



South Carolina Commission on Higher Education

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MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Ken Wingate, Chair, and Members, Commission on Higher Education

From: *BRH*
Dr. Bettie Rose Horne, Chair, and Members, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

Consideration of Annual Report on Admission Standards for First-Time Entering Freshmen, FY 2009-10

Act 629 of 1988, *The Cutting Edge*, requires that with respect to admission standards at the public colleges and universities:

- In consultation and coordination with the public institutions of higher learning in this state, the State Commission on Higher Education shall ensure that minimal admissions standards are maintained by the institutions.
- The Commission, with the institutions, shall monitor the effect of compliance with admission prerequisites that are effective in fall, 1988 (Section 59-104-10(A)).

In April 1988, the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs adopted a procedure that requires each institution to report annually on applications, acceptances, and enrollment and to specify the minimum approximate SAT score (combined math and verbal) that is required of most applicants for admission as freshmen.

In Act 359 of 1996, the General Assembly reiterated the importance of reporting admissions standards. Section 59-103-45(3) again directed the Commission to review minimum undergraduate admission standards.

Attached is the annual report on 2009 admission standards for first-time entering freshmen (**Attachment 1**) at South Carolina public senior colleges and universities. This document summarizes the results of five different reports related to admission standards and to measures of achievement of first-time entering freshmen for the fall of 2009.

The Report is presented in five parts:

Part I: Fall 2008 Applications, Acceptances, and Actual Enrollments
Part II: Fall 2009 Data Related to High School Course Prerequisites
Part III: Fall 2009 SAT and ACT Scores
Part IV: Fall 2009 Provisionally Admitted Students
Part V: Fall 2010 Minimum Admissions Requirements

The data for Parts II-IV, and the actual enrollment data included in Part I, were electronically supplied by the institutions via the Commission on Higher Education's Management Information System (CHEMIS).

Recommendations

The Committee of Academic Affairs and Licensing commends favorably to the Commission approval of the following:

1. Although there was an increase in first-time freshmen meeting all the high school course prerequisites for public college admission, the senior institutions whose compliance rate falls below the state average of 95.6 percent should focus on efforts to ensure increasing compliance, particularly in science, thereby enhancing student preparation for success in college and making majors in science, engineering, and technology more likely for entering students.
2. This report should be transmitted to the South Carolina Department of Education and the chairs of the House and Senate Education Committees.

Attachment 1

ANNUAL REPORT ON ADMISSION STANDARDS FOR FIRST-TIME ENTERING FRESHMEN, FALL 2009 SOUTH CAROLINA PUBLIC SENIOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

This document reviews the results of five different reports related to admission standards and measures of achievement for first-time entering freshmen. The results are presented in five parts:

- **Part I:** Fall 2009 Applications, Acceptances, and Actual Enrollments
- **Part II:** Fall 2009 Data related to high school course prerequisites
- **Part III:** Fall 2009 SAT and ACT scores
- **Part IV:** Fall 2009 Data related to provisional students
- **Part V:** Fall 2010 Minimum admission standards.

Part I: Applications, Acceptances, and Actual Enrollments

In Fall 2009, 77,053 applications were received for admission as first-time freshmen at the public senior colleges and universities. Of these, 49,543 (64.3%) met the minimum admission standards at one or more of the public senior institutions and were offered admission to the institution. Of those who were offered admission, 16,861 (34%) of applicants actually enrolled.

Table 1 on the following page shows the number and percent of students who applied, were accepted, and actually enrolled at each public senior institution.

**TABLE 1
APPLICATIONS, ACCEPTANCES, AND ACTUAL ENROLLMENTS
S.C. PUBLIC SENIOR INSTITUTIONS, FALL 2009**

Institutions	Number of Applications ¹	Number of Applicants Offered Admission ¹	Percent of Applicants Offered Admission	Number who Actually Enrolled	Percent Accepted and Enrolled
Research Institutions					
Clemson	16,282	10,224	62.8%	3,383	33.1%
USC-Columbia	17,695	11,262	63.6%	3,917	34.8%
Sub Total	33,977	21,486	63.2%	7,300	34.0%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities					
The Citadel	2,162	1,716	79.4%	591	34.4%
Coastal Carolina	8,705	6,438	74.0%	1,775	27.6%
Coll. Of Charleston	11,083	5,703	51.5%	2,143	37.6%
Francis Marion	3,432	1,930	56.2%	794	41.1%
Lander	2,654	1,297	48.9%	582	44.9%
S.C. State	3,715	2,906	78.2%	723	24.9%
USC-Aiken	2,721	2,058	75.6%	632	30.7%
USC-Beaufort	1,228	887	72.2%	374	42.2%
USC-Upstate	2,865	2,035	71.0%	887	43.6%
Winthrop	4,511	3,087	68.4%	1,060	34.3%
Sub Total	43,076	28,057	65.1%	9,561	34.1%
Total Sr. Institutions	77,053	49,543	64.3%	16,861	34.0%

¹Reported manually by the institutions.

Six institutions (The Citadel, S.C. State, USC-Aiken, Coastal Carolina, USC-Beaufort, USC-Upstate) offered admission to 70-80% of applicants. Three institutions (Winthrop, USC-Columbia, Clemson) offered admission to 60-69% of applicants. Two institutions (Francis Marion, College of Charleston) offered admission to 50-59% of applicants. Lander University offered admission to the lowest percentage (48.9%) of applicants and enrolled the largest percentage (44.9%) of students who were offered admission. The remaining institutions had enrollment percentages that ranged from 24.5% to 43.6%.

