visit our campus for one week to present their work, network with local community and nonprofit groups, and exchange cultural experiences. Two African scholars will be visiting USC Union during the end of March.

### **Facilities**

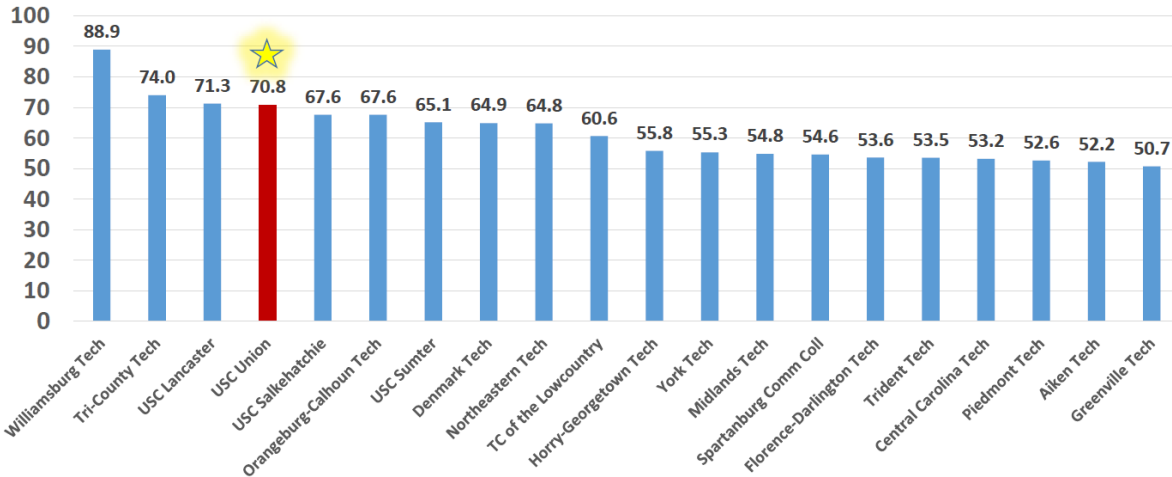
- Recently completed capital projects include work in the Whitener Central Building, the new wet lab in the Nursing Simulation Lab building, and a new roof, paint, and renovated bathrooms in Truluck Gym.
- The Main Building on campus in Union was cleared out in December to prepare for the major renovation work that has now begun in that building, which will include removing the boiler/chiller and installing VRV central HVAC system; an elevator upfit; ADA compliant restrooms, new fixtures, tile, and paint; and finishes to include carpet, paint, and fixtures. This project is estimated to take approximately 360-400 days to complete.
- Other projects that have already received state funding that are in various stages of preparation or progress, include new overflow parking areas, Jonesville Gym bathroom remodel and weight room equipment, new softball and baseball facilities at existing locations, campus security house upgrades and camera upgrades, Truluck Gym flooring, Rippy Courtyard student area expansion, campus signage updating, Laurens Location updating, new roofs on the Student Services Building and on the Jonesville gym, and soccer field upgrades in Jonesville.
- Obtained new golf cart for campus and working to finalize acquisition of two additional campus vehicles to begin to use as well.

### **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. 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. 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

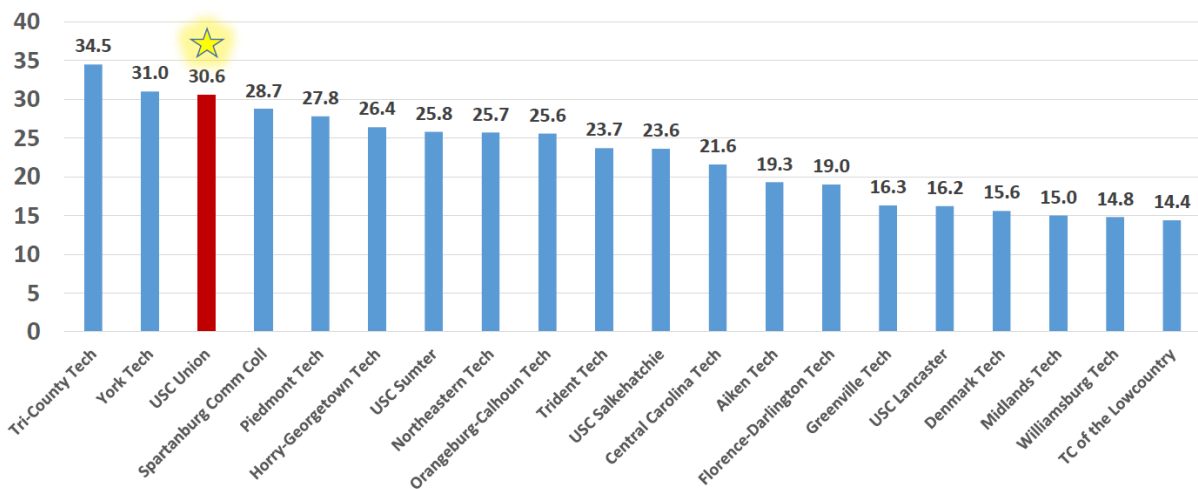


CHE success rate, in addition to graduates included in graduation rate cohort, includes as part of the completion group students who are still enrolled at the same institution during Fall term following 150% of program time and students who transfer to other institutions before 150% of program time. **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  
February 2024**

**Academic Affairs:**

- Full semester progress reports are due **February 23**.
- Spring I course evaluations are open now and will close on **February 29**. Please remind your students to check their Blackboard, USC email, and personal emails. They are sent a reminder electronically every two days.
- Annual Administrative Reviews will be returned by the end of March.

