



UNIVERSITY OF  
**South Carolina**  
UNION

*A Regional Palmetto College*

FO Minutes  
November 17, 2023 – 11:00 AM  
Room C104

In Person Attendance:

Dr. Maggie Aziz  
Dr. Allan Charles  
Dr. Andrew Pisano  
Dr. Lee Morris  
Dr. Steve Lowe  
Dr. David Mitra  
Professor Lynn Edwards

Online attendance:

Dr. Tekla Johnson  
Dr. Katie Klik  
Dr. Joe Anderson  
Professor Sandy Phillips-Long  
Professor Randy Ivey  
Professor Neill Hance  
Professor Susan Goebel  
Professor Kevin Torres  
Professor Caroline Wilson  
Professor Greta Bailey  
Professor Courtney Pinnell  
Dr. Emily Schafer  
Dr. Christine Sixta Rinehart  
Dr. Andrew Kettler  
Dr. Steve Lownes

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

**Approval of minutes from October 27 meeting**

Approved.

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

Dr. Lowell's report is attached.

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

- Dr. Aziz's report is attached. Specifically, she mentioned:
- First Generation Celebration went well. She would like to have feedback from faculty and staff.
- Student Athlete Workshops also went well.

- Center for Teaching Excellence has sample syllabi available. Dr. Aziz is working with CTE and will provide templates specific to USC Union for online, face to face, and Reach Act classes when those are completed.
- Caden Jackson accepted the position of Success Center Director.
- Final exams are to be given only at the regularly scheduled time. Final grades are due within 72 hours of administration of exam.

#### **Dr. Lownes – Changes to the Handbook**

- A vote was taken regarding changes to the handbook that Dr. Lownes presented at the October meeting. All voted in favor of the proposed changes. A copy of a document listing the changes is attached to these minutes.
- Dr. Lownes also spoke of having a Budget Committee meeting consisting of chairs of all faculty committees.

#### **Dr. Klik - Faculty Welfare Committee**

- Results of the recent survey of faculty have come in. Drs. Lowell, Aziz, Klik, Schafer and Pisano received the report. If anyone else would like to see it, they should email Dr. Klik. Dr. Klik said that each campus received its own report and can decide how to use the data contained in it. Dr. Klik also reported that she and Dr. Schafer have encouraged Dr. Elkins to have similar surveys done for staff and students.
- The Tenure and Promotion workshop will be on January 12. Everyone involved is invited to attend.
- Nomination for PC faculty awards are due by the end of this semester. (Plyler, Duffy and Shaw)

**Dr. Schafer** reported that PC is working on creating a Staff Senate.

**Dr. Pisano** initiated a discussion to decide on a date for the January FO meeting. It was decided to hold it on January 19 at noon.

#### **Adjournment**

There was a motion to adjourn. It was seconded and unanimously approved.

Submitted by:

Gale Ashmore, FO Secretary

With thanks to Dr. Lee Morris for taking and sharing her notes

Attachments:

Dean's Report

Academic Dean's Report

Changes to Handbook

### Students

- As we come off of record enrollment this Fall, at 1,353 headcount and 775 FTE, our early Spring enrollment numbers are trending ahead of where they were at this time last year.
- Bobby Holcombe put on the first ever Mr. USC Union Pageant last weekend, featuring seven of our students competing for three scholarship prizes and other accolades. The crown went to Tim Groenenberg, a sophomore student-athlete on the men's soccer team from Germany. Proceeds from the event were donated to the Stokes-Revels Scholarship Fund. All of the guys did a great job and had a lot of fun with the event. There was also a lyrical dance performance by Za'Kyah Jeter-Walton during the event that she did an excellent job with.
- A number of members of the men's soccer team received honors from NJCAA Region 10, as voted on by the coaches from the teams in that Region. This includes for the second year in a row the Bantams have the NJCAA Region 10 Player of the Year and first-team All-Region, freshman Mila Mzamane from South Africa (last year's winner was USC Union's freshman, Nico Steinweg, from Germany). Coach Marc Curlee was also voted in as Region Coach of the Year by his peers. Additionally, 1<sup>st</sup> Team All-Region Ben Roder; 2<sup>nd</sup> Team All-Region Adrian Williams, Bryan Garcia, and Jay Brunson; 3<sup>rd</sup> Team All-Region Maximus Moriarty; and Honorable Mention Donovan Cobb.
- Lots of success of late for our USC Union Bass Fishing Team. At the end of October, Mark Kershaw and Jacob Butts finished 2<sup>nd</sup> place out of 250 boats at the MLF5 National College Tournament on Lake Hartwell, punching their tickets to the MLF National Championship at Lake Toho in January. Additionally, Isaac Greene and Bryson Holderness, had a top finish at an event in early October at the Clemson Bass Fishing Trail "Lake Keowee" event. Also, Cole Hunter finished 4<sup>th</sup> at the PBC College Tournament Trail event at Lake Lanier last weekend, with a 17.66lb sack, and Clay Nix finishing 14<sup>th</sup> with a 14lb sack. At a different event over the weekend, the teams of MJ Lutz/Thomas Smith and Kyler Murray/Chase Rogers both had Top 10 finishes.
- Students, Za'Kyah Jeter-Walton and Emily Winstead, will be featured in the upcoming Fall issue of USC Columbia's *Carolina's Future* magazine, for which they were interviewed in relation to them having received From family scholarships at USC Union this year.
- Research Club had a successful Halloween Bake Sale, raising \$150 to put toward the club's activities. The Club also hosted a presentation by Caden Jackson and his colleagues from USC Columbia's Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR), during which they provided information about opportunities for students to engage in research and apply for various OUR funding to support it. Coming up on Friday, December 8, the Research Club will be going up to USC Lancaster's Native American Studies Center for a tour of the exhibits and lab space at 10:00, followed by lunch at the Wagon Wheel before heading back.