Table 2 provides a five-year overview of applications, acceptances, and actual enrollments. The number of applicants has increased by 19,115 over the last five years, and the number enrolled has increased by 1,133 students. However, the percentage of applicants who were accepted and enrolled **has decreased** by approximately 6.3%. This decrease may suggest that, as a whole, the public senior institutions are becoming somewhat more selective in offering admissions to students, but that, in turn, students who are offered admission are becoming more selective in choosing where they wish to attend. In addition, the relatively high cost of tuition may be influencing students' choices.

TABLE 2 Applications, Acceptances, and Actual Enrollments S.C. Public Senior Institutions Five Year Comparison					
Year	Number of Applications	Number of Applicants Offered Admission	Percent of Applicants Offered Admission	Number who Actually Enrolled	Percent Accepted and Enrolled
2005	57,938	39,068	67.4%	15,728	40.3%
2006	61,539	38,907	63.2%	15,635	40.2%
2007	65,709	40,484	61.6%	16,168	39.9%
2008	71,317	43,817	61.4%	15,902	36.3%
2009	77,053	49,543	64.3%	16,861	34.0%

Part II: Extent to Which 2009 Freshmen Met the High School Course Prerequisites

Since Fall 1988, public senior colleges and universities in South Carolina have required that applicants who graduated from high school in 1988 or subsequent years must have completed certain high school courses before being admitted. The required courses include the following:

- 1. Four units of English:** At least two units must have strong grammar and composition components, at least one must be in English literature, and at least one must be in American literature. Completion of College Preparatory English I, II, III, and IV will meet this criterion.
- 2. Three units of Mathematics:** These units include Algebra I (for which Applied Mathematics I and II may count together as a substitute if a student successfully completes Algebra II), Algebra II, and Geometry. A fourth higher-level mathematics course is strongly recommended. The fourth course should be selected from among algebra III/trigonometry, pre-calculus, calculus, statistics, or discrete mathematics.
- 3. Three units of Laboratory Science:** Two units must be taken in two different fields and selected from among biology, chemistry, or physics. The third unit may be from the same field as one of the first two units (biology, chemistry, or physics) or from any laboratory science for which biology and/or chemistry is a prerequisite. Courses in earth science, general physical science, or introductory or general environmental science for which biology and/or chemistry is not a prerequisite will not meet this requirement. It is strongly recommended that students take physical science (taught as a laboratory science) as a prerequisite to the three required units of laboratory science outlined in the section.
- 4. Two units of the same foreign language.**

- 5. Three units of social science:** One unit of U.S. History is required; a half unit of Economics and a half unit in Government are strongly recommended.
- 6. Four units of electives:** Four college preparatory units must be taken from at least three different fields selected from among Computer Science, English, Fine Arts, Foreign Languages, Humanities, Laboratory Science (excluding earth science, general physical science, general environmental science or other introductory science courses for which biology and/or chemistry is not a prerequisite), Mathematics above the level of Algebra II, and Social Sciences. It is suggested that one unit be in Computer Science which includes programming (i.e., not just keyboarding) and one unit in Fine Arts (appreciation of, history, or performance).
- 7. One unit of physical education or ROTC.**

NOTE: Each institution may make exceptions in admitting 1) students who do not meet all of the prerequisites, limited to those individual cases in which the failure to meet one or more prerequisites is due to circumstances beyond the reasonable control of the student or 2) students who have taken the Tech Prep (Applied Academics) courses rather than the required college preparatory curriculum described above and who meet all other institutional admissions criteria.

The required high school course prerequisites have been changed for students who will be college freshmen in Fall 2011. The changes require students to take four units of mathematics, one unit of fine arts, and at least one elective.

As shown in **Table 3**, although the proportion of all applicable first-time freshmen meeting all of the prerequisites increased from 95.2% in 2008 to 95.6% in 2009, the percentage of students meeting all of the prerequisites is still below the 1999 average of 98.15%. In Fall 2009 only Clemson, the College of Charleston, USC-Sumter, and USC-Union meet or exceed the 1999 average.

TABLE 3						
Percentage of Applicable¹ First-Time Freshmen Meeting High School Course Prerequisites						
Institutions	2007	2007	2008	2008	2009	2009
	Applicable	Percent	Applicable	Percent	Applicable	Percent
	Freshmen	Meeting	Freshmen	Meeting	Freshmen	Meeting
		Prerequisites		Prerequisites		Prerequisites
Research Institutions						
Clemson	2,762	99.7%	2,923	99.5%	3383	98.1%
USC-Columbia	3,642	96.0%	3,774	95.5%	3818	96.6%
Sub Total	6,404	97.6%	6,697	97.2%	7,201	97.3%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities						
The Citadel	621	89.0%	607	90.9%	591	93.2%
Coastal Carolina	1,645	92.3%	1,640	97.0%	1761	95.3%
College of Charleston	2,062	99.2%	1,949	97.8%	2134	99.3%
Francis Marion	779	95.5%	681	93.1%	794	90.8%
Lander	433	91.7%	535	88.2%	577	88.7%
SC State	1,214	95.3%	966	97.9%	723	91.7%
USC-Aiken	617	84.1%	582	93.8%	623	96.3%
USC-Beaufort	276	72.5%	288	78.8%	363	87.1%
USC-Upstate	800	93.9%	683	91.7%	856	92.3%
Winthrop	1,052	90.4%	1,051	92.8%	1042	92.9%
Sub Total	9,499	93.0%	8,982	93.8%	9,464	94.3%
Total Sr. Institutions	15,903	94.9%	15,679	95.3%	16,665	95.6%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC						
USC-Lancaster ²	91	96.7%	101	83.2%	113	92.9%
USC-Salkehatchie ²	0		14	100.0%	4	75.0%
USC-Sumter ²	98	100.0%	100	98.0%	122	100.0%
USC-Union ²	15	100.0%	18	100.0%	19	100.0%
Sub Total USC Two-Year	204	98.5%	233	91.8%	258	96.5%
Grand Total	16,107	94.9%	15,912	95.2%	16,923	95.6%

¹Not applicable to foreign students, GED students, and students who graduated prior to 1988.

