

Summary Report of the Data Verification
Team Visit
to
The University of South Carolina Aiken
April, 1999

Introduction

During April of 1999, a team of staff members visited the University of South Carolina Aiken and the University of South Carolina Columbia for the purpose of verifying USC Aiken data that are submitted in reports in support of the performance funding process, the CHEMIS (Commission on Higher Education Management Information System), and state administered financial aid programs. While the visit was scheduled for April 20th through the 22nd, scheduling problems and the need to work at and move between both campuses meant that some team members began visits on April 19th at USC Columbia and others conducted them as late as on April 26th and 27th at USC Aiken. Following the visits, additional time was also required to examine and review certain data in greater depth. The areas in which data were reviewed follow:

Average Class Size (Performance Funding Indicator 3A1)
Financial Support for Reform in Teacher Education (Performance Funding Indicator 9A)
Student Residency
Scores of Graduates on Licensing and Certification Examinations (Performance Funding Indicator 7D)
Transferability of Credits (Performance Funding Indicator 8A)
Availability of Faculty to Students Outside of the Classroom (Performance Funding Indicator 2E)

The team members appreciate the hospitality and support provided by the University of South Carolina during the visit. Special thanks are owed to Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong at USC Aiken and Ms. Kay Coleman at USC Columbia, who served as their respective campuses coordinators and liaisons with the team during the visit, and to the many administrators, staff and faculty who provided support and responded to questions posed by team members.

The main body of this report summarizes the purpose for verifying each element, the method used to do the verification, observations and/or findings as a result of the verification, and any recommendations for the institution or the Commission. As is true with any case where complex processes and data are being verified, there were a number of instances where initial problems or discrepancies were resolved through more detailed examination and/or explanation. Detailed data (where it does not violate privacy), background and supporting materials, and individual team members complete reports are available in the Commission offices. In addition, individual team members' complete reports were furnished to the institution if the more detailed data therein were deemed to be helpful.

The final section of the report consecutively lists all findings and recommendations in the report, and the Appendix lists those individuals who were interviewed or who assisted the team as the data were examined.

Performance Funding Data Elements

Average Class Size (Performance Funding Indicator 3A1)

I. Purpose: To verify that course enrollments are accurately reported to the Commission by the institution.

II. Method: A random sample of 10 each of lower division and upper division courses, and a random sample of 5 graduate courses was selected by the Commission from the Fall, 1998 CHEMIS course data. Data were verified on each of the courses on computer screens in the Office of Institutional Research at USC Columbia.

III. Findings: The reported course data produced from CHEMIS was reconciled and balanced with the computer screens and any differences were explained.

IV. Recommendations: None.

Financial Support for Reform in Teacher Education (Performance Funding Indicator 9A)

I. Purpose: To determine if the institution's reported listing of grants and expenditures for teacher education as stipulated in the measure agrees with copies of funded grant proposals and actual expenditure records.

II. Method: All the expenditures for grants to support reform in teacher education for FY 1994-95, FY 1995-96, FY 1996-97, and FY 1997-98 were verified. This was done by comparing the expenditure totals listed on the spreadsheet, which was given to the Commission, with the computer printout at USC Aiken that showed the balances of each of the accounts for the requested fiscal years. The following grants were selected for further examination in an attempt to determine whether they qualified under the "teacher reform" label.

III.