### Faculty/Staff News

- Thanks to Dr. Aziz and Amber Ivey for spearheading the planning and execution of the annual First-Generation College Student Day of activities and celebration. This was a great series of events throughout the day with a lot of good engagement from students and opportunities for them to better familiarize themselves with campus, resources, and faculty.
- Thanks to Randy Ivey for spearheading the revival of the Upcountry Literary Festival the first weekend in November, with impressive authors and artists presenting from far and wide here on the USC Union campus. Also, congrats to Randy Ivey for publishing two of his poems, "Early September" and "Anomaly" in the national publication CHRONICLES: A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE, in October.

- Congrats to Dr. Emily Schafer for a successful application to have USC Union selected to participate in the Humphrey Fellowship's Community College Residency Program for Spring 2024. Humphrey Fellowship is a 10-month program that enhances leadership among international professionals who collaborate to address local and global challenges and foster change for our collective good, and is a Fulbright Exchange, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State counterparts. The Community College Residency Program is a way to offer approximately 30 Humphrey Fellows exposure to a unique aspect of the American higher education system by engaging them at a community college and the opportunity to make personal and professional connections in a new area of the United States.
- Congrats to Annie Smith on a recently successful grant submission to the Lutz Foundation on behalf of the nursing department that will fund USC Union \$15,500 next semester for the purchase of the MATT Auscultation Task Trainer. Annie also received a \$5,000 donation from Mike Cassels to establish a new endowed scholarship in honor of his late wife, Linda.
- Dr. Andrew Kettler recently presented at the Society for the History of Discoveries in September; and at the Latin American Film Festival at USC-Union in September. In terms of publications, for the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Latin American History*, Chapter Author: "Recuperative Archives, Critical Resistance, and the History of the Senses in the Atlantic World," published in October 2023.
- Dr. Steve Lowe will be a judge for the 2024 George C. Rogers award for the best book of South Carolina history published in 2023. He received the Rogers award in 2022. He will also serve as a member of the internal university grant review committee for the Excel Funding Program for Liberal Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences.
- Dr. Andrew Pisano guest-edited a Special Issue "Gothic American Imaginaries: The Gothics of Race in American Literature and Film" for the journal *Humanities* that should hit the press by December 2023.
- As part of Rotary of Union's annual literacy service efforts, I joined Rotarians at Monarch Elementary School this month to distribute free books to the students there. Rotary did this at all of the other elementary schools in the county as well.
- Caden Jackson, USC Union and BLS alum and current temporary Success Center Coordinator, has accepted our offer for the permanent version of that position after the conclusion of that search process, which he will officially transition into next week.
- We have a new Rifle Team Coach, Paige Sherbert, who started this week and comes into the role with substantial experience coaching, managing, and fundraising for the high school team in Union.
- Multiple searches underway for faculty and staff, including Instructor of Psychology, Instructor of Art, Assistant Professor of Statistics, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Assistant Professor of Chemistry, Instructor of Mathematics, Assistant Professor of English, and Palmetto College Coordinator, with a few more in the pipeline.

### **Facilities**

- The Whitener Central Building second floor project has wrapped up, and currently working to get everyone settled back into their spaces up on that floor, as well as waiting on some furniture and getting the technology set back up in the Community Room. The final phase for the Whitener Central Building, down on the first floor in the entryway and corridor with the beaming classrooms, is being prepared to begin right after the Thanksgiving break. The portion of that work that will take place in the entryway will not start until after classes have ended, so you can continue to enter/exit the building using the doors by the elevator through the end of the semester.
- Next phase of Truluck renovation has been moving very quickly, including the new roof and the exterior painting.
- Creation of the new wet lab space in the Nursing Simulation Lab building is near completion
- Preparations for other major capital projects are underway in various stages, such as the Main Building project and the athletic fields.

- Materials and supplies are being ordered to begin installing the feminine hygiene product dispensers/disposal setup in campus restrooms. Will update further on timeline for this project once we get all of the supplies in.

### **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 5<sup>th</sup> 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.