²At the USC two-year campuses, the prerequisites are applicable only to those students classified by the institution as baccalaureate-ready and accepted as such.

Institutional Issues

The lowest compliance rate is shown by USC-Beaufort, which has continued to have a low compliance rate, but it steadily increased each year since becoming a four-year institution in Fall 2004.

Lander has the second lowest compliance rate at 88.7%, which is a slight increase of 0.5% between 2008 and 2009, but is still 3% below the 2007 compliance of 91.7%.

South Carolina State's compliance rate increased from 95.3% in 2007 to 97.9% in 2008. However, SCSU decreased from 97.9% in 2008 to 91.7% in 2009.

Clemson University's compliance rate decreased from 99.5% in 2008 to 98.1% in 2009. However, this decrease is still above the 2009 average of 95.7%.

Coastal Carolina's compliance rate decreased from 97% in 2008 to 95.3% in 2009 but is still above the 2009 average of 95.7%.

Given the fact that in 2001 institutions agreed to require a third lab science, a dip in the compliance rate was to be expected. However, by 2009, it is reasonable to expect that students would be improving their compliance with the new prerequisite, and in general that is happening throughout the system.

The percent of applicable first-time freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites is broken down further into "In State Only" (**Table 3A**) and "Out-of-State Only" (**Table 3B**) to determine if out-of-state students were responsible for the overall decrease from 1999 in the percentage of first-time freshmen meeting the high school course prerequisites.

As **Table 3A** and **Table 3B** show, the decrease in compliance reported in **Table 3** for Lander can be attributed to its out-of-state students. At Lander, 81.6% of in-state, first-time freshmen meet high school course prerequisites, compared to only 50% of out-of-state, first-time freshmen.

By contrast, **Table 3A** shows that six institutions (Clemson, The Citadel, Coastal Carolina, Francis Marion, Lander, and Winthrop) report a decrease in their compliance rate for in-state, first-time freshmen for 2009 ranging from 0.7% to 7.8%.

As **Table 3B** shows, seven institutions improved their compliance rate for out-of-state students in 2009. The Citadel (+3.4%), USC-Aiken (+6.7%), USC-Beaufort (+23.7%), and USC-Upstate (+4%) showed the greatest improvement. However, despite this improvement, eight of the ten comprehensive teaching institutions and one of the research institutions report a compliance rate for out-of-state students below the average of 95.0% for all institutions, ranging from 50% to 94.9%.

TABLE 3A						
Percentage of Applicable¹ First-Time Freshmen Meeting High School Course Prerequisites In State Only (GEO-Origin = SC)						
Institutions	2007 Applicable Freshmen	2007 Percent Meeting Prerequisites	2008 Applicable Freshmen	2008 Percent Meeting Prerequisites	2009 Applicable Freshmen	2009 Percent Meeting Prerequisites
Research Institutions						
Clemson	1,819	99.9%	1,828	99.8%	2023	99.1%
USC-Columbia	2,115	97.8%	2,194	97.5%	2191	98.7%
Sub Total	3,934	98.8%	4,022	98.6%	4,214	98.9%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities						
The Citadel	255	97.6%	243	97.9%	272	97.4%
Coastal Carolina	772	96.1%	748	97.7%	776	96.0%
College of Charleston	1,191	99.6%	1,067	98.1%	1137	99.4%
Francis Marion	751	96.0%	646	92.9%	758	90.9%
Lander	395	94.2%	492	89.4%	533	88.3%
SC State	955	96.0%	673	97.3%	500	89.6%
USC-Aiken	566	86.2%	531	94.4%	564	96.5%
USC-Beaufort	222	77.5%	223	83.4%	295	87.1%
USC-Upstate	739	94.2%	638	92.0%	813	92.4%
Winthrop	936	91.7%	883	94.9%	937	94.8%
Sub Total	6,782	94.4%	6,144	94.2%	6,585	94.2%
Total Sr. Institutions	10,716	96.0%	10,166	95.9%	10,799	96.0%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC						
USC-Lancaster ²	87	96.6%	97	83.5%	108	93.5%
USC-Salkehatchie ²	0		14	100.0%	4	75.0%
USC-Sumter ²	93	100.0%	95	97.9%	120	100.0%
USC-Union ²	15	100.0%	18	100.0%	19	100.0%
Sub Total USC Two-Year	195	98.5%	224	92.0%	251	96.8%
Grand Total	10,911	96.0%	10,390	95.9%	11,050	96.1%

¹Not applicable to foreign students, GED students, and students who graduated prior to 1988.

²At the USC two-year campuses, the prerequisites are applicable only to those students classified by the institution as baccalaureate-ready and accepted as such.