- 1) NRSMEEP, Natural Resources Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Education Program
- 2) SEPUP, Science Education for Public Understanding Program
- 3) Aiken County HUB Science Teaching and Revitalization Program
- 4) TREAT, Teaching Radiation, Energy and Technology

IV. Findings and Observations: The four grants listed above were determined to clearly qualify as "teacher reform" grants. However, a number of discrepancies in the actual grant expenditures were found and are shown in the table below:

Recording of Expenditures of Grants

	Account	Grant Title	Reported	Actual Expenditure	Fiscal Year (Inc/Dec)
1994-95	E902	Teacher Cadet	3,000	3,501	
	Total		3,000	3,501	501
1995-96	F153	Env. Educ. Project	42,842	44,582	
	F462	Mobile Compt. Classroom	57,535	57,685	
	G420	SC SSI CSRA HUB	133,483	134,368	
	F461	Coop Nat Resources, Sci. Educ	201,559	202,430	
	E902	Teacher Cadet	4,000	2,634	
	Total		439,419	441,699	2,280
1996-97	F153	Env. Educ. Project	87	0	
	F155	Comp Tech/Math Sci	26,603	0	
	F462	Mobile Compt. Classroom	757	0	
	E902	Teacher Cadet	3,500	3,423	
	Total		30,947	3,423	-27,074
1997-98	J409	SEPUP	0	12,788	
	E902	Teacher Cadet	3,000	4,095	
	Total		3,000	16,883	13,883

IV. Recommendations: Institutional records should be corrected to reflect accurate expenditures for the discrepancies that were noted in the table above, and corrected information should be submitted to the Commission. In addition, USC Aiken should institute procedures to ensure that correct expenditures are reported for grants to reform teacher education, and report to the Commission when those procedures are in place.¹

Student Residency (Performance Funding Indicator 6D)

I. Purpose: To verify that student residency classifications, which are used by the Commission and the institutions for performance funding, calculation of the MRR, and determination of qualification for student scholarship programs, are accurately reported to the Commission by the institutions.

II. Method: A random sample of 150 undergraduate students and all 41 degree-seeking graduate students enrolled at USC Aiken during Fall 1998 were selected from the

¹ USC Aiken has validated the data collected during the site visit and has established policies and procedures to assure that similar errors do not occur in future reporting.

Commission on Higher Education Management Information System (CHEMIS). Data verified included permanent address, address of next of kin, high school graduation date, location of high school, and a series of residency questions on the application. CHEMIS residency data represents residency for fee purposes. Beginning with Fall 1998, it also provides a breakdown for eight exceptions granted to students not meeting the State's residency requirements that enable them to receive in-state tuition and fees. Therefore, team members also verified that exceptions were correctly coded for revised CHEMIS requirements.

Data verification included reviewing records housed on two campuses, USC Aiken and USC Columbia. Student admissions files and residency application files are maintained in paper form in the Admissions office on the Aiken campus or on microfiche for applications and residency files received in earlier semesters at the USC Columbia campus. At point of receipt, the information in these files is added to the USC system student database from which the Commission eventually receives its information. Thus, the data verification process involved assessing the paper and fiche files for each of the 191 students and comparing this information to the computer files maintained at USC Columbia.

III. Findings and Observations: Of the 150 undergraduate students sampled, 91 percent (136 students) are charged in-state rates because they meet the qualifications for South Carolina residency, five percent (eight students) are charged out-of-state tuition, and four percent (six students) are charged in-state tuition because of one of three qualifying exceptions. Of the 41 graduate students, 83 percent (34 students) are identified as in-state students because they meet the qualifications for South Carolina residency, two percent (one student) are charged out-of-state tuition, and 15 percent (six students) are charged in-state tuition because of one of two qualifying exceptions.

The following issues were identified during the data verification process:

USC Aiken maintains policies on certain tuition waivers that differ from those followed by USC Columbia and, during fall 1998, is the only institution in the State that is able to award in-state fees to out-of-state residents from specific Georgia counties. Difficulties in the use of the "feeclass" field resulted in changes to the "indefinite" student field for students enrolled prior to Fall 1998. As a result, students on the file were identified as resident students, not students eligible for in-state tuition due to particular exemption.

1. Overall, nineteen students were not coded as exemptions; although none of these errors resulted in incorrect tuition being assessed.