**Awards Night:**

- Please send Amber your Awards nominations by **March 1 by 12:00pm**.
- Each discipline will have the privilege of recognizing one outstanding student. In disciplines where multiple faculty members teach (e.g., PSYC, SPAN, MATH, etc.), collaboration is required to select a single student for the award.
- Please be aware that only faculty members who can attend the event in person will have the chance to present awards on behalf of their discipline. If you are unable to attend in-person, you will not need to nominate a student on behalf of your discipline.
- Additionally, only one faculty member can present the award for disciplines with multiple faculty members. Please inform us of the designated presenter for your discipline if this situation applies (other faculty members from the same discipline are still welcome to attend the ceremony).
- Awards Night will be held **April 12 @ 6:00** at the Main Street Junction.

**Advising:**

- Summer and Fall 2023 advising will begin **March 18**. I hope to send out the first draft of the schedule by the 4<sup>th</sup>. Please review this schedule closely and contact me immediately with any concerns.

**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.
- Always be sure to submit summer syllabi to Amber Ivey as soon as you have them prepared (by the first day of each semester).

**Peer Reviews:**

- Peer reviews will resume this semester. I will be reaching out to several of you to help conduct those reviews. Please have the reviews completed by the end of this semester.
- Faculty Information Forms were sent to the Peer Review and T&P Committees for review.

**Course Modality:**

- As a reminder, there is absolutely no reason for you to switch your course modality in the middle of the semester without prior approval.

**Academic Probation Recovery Program:**



- This fall we will be the Academic Probation Recovery Program that was introduced during the advisor training. Students who complete the program will receive a one-time \$500 scholarship for the semester following their initial probation semester.
- As a reminder, your advisees who are placed on academic probation will be encouraged to participate in this program.
- Academic Success Plan: You initially meet with your advisee to review the Academic Success Plan. The student will initial and sign this plan and a copy will be sent to Blake Wilson. Students will be required to meet with their advisor at least once per month, attend at least 4 hours of study hall per week, schedule and attend regular (once a week) tutoring sessions in the SACS for courses they have a C in, attend all classes (no unexcused absences), schedule and meet with professors at least twice during the semester, attend at least one campus activity, use an organizational tool of their choosing such as a calendar, check email and blackboard frequently, study an agreed upon amount of hours per day, submit a mid-semester progress report for each course, adhere to monthly academic success and engagement checks, and make the appropriate lifestyle and behavioral changes in areas which may prevent them from reaching their academic goals.
- Monthly Check-in: Students will meet with their advisor once a month to check-in. Students will need to initial this form during each meeting. Once completed, advisors will need to submit the form to Blake Wilson.
- Professor Check-in: Students will meet with their professors at least twice during the semester during scheduled office hours (or by appointment). Students will have each professor fill out this form and once completed submit it to their advisor. Advisors will need to forward a copy to Blake Wilson.
- Midsemester Progress Report: Students will need to have their professors complete a midsemester progress report. Professors will provide the advisor with a copy. Advisors will submit the form to Blake Wilson.

**Other Items:**

- In collaboration with USC-Upstate and Union Country School District, we submitted a grant through USCERA to set up a reading program for K-Third Grade students in Union County. It involves an affiliation with the Reading and Engagement for All (REAL) Center of Excellence on the Upstate campus and focuses on the analysis of programs related to the "Science of Reading." As such, there is an academic component for research and data collection to analyze outcomes of this funding in rural areas where reading and educational resources are limited for younger children. As part of that academic aspect, Union also will host a Teacher's Clinic in the summers of the three-year program, which will be focused on educating elementary and early secondary teachers on the advantages of reading and promoting the Science of Reading. The grant is totaled at 450,000, spread around the two campuses and associated school district for three years, mostly spent at Upstate, and would involve, for Union, supporting the REAL Center, the hiring of a director for the program on the Union campus, and a growing connection to the Carnegie Library, as they would house the reading, curriculum, and activity kits to be accessed by local Union County School District students and other local students desiring access to the program.
- We've been invited to join the First Scholars Network. The First Scholars Network, as part of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Foundation and the Center for First-Generation Student Success, sets up formal networking and portal to access grants for campuses devoted to First Generation students. We are signed in to receive information on the network from the NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education and are formally

applying for entrance into the network by the deadline of March 22, including the submission of a “Readiness and Progress Audit”. If accepted, we are entered into a process of four phases they place schools through within the system. There are currently 349 institutions in the network in the United States who share evidence on First Generation scholars and engage with trying to create knowledge and funding for First Generation students. Each phase of the program enters the school accepted into more opportunities and means-tested information on the accelerating of First-Generation scholars. The goal of entering the network, and the reason for doing so for Union, is to help share data, model innovations to help First Generation students, and scale up campuses that want to engage more with First Generation students.