TABLE 3B						
Percent of Applicable¹ First-Time Freshmen Meeting High School Course Prerequisites						
Out-of-State Only (GEO-Origin not = SC)						
Institutions	2007 Applicable Freshmen	2007 Percent Meeting Prerequisites	2008 Applicable Freshmen	2008 Percent Meeting Prerequisites	2009 Applicable Freshmen	2009 Percent Meeting Prerequisites
Research Institutions						
Clemson	943	99.5%	1,095	98.9%	1360	96.6%
USC-Columbia	1,527	93.5%	1,580	92.7%	1627	93.7%
Sub Total	2,470	95.7%	2,675	95.2%	2,987	95.0%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities						
The Citadel	365	83.3%	364	86.3%	319	89.7%
Coastal Carolina	873	88.9%	892	96.4%	985	94.8%
College of Charleston	871	98.7%	882	97.4%	997	99.3%
Francis Marion	28	82.1%	35	97.1%	36	88.9%
Lander	28	89.3%	43	74.4%	39	94.9%
SC State	259	92.7%	293	99.3%	223	96.4%
USC-Aiken	51	60.8%	51	88.2%	59	94.9%
USC-Beaufort	54	51.9%	65	63.1%	68	86.8%
USC-Upstate	61	90.2%	45	86.7%	43	90.7%
Winthrop	116	80.2%	168	81.5%	105	76.2%
Sub Total	2,706	90.0%	2,838	92.9%	2,874	95.1%
Total Sr. Institutions	5,176	92.7%	5,513	94.0%	5,861	95.0%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC						
USC-Lancaster ²	4	100.0%	4	75.0%	5	80.0%
USC-Salkehatchie ²	0		0		0	
USC-Sumter ²	5	100.0%	5	100.0%	2	100.0%
USC-Union ²	0		0		0	
Sub Total USC Two-Year	9	100.0%	9	88.9%	7	85.7%
Grand Total	5,185	92.7%	5,522	94.0%	5,868	95.0%

¹Not applicable to foreign students, GED students, and students who graduated prior to 1988.

²At the USC two-year campuses, the prerequisites are applicable only to those students classified by the institution as baccalaureate-ready and accepted as such.

This year's report examines for the first time the retention rate of first-time freshmen in relationship to the prerequisite compliance date. Table 3C shows the retention rate of first-time freshmen who did not meet the recommended high school course prerequisites. The College of Charleston shows little difference in the retention rate between those freshmen who met the

high school course requirements compared to those who did not meet them. The remaining ten institutions showed a lower retention rate for students who did **not** meet the high school course requirements. Francis Marion University showed a 45% difference in retention between students who met the requirements compared to those who didn't meet them. In addition, Coastal Carolina (-22.7%) and USC-Aiken (-24.6) also showed a significant difference in retention rates for students who did not meet the high school course prerequisites. The remaining institutions showed a difference in retention rates of 8.4% to 18.9% between those who met the high school course prerequisites and those who did not.

Table 3C Fall 2008 First-Time Freshmen Who Didn't Meet High School Pre-Reqs Retained at Same Institution in Fall 2009 S.C. Public Colleges and Universities								
Institution	Applicable Freshmen	Applicable Freshmen Meeting Pre-Reqs.			Applicable Freshmen Not Meeting Pre-Reqs.			Difference
		#	Retained	%	#	Retained	%	
Clemson University	2,923	2,908	2,593	89.2%	15	11	73.3%	-15.8%
U.S.C. - Columbia	3,774	3,604	3,248	90.1%	170	139	81.8%	-8.4%
The Citadel	607	552	502	90.9%	55	45	81.8%	-9.1%
Coastal Carolina University	1,640	1,591	1,075	67.6%	49	22	44.9%	-22.7%
College of Charleston	1,949	1,906	1,601	84.0%	43	36	83.7%	-0.3%
Francis Marion University	681	603	460	76.3%	78	24	30.8%	-45.5%
Lander University	535	472	374	79.2%	63	38	60.3%	-18.9%
South Carolina State Univ.	966	946	617	65.2%	20	13	65.0%	-0.2%
U.S.C. - Aiken	582	546	377	69.0%	36	16	44.4%	-24.6%
U.S.C. - Beaufort	288	227	161	70.9%	61	38	62.3%	-8.6%
U.S.C. - Upstate	683	626	438	70.0%	57	35	61.4%	-8.6%
Winthrop University	1,051	975	707	72.5%	76	44	57.9%	-14.6%

The data shows that for Fall 2008 first-time freshmen who didn't meet the high school course prerequisites there is a lower retention rate at all of the four-year institutions. On average there was a -18% difference in retention rates for students who did not meet the prerequisites as compared to those who did. Based on the data, students are more likely to remain in college and complete their degrees if they have taken and successfully completed the high school course prerequisites. Colleges will need to develop programs to increase the retention rate of those students who were admitted without having met the prerequisites.

Part III: SAT and ACT Scores as Indicators of Academic Preparation, Fall 2009

Act 629 of 1988, *The Cutting Edge*, and Act 359 of 1996 require public senior colleges and universities in South Carolina to report annually to the Commission on the admissions standards for first-time entering freshmen students. Act 359 also requires that the Commission review admissions standards. This report includes the average SAT/ACT scores for all first-time entering freshmen, including those admitted under the regular admission policies of the

institution and those who are admitted on a provisional basis (admitted under exceptions to the regular admission policies), foreign students, and students aged 22 and above.