The institution should collect additional information regarding the residency status of students applying to USC Aiken. In addition, depending on the age of the student, information concerning high school location and date of completion, which is available on the student's original application form, is not added consistently to the institution's database. Finally, documentation on the residency status of students who are being readmitted is not sufficient during periods of non-enrollment.

2. Insufficient information was available to validate the residency code for five students who were coded on the CHEMIS file as in-state students.

3. One graduate student's fee code was listed as a graduate assistant, yet no documentation was available to validate this status.

USC Aiken does not distinguish between in-state and out-of-state students for tuition and fee purposes when it establishes contracts with school districts. While the students in the sample were all South Carolina residents or qualified for the exemption granted students from certain counties in Georgia, State law requires that a tuition differential be charged to out-of-state students. In the future, it is suggested that contracts with school districts or other entities should include a tuition differential for students not eligible to receive in-state rates.

IV. Recommendations:

1. USC Aiken should review and correct records for all students enrolled fall 1998 and following to assure that all "indefinite" student type assignments are correct and ensure that the "feeclass" field is used correctly.

2. USC Aiken should consider revising its application forms to include more information on residency. The forms and data fields on the database should be fully completed, and a protocol should be developed that appropriately restricts access to changing codes.²

It is suggested that in order to improve residency assessments for transfer students within the USC system, the system should explore a process that would result in the transfer of originals or copies of all application/residency files from the originating campus to the host campus.

Graduates on Licensing and Certification Examinations (Performance Funding Indicator 7D)

I. Purpose: To verify that pass rates on licensure and certification examinations have been accurately calculated and reported.

II. Method: Pass Rates reported to the Commission on the NCLEX (nursing) examinations and the NTE Professional Knowledge and Specialty Areas examinations (teachers) were compared with source documents or otherwise reviewed for the years

² USC-Aiken has modified its application forms to include the suggested elements and will add the data to its student database once collected.

1995 through 1998 to determine if they were accurately recorded and reported to the Commission.

III. Observations: There were no discrepancies between pass rates reported by USC Aiken to the Commission and pass rates reported to USC Aiken by the NCLEX office for all students who took the NCLEX examination for first time from 1995 through 1998. Suggestions from the institutional representative and the staff team member concerning the test dates that are reported have been provided to the performance funding staff. There were discrepancies of one student each on two of the NTE reports that were sampled. These discrepancies, which can be ascribed to late reporting by NTE of single scores or corrections after the reports had been submitted to the institutional research office, are not considered sufficiently serious to warrant a recommendation. Issues that were discussed concerning reporting of NTE (now PRAXIS) results have been provided to the performance funding staff for their consideration. *The institution may wish to consider ordering the PRAXIS data tapes, which appear to have several advantages over the paper reports that the institution currently receives.*

IV. Recommendations: None

Transferability of Credits (Performance Funding Indicator 8A)

I. Purpose: To verify that the information submitted by the institution that indicates the extent to which the criteria stipulated in the Commission's "Policy and Procedures for Transferability of Credits" document is accurate.

II. Method: Verification of the data for this indicator involved three activities: 1) a comparison of courses in the College's published guide for potential transfer students to courses on the Commission approved Statewide Articulation Agreement (list of 74 technical college courses); 2) a review of a Commission generated random sample of 50 transfer student's transcripts to verify that the College appropriately accepted coursework on the Statewide Articulation Agreement and the Statewide transfer blocks; and 3) discussions with the registrar about compliance with specific areas of the indicator.

III. Observations: USC Aiken annually develops transfer guides for students at the technical colleges; these guides are also available on the web. Examination of the 50 sample transcripts of students who transferred to the institution validated that all 74 courses on the statewide agreement are being accepted. In response to a specific question, the Dean of Enrollment Management reported that coursework in foreign languages from the technical colleges is being accepted with no additional requirements such as placement or assessment instruments/examinations/fees required or requested. He also reported that to date no student has presented one of the transfer blocks in its entirety. As a constituent campus of the University of South Carolina, USC Aiken has

begun to use the SPEEDE/EXPRESS standard for sending receiving, and confirming the receipt of student transcripts by electronic means.