**Academic Dean's Report**  
**Maggie Aziz**  
**November 17, 2023**

**Updates:**

- **First Generation College Celebration Day:** On behalf of the Office of Academic and Student Affairs, we extend our heartfelt thanks for your valuable contributions that led to the success of the first-generation college celebration day events. The Morning Mingle: Biscuits and Brainiacs event had 33 participants, the expo had an impressive turnout of 98 students, and 14 students participated in the first-generation scavenger hunt and party. Attendance sheets were emailed to you for your records. Please share your thoughts, recommendations, and suggestions based on your experience. Your input will help us enhance and shape future celebrations!
- **Student-Athlete Workshops:** Each November, the Office of Academic and Student Affairs hosts a workshop series for student-athletes. While mandatory for student-athletes, this year we will open these workshops to all students. This year the schedule was as follows:
  - Monday, November 13 (3:00-4:00) - Relationships 101: Dr. Schafer hosted an interactive hour discussing relationships.
  - Tuesday, November 14 (2:30-4:00) – Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) shared personal stories regarding the long-term impacts of impaired driving.
  - Wednesday, November 15 (2:30-4:00) – The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) discussed the warning signs of mental health conditions and what steps to take if you or a loved one are showing symptoms of a mental health condition.
  - Thursday, November 16 (2:30-4:00) –Safe Passage discussed sexual assault and interpersonal violence prevention.
- **Syllabi Templates:** I am working with the Center for Teaching Excellence to develop USC Union specific syllabus templates (online, F2F, and Reach Act). I will share those when are ready.

**Faculty Action Items:**

- **Faculty Information Forms and Individual Research, Scholarly Activity, and Service Reports** were emailed Nov. 1 and are due back to me by the end of January. I will forward the reports to the appropriate committees for peer reviews. Administrative evaluations will be completed by the end of March.

To conduct a thorough review, please consider incorporating the following in each section:

- Teaching – teaching load, # of preps/new courses, locations, formats, results of course evaluations, descriptions of each course taught each semester (including course design, link to USCU mission, Carolina core fulfillment, professional development, etc.)
- Scholarship – list and describe each activity (papers in preparation, presentations, papers under review, publications, grants, creative activities, consultations, workshops, etc.)
- Service – list and describe each activity (advising, committees, attendance at university functions, club activities, peer reviews, etc.)
- **Adjunct Peer Reviews** began this fall and will continue through the spring. I have already started reaching out to those who require a review and enlisting volunteers to conduct those reviews.
- **Advising for Spring 2024** has begun. The schedule has been emailed out to all faculty advisors. If you need a copy of the AA, AS, and Dual Degree advising forms, please let me know. I will email advisors any changes to the schedule. Reach out to your advisees directly to schedule appointments. New students will be assigned via Calendly. Keep a lookout for those appointments and make sure to put in your availability.
- **Summer and Fall 2024 Schedule Planning:** I will begin reaching out to all faculty before the end of this semester to plan Summer/Fall 2023. Please begin thinking about what you would like to offer.

**New Faculty/Staff Hires:**

- Caden Jackson has accepted the position of Success Center Coordinator.

**Final Exam Reminder:**

- Final Exams: Final exams for full semester classes are to be given ONLY at the regularly scheduled time listed on the final exam schedule. In any course or laboratory that meets weekly, no quiz, test, or examination shall be given during the last class session before the regular examination period. In any course or laboratory that meets two or three times a week, no quiz, test, or examination shall be given during the last two class sessions before the regular examination period. In any course or laboratory that meets more than three times a week, no quiz, test, or examination shall be given during the last three sessions before the regular examination period.
- Final Grades: When entering final grades in Self-Service, if a student had stopped attending that class at some point (or stopped logging in the case of an online class), you will need to enter a grade of “FN” (rather than just an “F”), as well as their last date of attendance/login for that student. Those unearned/walk-away FN’s are tracked by Financial Aid to determine if the student owes additional money and that information needs to be as accurate as possible when those grades are entered. Final grades are submitted and posted to students’ academic records using Self Service Carolina. Final grade rolls will be available 2-3 business days before the last day of class and are due no later than 72 hours after the date of the scheduled final exam. Grades submitted late may affect a student’s academic standing, eligibility for financial aid, or ability to graduate.

**These are the proposed changes to the handbook that Dr. Lownes presented at the October FO meeting and that were voted on at the November meeting. The changes are highlighted in yellow.**

### **Faculty Advisory Committee**

The Faculty Advisory Committee performs the following functions:

1. Considers matters related to the general welfare of USC Union and related to faculty governance including assigning items to be addressed by standing committees. The assignments will be made through a process of advance planning for the upcoming year.
2. Considers unforeseen issues of a general nature not clearly related to the charges of any one standing committee as they arise during the year and advises the Deans and the appropriate standing committee regarding policy, planning, strategies, and tactics in relation to these issues.
3. Initiates assessment and effectiveness activities and evaluates the results of those activities on campus. Also, the committee makes recommendations concerning the improvement of assessment and effectiveness process.
4. Makes recommendations in the areas of campus facility development and public relations.

Members of this committee include the Faculty Organization Chair (who serves as the Chair of the committee), and the Chairs of the other **standing committees listed in Section 1 and Section 2 of Article VII of this document provided they are voting members of FO.** The Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs serves as ex-officio to this committee.