Beginning in 1995, the Commission began using a more inclusive standard of comparison for indicators of academic preparation of entering students. The combined mean for college entrance examinations has been calculated based on the scores of the entire entering freshman class including foreign students, provisional students, students aged 22 and above, and students taking the ACT.

The majority of students attending South Carolina institutions take the SAT rather than the ACT as a college entrance examination. An ACT/SAT combined mean is now calculated for the entire entering freshman class. The scores of students who report only ACT scores have been converted to SAT equivalencies using the ACT-SAT concordance tables developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). The converted scores are then averaged with the SAT scores to arrive at an SAT/ACT combined mean.

When ACT scores are converted into SAT equivalents and combined into the mean, the SAT/ACT combined mean is slightly lower than the SAT combined mean excluding ACT scores (except for the research institutions). In general, this lowered mean results because more than one SAT combined score (verbal and math) converts into the same ACT score, whereas only one ACT composite score converts to an SAT combined score except at the lowest end of the range. Depending on where students' scores fall within a range (including ACT/SAT equivalencies in the calculation of the mean), they could either increase or decrease the combined mean at that institution.

Table 4 shows institutions by institution type and SAT/ACT combined mean. In addition, the combined mean for SAT scores only and the percentage of students reporting ACT scores only are also shown in **Table 4**.

TABLE 4 SAT/ACT SCORES OF FIRST-TIME ENTERING FRESHMEN, FALL 2009 (INCLUDING Foreign and Provisional Students and Students Age 22 and Above) SOUTH CAROLINA PUBLIC SENIOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITIES			
Institutions	SAT & ACT Combined Mean ¹ Including Foreign, Prov. & Age 22 & Above	SAT (Only) Combined Mean Including Foreign, Prov. & Age 22 & Above	% Reporting ACT Score Including Foreign, Prov. & Age 22 & Above
Research Institutions			
Clemson	1228	1225	24.2%
USC-Columbia	1193	1192	28.3%
Average Research Institutions	1209	1208	26.4%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities			
The Citadel	1073	1092	27.2%
Coastal Carolina	1010	1028	30.5%
College of Charleston	1159	1197	44.9%
Francis Marion University	963	971	33.0%
Lander University	979	989	35.9%
S.C. State University	864	866	46.6%
USC-Aiken	985	988	28.6%
USC-Beaufort	938	937	23.5%
USC-Upstate	974	972	33.7%
Winthrop	1058	1058	30.6%
Average Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	1028	1040	35.2%
State Average, Senior Institutions	1107	1116	
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC			
USC-Lancaster	894	940	38.3%
USC-Salkehatchie	818	840	22.4%
USC-Sumter	932	953	38.9%
USC-Union	807	889	54.6%
Average Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC	882	920	36.1%

¹ACT scores converted to SAT equivalencies using the ACT/SAT Concordance Tables.

Table 5 presents a comparison of the number of students accepted with ACT scores for 2008 and 2009. The majority of institutions indicated that the results reported to CHEMIS are for the highest SAT or ACT scores for the decision on student admission to the institution.

Table 5 Comparison of the Percent of Students Reporting ACT Scores Academic Years 2008 and 2009		
Institutions	% First-Time Freshmen Including Foreign, Prov. & Age 22 & Above Reporting ACT in 2008	% First-Time Freshmen Including Foreign, Prov. & Age 22 & Above Reporting ACT in 2009
Research Institutions		
Clemson	21.1%	24.2%
USC-Columbia	25.0%	28.3%
Average Research Institutions	23.3%	26.4%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities		
The Citadel	25.2%	27.2%
Coastal Carolina University	36.9%	30.5%
College of Charleston	46.6%	44.9%
Francis Marion University	30.3%	33.0%
Lander University	36.2%	35.9%
S.C. State University	45.9%	46.6%
USC-Aiken	24.9%	28.6%
USC-Beaufort	22.1%	23.5%
USC-Upstate	30.9%	33.7%
Winthrop University	28.8%	30.6%
Average Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	35.9%	35.2%
State Average, Senior Institutions	30.5%	31.4%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC		
USC-Lancaster	40.8%	38.3%
USC-Salkehatchie	34.1%	22.4%
USC-Sumter	42.0%	38.9%
USC-Union	43.7%	54.6%
Average Two Year Regional Campuses of USC	39.5%	36.1%

Table 6 compares the SAT/ACT combined mean for each institution for 2007, 2008, and 2009. **Table 6** indicates the research universities had an increase in the average combined SAT/ACT mean for USC-Columbia (2 points) and Clemson University (1 point) between 2008 and 2009. The four-year comprehensive teaching institution sector shows mixed results. Four of the institutions had increases over 2008 scores and six had decreases. Two of the two-year campuses of USC had a decrease and two had increases from 2008 SAT/ACT combined scores.