IV. Recommendations: None

Availability of Faculty to Students Outside of the Classroom (Performance Funding Indicator 2E)

I. Purpose: To determine whether USC Aiken used recommended administration procedures to survey students on the availability of faculty outside of the classroom and on the availability of faculty advisors.

II. Method: The persons responsible for coordinating the administration of the surveys were interviewed and memoranda, answer sheets, and results and their analyses were examined.

III. Observations: Comprehensive surveys were administered appropriately to students at the institution, which not only reports the required data to the Commission, but uses additional information to make constructive improvements in teaching and advising.

IV. Recommendations: None

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Finding #1: (Teacher Education Grants) A number of discrepancies in grant expenditures were found.

Recommendation #1: Institutional records should be corrected to reflect accurate expenditures for the discrepancies that were noted in the table above, and corrected information should be submitted to the Commission. In addition, USC Aiken should institute procedures to ensure that correct expenditures are reported for grants to reform teacher education, and report to the Commission when those procedures are in place.³

Findings #2: (Residency)

a. Overall, nineteen students were not coded as exemptions, although none of these errors resulted in incorrect tuition being assessed.

b. Insufficient information was available to validate the residency code for five students who were coded on the CHEMIS file as in-state students.

c. One graduate student's fee code was listed as a graduate assistant, yet no documentation was available to validate this status.

Recommendations #2:

a. USC Aiken should review and correct records for all students enrolled fall 1998 and following to assure that all "indefinite" student type assignments are correct and ensure that the "feeclass" field is used correctly.

b. USC Aiken should consider revising its application forms to include more information on residency. The forms and data fields on the database should be fully completed, and a protocol should be developed that appropriately restricts access to changing codes.⁴

³ USC Aiken has validated the data collected during the site visit and has established policies and procedures to assure that similar errors do not occur in future reporting.

⁴ USC Aiken has modified its application forms to include the suggested elements and will add the data to its student database once collected.

Appendix

List of Data Verification Team Members

Ms. Camille Brown, Coordinator -- MIS
Dr. R. Lynn Kelley, Coordinator – Academic Programs
Mr. Richard Mattox, Retired Administrator, Clemson University
Dr. Aileen Trainer, Coordinator, Planning, Assessment & Performance Funding
Mr. Alan Krech – Sr. Exec. Asst. for Policy and Administration (Chair)

List of Individuals Interviewed or Assisting the Team

Dr. Patti Cook, Assoc. Prof. and ADN Prog. Coord. – School of Nursing, USC Aiken
Ms. Kay Coleman, Research Administrator, USC Columbia
Mr. Randy Duckett, Director of Admissions, USC Aiken
Dr. Tom Hallman, Vice Chancellor for Administration, USC Aiken
Ms. Barbara Henkes, Assistant Director of Admissions, USC Aiken
Ms. Jodi Herrin, Statistical Analyst, USC Aiken
Ms. Brenda Josey, Residency Officer, USC Columbia
Dr. Ginger Noel, Assoc. Chancellor for Business and Finance/Controller, USC Aiken
Dr. Blanche Premo-Hopkins, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, USC Aiken
Dr. Maggie Riedell, Professor and Head, School of Education, USC Aiken
Mr. Glenn Shumpert, Director of Financial Aid, USC Aiken
Ms. Gail Stephens, Registrar, USC Columbia
Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong, Director of Institutional Research and Assessment

**Summary Report of the Data Verification
Team Visit
to
The University of South Carolina Columbia
March 16-18, 1999**

Introduction

On March 16-18, 1999, a team of staff members visited the University of South Carolina at Columbia for the purpose of verifying data that are submitted in reports in support of the performance funding process, the CHEMIS (Commission on Higher Education Management Information System), and state administered financial aid programs. While formal visits were completed on March 18th, in depth follow-up meetings concerning certain data continued well into June. The areas in which data were reviewed follow:

Average Class Size (Performance Funding Indicator 3A1)
Financial Support for Reform in Teacher Education (Performance Funding Indicator 9A)
Student Residency
Ratio of Full-time Faculty as Compared to other Full-time Employees (Performance Funding Indicator 3C)
Scores of Graduates on Licensing and Certification Examinations (Performance Funding Indicator 7D)
Transferability of Credits (Performance Funding Indicator 8A)
Availability of Faculty to Students Outside of the Classroom (Performance Funding Indicator 2E)

The team members appreciate the hospitality and support provided by the University of South Carolina during the visit. Special thanks are owed to Ms. Kay Coleman, who served as the University's coordinator and liaison with the team during the visit, and to the many administrators, staff and faculty who provided support and responded to questions posed by team members.

The main body of this report summarizes the purpose for verifying each element, the method used to do the verification, observations and/or findings as a result of the verification, and any recommendations for the institution or the Commission. As is true with any case where complex processes and data are being verified, there were a number of instances where initial problems or discrepancies were resolved through more detailed examination and/or explanation. Detailed data (where it does not violate privacy), background and supporting materials, and individual team members' complete reports are available in the Commission offices. In addition, individual team members' complete reports were furnished to the institution if the more detailed data therein was deemed to be helpful.

The final section of the report consecutively lists all findings and recommendations in the report, and the Appendix lists those individuals who were interviewed or who assisted the team as the data were examined.

Performance Funding Data Elements

Average Class Size (Performance Funding Indicator 3A1)

I. Purpose: To verify that course enrollments are accurately reported to the Commission by the institution and that course CIP codes were correctly assigned.

II. Method: A random sample (20 each) of lower division, upper division, and graduate courses was selected by the Commission from the Fall, 1998 CHEMIS course data. Detailed data on the sixty courses was checked to confirm the accuracy of the course number, section, level of course, contact hours, method of instruction, enrollment type, course credit hours, course enrollment, instructor identifier, days of week of course, start time, end time, site identifier, building identifier, and room identifier. Computer screens were used to check these data. If differences existed between the data on the computer screens and the CHEMIS data, class rolls and individuals' records were examined to determine that the differences were appropriate.

III. Observations: All reported course data matched with the data on the computer screens or was reconciled with class rolls and individual's records. Courses are coded with appropriate CIP codes.

IV. Recommendations: None

Financial Support for Reform in Teacher Education (Performance Funding Indicator 9A)

I. Purpose: To determine if the institution's reported listing of grants and expenditures for teacher education as stipulated in the measure agrees with copies of funded grant proposals and actual expenditure records.

II. Method: Following the protocol established for verification of this data element, staff reviewed total listed expenditures for grants to support reform in teacher education for FY1992-93, FY1993-94, FY1994-95, and FY1995-96 to determine if (1) the amounts were reported correctly, and (2) the titles of the grants appeared to be related to "teacher education reform." Staff then selected 13 individual grants to review from various years. Of these, four of the earliest ones had been purged and details were not available for review. Nine were reviewed more thoroughly to determine if all were appropriate to be

included as teacher education/reform grants based on staff's understanding of the current definition. Staff then compared the detailed budget/expenditures of four of the grants.

III. Observations and Findings: It appears that grants that were reported were appropriate to be included as teacher education grants. However, **in all of those cases where detailed budgets and expenditures for teacher education grants were compared, the budgeted amount was higher than the reported expenditures due to the failure to include fringe benefits.** At USC Columbia, the fringe benefits attached to a grant have not been posted until the grant is closed and are not included in the expenditure report. Therefore, the University is actually under-counting the amount of grant expenditures.