- We are looking for grants to apply to supplement funding for our Food Pantry. Dr. Kettler has identified several federal grants that will probably need matching support. Dr. Kettler is most likely going to apply for money through the Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program (CFPCGP). Part of the issue with such a grant relates to requirements of being a “private” organization. As such, to get any federal money through the program we may not be able to apply as a public university, even as we are non-profit. We would need significant documentation to attach to the application to prove our non-profit status. There are also grants through Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) Reach and Resiliency Grant through the USDA, which can be accessed by “state agencies”; although there seems to be some complex language that seem to disallow universities from existing as “state agencies” in this manner. Dr. Kettler will reach out to the SC Department of Agriculture as they have some of this money as a “state agency” already allocated to The Patrick Leahy Farm to School Program and The Emergency Food Assistance Program. There are also funds through TEFAP into SC through the Department of Education, although they are probably quite strapped to be able to help through their programs. DHEC and SCDCSS have their own food programs as well, although I think that would be more of a long shot with their cash strapped situations as well. There are also private angles to take, as with Food Lion.
- We will begin developing a PCAM course for dual enrollment students. Currently, Columbia does not allow UNIV 101 to be taught at high schools. However, after speaking with Dan Friedman, Assistant Vice President for University 101 & the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition. He would be supportive of us creating a UNIV 101 like course to be offered to these students. It’s important to offer this type of course to high school students, especially in schools where we offer a full degree, as these students face their own unique experiences as dually enrolled high school students. Dr. Emily Schafer has applied for the UNIV 101 training to develop a special section for international students as well.

### **Dr. Johnson's Reports:**

Remembrance Day: Thursday, April 4, 2024.

Professor Johnson's African American Studies 201 Spring 2024 Course is sponsoring a **Remembrance Day** in recognition of the history of the African American Community, impacted families, and individuals who have experienced racial violence in Union County. The event includes:

A Jail Tour, a Tour of the Historic Memory Room, a Reading of the Historic Plaques, a Tour of the Long Hospital, and a Discussion. Lunch is *provided* by the USC Union-Engagement and Awareness Committee. The events begin at 10:00 am at the Courthouse (meeting on the steps). The formal program ends after lunch and a volunteer opportunity (light cleaning, staging materials etc) will run from 1:00 -3:00 pm.

Systems Committee Report (2/2024)  
Delivered at USC-UNION FO Meeting February 23, 2024

(Transcribed oral report)

For the past few months, the Palmetto College Systems Committee has been working on standardizing grievance procedures. The impetus for our review came in response to a request by another campus whose faculty have an issue that has gone unresolved. It was indicated that the failure to resolve the issue is, at least in-part, due to the lack of clarity of the FO Manual with respect to the correct steps to take in non-tenure and promotion related grievances.

After a review of the entire Grievance process as it now stands, the Committee found that *there is* a clear and effective grievance procedure for issues relating to Tenure and Promotion. The Committee also found that there is a less clear set of processes covering non-tenure and promotion grievances.

The Systems Committee then reviewed the Faculty Manual with respect to existing procedures (and step by step directions) for the handling of non-T & P grievances. The current requirements for the handling of such grievances include that the written grievance go to the Academic Dean, or if the issue involves the Academic Dean, that it go to the Campus Dean. If not resolved at the Office of the Campus Dean, then grievance is to be forwarded to the local Campus Grievance Committee. If not resolved, at the Campus Grievance Committee, then the Grievance instance then go to the Palmetto College Grievance Committee.

The Systems Committee noted that three of the four campuses' have a local Grievance Committees. The USC-Union Campus does not have such a committee. Thus, to standardize the processes, it is recommended that the Union Campus create a local Grievance Committee. The System's Committee does not expect to alter the Palmetto College Grievance Procedures but continues to work toward clarifying those procedures; a report will be forthcoming when the process is completed.

Respectfully submitted,

by Dr. Tekla Ali Johnson

Systems Committee Member

## **2024 02 23 Report from Dr. Kettler**

- 1) Rights and Responsibilities Committee – Debate on Whether to Shift From Student Total as way to Calculate Senate Members to Total Faculty Members to Calculate Senate Members Number
- 2) Provost Meeting – E-Mail was sent to faculty from Provost Office with list of campuses to possibly draw from for external reviewers on TandP files.
- 3) P3 Program – Andrew will serve as point person initially on campus for any elite sophomores who are interested in Medical School – please email if any students are interested.
- 4) Library – Andrew serving as point person on campus for bringing up books from Thomas Cooper that are being culled – please email if any books are to still be requested.
- 5) AI – Need to have a debate soon on how we are going to handle AI assisted assignments in the classroom.