TABLE 6				
SAT/ACT Scores of First-Time Entering Freshmen				
(Including Foreign, Provisional, and Students Age 22 and Above)				
Institutions	2007 SAT/ACT Combined Mean	2008 SAT/ACT Combined Mean	2009 SAT/ACT Combined Mean	2008-2009 Change Combined Mean
Research Institutions				
Clemson	1222	1227	1228	1
USC-Columbia	1180	1191	1193	2
Average Research Institutions	1198	1207	1209	2
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities				
The Citadel	1078	1076	1073	-3
Coastal Carolina	1028	1027	1010	-17
College of Charleston	1159	1169	1159	-10
Francis Marion	961	946	963	17
Lander	989	955	979	24
S.C. State	814	845	864	19
USC-Aiken	995	983	985	2
USC-Beaufort	940	971	938	-33
USC-Upstate	1003	1000	974	-26
Winthrop	1051	1071	1058	-13
Average Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	1019	1030	1028	-2
State Average, Senior Institutions	1091	1106	1107	1
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC				
USC-Lancaster	878	881	894	13
USC-Salkehatchie	841	807	818	11
USC-Sumter	954	938	932	-6
USC-Union	824	826	807	-19
Average Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC	890	876	882	6

Part IV: Provisionally Admitted Students

Two types of admission may be offered to a degree-seeking student upon admission to an institution. Applicants who meet the institution's minimum admission criteria and who are offered admission are classified as regular students. Applicants who do not meet the institution's regular admission requirements but who are offered admission using alternative criteria are classified as provisional students. Several institutions reported a percentage of students who had not met the recommended high school course prerequisites, yet reported 0% provisional students. In response to a staff request for additional information about provisional

students in 2006, Clemson University reported that the institution does not admit provisional students, but may allow students to be enrolled with “conditions.” Similarly, Lander University stated it allows some “discretion” on a limited case-by-case basis. The Citadel does not label any student as provisional, but may limit the number of hours taken or provide specific academic expectations for those students who do not meet the recommended high school course prerequisites. Coastal Carolina University does not have a definition for provisional students.

Table 7 shows provisional freshmen as a percent of total first-time entering freshmen for Fall 2009 for each institution and overall.

TABLE 7			
Provisional Freshmen as a Percent of Total First-Time Freshmen			
Fall 2009			
Institutions	Total First-Time Freshmen	Provisional Freshmen	Percent Provisional
Research Institutions			
Clemson	3,383	0	0.0%
USC-Columbia	3,917	156	4.0%
Total Research Institutions	7,300	156	2.1%
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities			
The Citadel	591	0	0.0%
Coastal Carolina	1,775	0	0.0%
College of Charleston	2,143	248	11.6%
Francis Marion University	794	0	0.0%
Lander University	582	0	0.0%
S.C. State University	723	0	0.0%
USC-Aiken	632	44	7.0%
USC-Beaufort	374	11	2.9%
USC-Upstate	887	65	7.3%
Winthrop University	1,060	76	7.2%
Total Comprehensive Teaching Institutions	9,561	444	4.6%
Total Senior Institutions	16,861	600	3.6%
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC			
USC-Lancaster	368	242	65.8%
USC-Salkehatchie	286	216	75.5%
USC-Sumter	319	173	54.2%
USC-Union	119	79	66.4%
Total Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC	1,092	710	65.0%
Grand Total	17,953	1,310	7.3%

Clemson University, The Citadel, Coastal Carolina, Francis Marion, Lander, and South Carolina State University reported accepting no provisional students in 2009. USC-Columbia admitted 4.0% provisional students. Of the comprehensive teaching institutions, the College of Charleston admitted the most provisional students (11.6%).

At its meeting on August 25, 1997, the Commission approved several recommendations for the institutions to consider regarding provisional students. Among these recommendations were two which relate to the data presented in **Table 7**:

- Research universities should limit provisional admissions to no more than 10% of the first-time entering freshman class.
- Four-year teaching universities should limit provisional admissions to no more than 15% of the first-time entering freshman class.

As can be seen from the data presented in **Table 7**, in 2009, the two research universities are in compliance with the recommended 10% guideline. All of the four-year institutions are in compliance with the recommended 15% guideline.

Trend data for provisional admissions for the last five years for the four-year comprehensive teaching institutions are shown below:

TABLE 7A					
Provisional Freshmen as a Percent of Total First-Time Freshmen					
Fall 2005 - 2009					
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
The Citadel	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Coastal Carolina University	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
College of Charleston	10.5%	9.6%	12.9%	8.4%	11.6%
Francis Marion University	7.1%	9.7%	14.6%	0.3%	0.0%
Lander University	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
S.C. State University	8.4%	14.2%	7.4%	2.0%	0.0%
USC-Aiken	1.1%	0.3%	5.9%	6.7%	7.0%
USC-Beaufort*	3.7%	6.9%	10.8%	5.6%	2.9%
USC-Upstate	4.9%	4.6%	2.9%	2.2%	7.3%
Winthrop University	5.4%	6.7%	8.1%	7.6%	7.2%

These data indicate that the percentage of provisional students admitted to the four-year comprehensive institutions has fluctuated at several institutions over the last five years. USC-Beaufort attained four-year status in 2002 and in 2004 reduced the number of provisional students it accepts to meet the Commission's recommended levels for comprehensive institutions. The Citadel, Coastal Carolina, Francis Marion, Lander, and South Carolina State University report that there were no provisional students admitted in Fall 2009.

USC applies the same admissions standards used at its main campus to students who apply to a USC two-year campus and who are classified by the institution as baccalaureate-ready students. Because these admissions standards are applicable only to those baccalaureate-ready freshmen, a little less than two-thirds of the entering freshmen at the USC two-year campuses are classified as provisional students. The trend data for five years is presented below and shows a general pattern of approximately 68% provisionally admitted students with decreases between 2005 and 2006 and 2007 and 2008.