IV. Recommendations: **In the future, USC Columbia should include annual fringe benefits with other expenditures when reporting each year's grant expenditures.**

Student Residency

I. Purpose: To verify that student residency classifications, which are used by the Commission and the institutions for performance funding, calculation of the MRR, and determination of qualification for student scholarship programs, are accurately reported to the Commission by the institutions.

II. Method: Although a random sample of 330 undergraduate and 200 graduate students enrolled at USC Columbia during Fall 1998 was initially selected from the Commission on Higher Education Management Information System (CHEMIS), it was discovered that the record keeping system at the University of South Carolina was significantly more complex than at institutions previously visited. Therefore, in order to do a thorough examination and comparison of computerized and backup paper and microfiche records, the records of 169 undergraduate and 84 graduate students were randomly selected and analyzed from the original sample. Data verified included permanent address, address of next of kin, high school graduation date, location of high school, and a series of residency questions on the application. CHEMIS residency data represents residency for fee purposes, but beginning with Fall 1998, provides a break down for eight exceptions granted to students not meeting the State's residency requirements which enable them to receive in-state tuition and fees. Since this was the first institution for which Fall 1998 data were used, team members took on the additional task of determining that exceptions were correctly coded for revised CHEMIS requirements.

III. Findings and Observations: Of the 169 undergraduate students sampled, 81 percent (138 students) are charged in-state rates because they meet the qualifications for South Carolina residency, 14 percent (23 students) are charged at the out-of-state rate, and five percent (eight students) are charged in-state tuition because of one of three qualifying exemptions. Of the 84 graduate students, 83 percent (70 students) are charged in-state

rates because they meet the qualifications for South Carolina residency, 12 percent (10 students) are charged out-of-state tuition, and five percent (four students) are charged in-state tuition because of one of three possible qualifying exemptions.

Commission staff may want to explore with USC Columbia the use of a single tuition and fee schedule for the International Masters in Business Administration program. The assignment of a common tuition and fee amount (\$25,000 for both residents and non-residents in Fall 1999) may be a violation of State law, which requires that a differential be charged for non-residents.

The following data problems are classified as findings:¹

- 1. A programming error resulted in 24 graduate students being reported to CHEMIS as residents when they should have paid resident fees as a result of an "F" coded exemption.**
- 2. Insufficient evidence was available to validate the residency of three students, two of whom had breaks in enrollment and one of whom was listed with a military exemption based on a residency file housed at USC Beaufort, where the student began studies.**
- 3. Coding errors of various types were found for three students.**

IV. Recommendations:

- 1. Non-resident students receiving graduate assistantships should be coded as non-resident students paying in-State tuition with an "F" exemption. Although the error that was found has no direct impact on either performance funding or the MRR, because of its relative size (29 percent of the sample), this programming change should be applied to the Fall 1998 data submission and corrected data should be submitted.**
- 2. In the future, the USC Columbia residency office should review the residency status of South Carolina resident students with any break in enrollment, excluding summer enrollment, to ensure that they have not initiated a change in their residency status during periods of non-enrollment. In addition, the USC System should establish a procedure to transfer residency files with students as they move from one USC campus to another.**
- 3. The three coding errors should be corrected for Fall 1998.**

¹ The full report of the verification team member is being provided to the institution so that they will know each circumstance and be able to make corrections on individual cases. The report is also available for examination in the Commission offices.

Ratio of Full-time Faculty as Compared to Other Full-time Employees (Performance Indicator 3C)

I. Purpose: To verify that information reported on the institution's IPEDS Fall Staff Survey accurately reflects employee information.

II. Method: A printout of Fall 1998 faculty and staff and the categories assigned to each member of the faculty or staff was reviewed. The reviewers compared the definition for each category on the IPEDS Fall Staff Survey with the criteria used by the institution to place the faculty/staff into the various categories. At the request of the reviewers, the Research Administrator described several employees' job duties and explained why each was included in a particular category.

III. Observations: The reviewers determined that the institution is correctly interpreting the instructions/definitions and placing the faculty and staff into appropriate categories.

IV. Recommendations: None

Scores of Graduates on Licensing and Certification Examinations (Performance Funding Indicator 7D)

I. Purpose: To verify that pass rates on licensure and certification examinations have been accurately calculated and reported.

II. Method: Pass Rates reported to the Commission on the NTE Professional Knowledge and Specialty Areas examinations (teachers), the NCLEX (nursing), the NABPLEX (pharmacy), the South Carolina Bar Examination (law), and the US Medical Licensing Examination, Steps 1 and 2 (medicine) were compared with source documents or otherwise reviewed for the years 1995 through 1998 to determine if they were accurately recorded and reported to the Commission.

III. Observations and Findings: The University has relied on individual colleges or other external sources (e.g., the American Bar Association) to report pass rates – in many cases verbally over the telephone – to the USC Office of Planning and Research. Accurate pass rates were submitted for the NCLEX and NTE examinations, although non USC students were not sorted out of the NTE results prior to 1997. **The reviewers found that the results of all test takers rather than first time test takers were reported for**

several years for the NABPLEX and Medical Licensing examinations. In addition the last two years' pass rates on the bar examination excluded the results of the July administrations and included students for the February administration who did not attend the USC Law School, making those pass rates highly inaccurate.

IV. Recommendations: Corrected data for the NABPLEX, Medical Licensing, and Bar Examinations should be submitted to the Commission, and the University should revise its method of collecting licensing examination results to ensure they are properly analyzed and submitted.²

Transferability of Credits (Performance Funding Indicator 8A)

I. Purpose: To verify that the information submitted by the institution that indicates the extent to which the criteria stipulated in the Commission's "Policy and Procedures for Transferability of Credits" document is accurate.

II. Method: Verification of the data for this indicator involved three activities: 1) a comparison of courses in the College's published guide for potential transfer students to courses on the Commission approved Statewide Articulation Agreement (list of 74 technical college courses); 2) a review of a Commission generated random sample of 100 transfer student's transcripts to verify that the College appropriately accepted coursework on the Statewide Articulation Agreement and the Statewide transfer blocks; and 3) discussions with the associate registrar and other University staff about compliance with specific areas of the indicator.

III. Observations and Findings: The University of South Carolina's transfer guide lists every course included in the Statewide Articulation Agreement. The University of South Carolina at Columbia accepted all of the technical college courses on the Statewide Articulation Agreement submitted for transfer by the 100 students in the sample cohort. Conversations with representatives from the University indicated that students transferring from the technical colleges are urged to take placement examinations in foreign languages and mathematics in some colleges of the University. In these situations, the University awards credit for coursework found on the Statewide Transfer Agreement, although additional coursework may be required for meeting college specific proficiency requirements.

² USC Columbia officials have submitted corrected data in response to this finding and have provided assurances that they will take appropriate measures to assure that accurate pass rates are submitted in the future.

The University of South Carolina is able to send, receive, and confirm receipt of transcripts and other documents via SPEEDE/EXPRESS, including those from Midlands Technical College, its largest transfer partner. It is hoped that all transcripts received via SPEEDE will flow directly into the University's degree audit module within the next three years.

IV. Recommendations: None

Availability of Faculty to Students Outside of the Classroom (Performance Funding Indicator 2E)

I. Purpose: To determine whether the institution used recommended administration procedures to survey students on the availability of faculty outside of the classroom and on the availability of faculty advisors.

II. Method: The persons responsible for coordinating the administration of the surveys were interviewed and memoranda, answer sheets, and results and their analyses were examined.

III. Observations: The University of South Carolina used a standard written faculty evaluation to determine the availability of faculty outside of the classroom.

A telephone survey was used to sample 300 students on the availability of faculty advisors.