TABLE 7B						
Provisional Freshmen as a Percent of Total First-Time Freshmen						
USC Two-Year Campuses Annual Percentage						
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Two-year Institutions	66.6%	71.3%	69.1%	68.5%	64.9%	65.0%

Part V: Fall 2010 Minimum Admission Standards

A component of Act 629 of 1988 requires the Commission to work with public institutions of higher learning in the state to ensure that minimal admission standards are maintained by the institutions. *The publication and dissemination of minimal admission standards was recommended by external consultants who argued that unless students had a clear sense of what institutional expectations are, they could not rise to meet these expectations.* In 1988, each institution was required to specify annually the minimum approximate SAT score (combined math and verbal) that is required of most applicants for admission as freshmen. In 1993, the Commission approved the collection of additional data to include minimum ACT scores if these were submitted in lieu of SAT scores.

It is important to note that these minimum admissions standards are approximate. Some institutions use a predictive equation to determine which students to admit. At these institutions, the minimum required scores will vary somewhat depending on the value and weight of the other elements in the admissions formula. For this reason, the minimum SAT and ACT scores reported by the institutions as required for admission are to be used as guideposts for students aspiring to admission to any given institution.

During the past few years, institutions have been reporting that they no longer use class rank to set the approximate minimum SAT/ACT score, but instead use the Grade Point Average (GPA) of the core high school college prep curriculum. In order to report more accurately the approximate minimum SAT/ACT score for the institutions, the Commission requested information on which method an institution used to set the minimum score and to report this information for this report. These data are separated into two tables indicating institutions that use class rank (**Table 8**) and those that use core GPA (**Table 9**). Clemson University, The Citadel, College of Charleston, Lander University, South Carolina State University, USC-Aiken, USC-Beaufort, and USC-Upstate report using both forms in setting their approximate minimum scores.

The approximate SAT and ACT score requirements reported by each institution **using class rank** for Fall 2010 are shown in **Table 8**.

Table 8 APPROXIMATE MINIMUM SAT SCORE (COMBINED) AND MINIMUM ACT SCORE REQUIREMENTS FOR FIRST-TIME ENTERING FRESHMEN 2010								
Institutions	High School Class Rank						Predictive Equation ¹	
	Top 20%		Top 50%		Top 80%		Equation	
	of Class		of Class		of Class			
	SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT	Yes	No
Research Institutions								
Clemson University	1050	23	1290	30	1580	36	X	
USC-Columbia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities								
The Citadel	920	20	920	20	920	20		X
Coastal Carolina University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
College of Charleston	1050	21	1170	26	1350	30	X	
Francis Marion University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Lander University	800	16	975	20	1050	22	X	
S.C. State University	850	18	850	18	850	18		X
USC-Aiken	800	17	800	17	N/A	N/A	X	
USC-Beaufort	800	17	800	17	800	17	X	
USC-Upstate	850	18	900	19	900	19	X	
Winthrop University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC								
USC Lancaster	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
USC Salkehatchie	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
USC Sumter	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
USC Union	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		

1. Some institutions use predictive equations, formulas which combine elements such as high school class rank and/or high school grade point ratios and/or SAT or ACT scores, to determine which students to admit. At these institutions, the minimum required scores will vary somewhat depending on the value and weight of the other elements in the formula.

Two institutions (College of Charleston and South Carolina State University), reported changes in approximate minimum SAT/ACT scores in **Table 8** for 2010. All other institutions reporting data in **Table 8** kept the same minimum scores as in 2009.

College of Charleston is **decreasing** the required SAT/ACT for students in the top 20% (1070/22 to 1050/21) and **increasing** for students in the top 50% (1140/25 to 1170/26), and **increasing** the required scores for students in the top 80% (1310/28 to 1350/30) for Fall 2010.

South Carolina State University is **increasing** the required SAT/ACT for students in the top 20% (830/18 to 850/18), students in the top 50% (830/18 to 850/18), and students in the top 80% (830/18 to 850/18) for Fall 2010.

The approximate SAT and ACT score requirements reported by each institution **using core GPA for Fall 2010** are shown in **Table 9**. This year is the seventh year that institutions reported the use of the core GPA rather than class rank in reporting minimum SAT/ACT scores. Institutions reporting SAT/ACT with core GPA in **Table 9** indicated some changes for Fall 2010.

Coastal Carolina University is **decreasing** required minimum scores (SAT/ACT) for the admission of students with a 4.0 core GPA (850/18).

College of Charleston is **increasing** the required minimum scores for the admission of students with a 3.0 core GPA from 1140/25 to 1200/26 and **decreasing** the required minimum scores for students with a 4.0 GPA from 1070/22 to 1050/22.

South Carolina State University is **increasing** the required minimum scores (SAT/ACT) for the admission of all students from 830/18 to 850/18.

**Table 9
FIRST-TIME ENTERING FRESHMEN
2010**

Institutions	High School Core GPA and Minimum SAT/ACT score						Use Predictive Equation	
	Core GPA 2.0		Core GPA 3.0		Core GPA 4.0		Yes	No
	SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT		
Research Institutions								
Clemson University	1580	36	1270	29	950	22	X	
USC-Columbia	1250	28	950	20	700	15	X	
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities								
The Citadel	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Coastal Carolina University	960	20	900	19	850	18		X
College of Charleston	N/A	N/A	1200	26	1050	22	X	
Francis Marion University	880	19	800	17	800	17		X
Lander University	1050	22	875	18	800	16	X	
S.C. State University	850	18	850	18	850	18		X
USC Aiken	910	19	800	17	800	17	X	
USC Beaufort	800	17	800	17	800	17	X	
USC Upstate	900	19	900	19	850	18	X	
Winthrop University	N/A	N/A	900	19	850	17		X
Two-Year Regional Campuses of USC								
USC Lancaster	1250	28	950	20	700	15	X	
USC Salkehatchie	1250	28	950	20	700	15	X	
USC Sumter	1250	28	950	20	700	15	X	
USC Union	1250	28	950	20	700	15	X	

1. Some institutions use predictive equations, formulas which combine elements such as high school class rank and/or high school grade point ratios and/or SAT or ACT scores, to determine which students to admit. At these institutions, the minimum required scores will vary somewhat depending on the value and weight of the other elements in the formula.

Table 9 indicates variability among reports of minimum SAT/ACT scores in conjunction with a core GPA, which is attributable to patterns used by institutions for assessing student qualifications. USC-Beaufort and South Carolina State University determine eligibility based upon a single minimum SAT/ACT score (800/17 and 850/18, respectively). Francis Marion University and USC-Aiken use a single minimum SAT/ACT score for students entering with a 3.0 and 4.0 core GPA. Clemson University, USC-Columbia, Coastal Carolina University, Lander University, and Winthrop University report different minimum SAT/ACT scores required for entering students with a core GPA of 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0.

In 2005, the SAT added a mandatory Writing section. **Table 10** shows that the Writing section was not a requirement for admission to any institution in South Carolina for Fall 2009, but several institutions (Clemson, USC-Columbia, College of Charleston, South Carolina State University, USC-Upstate, and Winthrop University) use the Writing component for research or for planning services and placements. The College of Charleston reports that it uses either the SAT or ACT Writing score.

Table 10		
Requirement of SAT Writing Component for Admissions in Fall 2010		
Institutions	Yes/ No	Additional Information
Research Institutions		
Clemson	No	Used as supplemental information in a student's application. Research to see if Writing may become part of the predictive formula.
USC-Columbia	No	Currently required for study & possible use in holistic review.
Comprehensive Teaching Colleges & Universities		
The Citadel	No	
Coastal Carolina University	No	
College of Charleston	No	Require either SAT or ACT Writing score. Collecting data for research this summer.
Francis Marion University	No	
Lander University	No	
S.C. State University	No	Used in planning and services provided to entering freshmen.
USC-Aiken	No	
USC-Beaufort	No	
USC-Upstate	No	Uses for appropriate placement in freshman English courses.
Winthrop University	No	Collecting for review of correlation between our freshman student's performance in 1st Writing Course.

Table 11 shows the number of first-time freshmen aged 25 or older in the South Carolina public colleges and universities for the past five years.

Table 11						
Number of First-time Freshmen Aged 25 and Older by Year						
South Carolina Public Colleges and Universities						
	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Grand Total
U.S.C. - Columbia	2	3	3	3	1	12
The Citadel	1	2	0	1	1	5
Coastal Carolina University	3	2	1	2	3	11
College of Charleston	1	1	0	2	1	5
Francis Marion University	3	2	2	5	5	17
Lander University	1	2	0	3	2	8
South Carolina State Univ.	4	2	2	10	7	25
U.S.C. - Aiken	3	4	3	1	1	12
U.S.C. - Beaufort	7	7	6	7	6	33
U.S.C. - Upstate	13	14	8	11	7	53
Winthrop University	1	4	2	2	0	9
<i>4 Year Institutions</i>	39	43	27	47	34	190
U.S.C. - Lancaster	16	18	22	24	12	92
U.S.C. - Salkehatchie	13	28	23	36	41	141
U.S.C. - Sumter	10	12	13	4	14	53
U.S.C. - Union	5	10	12	8	14	49
<i>2-Year Institutions</i>	44	68	70	72	81	335
Grand Total	83	111	97	119	115	525

Conclusion

In general, students are becoming slightly better prepared for postsecondary education as 95.7% of applicable first-time freshmen meet all of the high school course prerequisites in 2009; however, there is considerable variability among institutions with eight four-year institutions showing increases in the percentage of freshmen meeting high school course prerequisites for all freshmen and four showing decreases. Institutions continue to have freshmen who do not meet the lab science and the elective requirements of the high school course prerequisites. Based on the data, students who are admitted and have not met the high school course prerequisites tend to have a lower retention rate after the first year at the institution than those students who did meet the prerequisites. Institutions need to focus on complying with the course prerequisites for entering freshmen and developing a plan of action for working with those students who are admitted who do not meet the prerequisites.

As a whole, the public senior institutions are becoming somewhat more selective in offering admissions to students because the percentage of applicants offered admission to a public senior institution has steadily declined since 2004. At the same time, because the percentage of students accepted and enrolled has also declined, it appears that students who are

offered admission are becoming slightly more selective in choosing the institutions they wish to attend.

The combined SAT/ACT scores for first-time entering freshmen have increased at the research institutions each year since 2007. College of Charleston, Francis Marion, South Carolina State University, and Winthrop University are the only comprehensive teaching colleges and universities that show an increase in the combined SAT/ACT scores since 2007. However, Lander University and USC-Aiken showed an increase since Fall 2008.

Institutions continue to adjust admission requirements for first-time entering freshmen as indicated in the proposed minimum admission standards for Fall 2010. The required minimum SAT/ACT scores are lower for those students with a higher GPA and high school class rank at most but not all institutions.

Finally, institutions are not using the new Writing Component of the SAT as a requirement for admission. However, six of the institutions are using the scores for research. These institutions are analyzing the data to determine whether the Writing Component should become part of the admission requirements and/or be used for supplemental information as part of a holistic review of the student's application.