IV. Recommendations: None

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Finding #1: (Teacher Education Grants) In all of those cases where detailed budgets and expenditures for teacher education grants were compared, the budgeted amount was higher than the reported expenditures due to the failure to include fringe benefits.

Recommendation #1: In the future, USC Columbia should include annual fringe benefits with other expenditures when reporting each year's grant expenditures.

Findings #2: (Residency)

- a. A programming error resulted in 24 students being reported to CHEMIS as residents when they should have paid resident fees as a result of an "F" coded exemption.
- b. Insufficient evidence was available to validate the residency of three students, two of whom had breaks in enrollment and one of whom was listed with a military exemption based on a residency file housed at USC Beaufort, where the student began his studies.
- c. Coding errors of various types were found for three students.

Recommendations #2:

- a. Non-resident students receiving graduate assistantships should be coded as non-resident students paying in-State tuition with an "F" exemption. Although the error that was found has no direct impact on either performance funding or the MRR, because of its relative size (29 percent of the sample), this programming change should be applied to the Fall 1998 data submission and corrected data should be submitted.
- b. In the future, the USC Columbia residency office should review the residency status of South Carolina resident students with any break in enrollment, excluding summer enrollment, to ensure that they have not initiated a change in their residency status during periods of non-enrollment. In addition, the USC System should establish a procedure to transfer residency files with students as they move from one USC campus to another.

c. The three coding errors should be corrected for Fall 1998.

Finding #3: (Licensing Examinations) The reviewers found that the results of all test takers rather than first time test takers were reported for several years for the NABPLEX and Medical Licensing examinations. In addition the last two years' pass rates on the bar examination excluded the results of the July administrations and included students for the February administration who did not attend the USC Law School, making those pass rates highly inaccurate.

Recommendation #3: Corrected data for the NABPLEX, Medical Licensing, and Bar Examinations should be submitted to the Commission, and the University should revise its method of collecting licensing examination results to ensure they are properly analyzed and submitted.³

³ USC Columbia officials have submitted corrected data in response to this finding and have provided assurances that they will take appropriate measures to assure that accurate pass rates are submitted in the future.

Appendix

List of Data Verification Team Members

Mr. David Loope, Coordinator – Research
Mr. Richard Mattox, Retired Administrator, Clemson University
Ms. Lynn Metcalf, Coordinator – Facilities, Finance, and IPEDS
Dr. Aileen Trainer, Coordinator, Performance Funding
Mr. Alan Krech – Sr. Exec. Asst. for Policy and Administration (Chairman)

List of Individuals Interviewed or Assisting the Team

Ms. Alice S. Adkins, Assistant Dean, College of Nursing
Ms. Mary Ann Byrnes, Assistant Dean, College of Liberal Arts
Ms. Kay Coleman, Research Administrator
Mr. Thomas Coggins, Assoc. Director, Office of Sponsored Programs and Research
Ms. Falicia Harvey, Coordinator of Certification, College of Education
Ms. Brenda Josey, Director, Office of Legal Residency
Mr. Scott Kaplan, Director of Testing
Mr. Russell Long, Coordinator of Accountability Reporting
Dr. Harry Matthews, Asst. Provost for Institutional Planning and Assessment
Ms. Emmie May, Director of Student Services, College of Education
Dr. Phil Moore, Director of Assessment
Dr. C. Eugene Reeder, Assistant Dean, College of Pharmacy
Ms. Laura Shealy, Finance
Ms. Gail Stephens, Associate Registrar
Dr. Marcia Welsh, Assoc. Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

Summary Report of the Data Verification
Team Visit
to
The University of South Carolina Spartanburg
May, 1999

Introduction

During May of 1999, a team of staff members visited the University of South Carolina Spartanburg and the University of South Carolina Columbia for the purpose of verifying USC Spartanburg data that are submitted in reports in support of the performance funding process, the CHEMIS (Commission on Higher Education Management Information System), and state administered financial aid programs. While the visit was scheduled for May 11th through May 13th, scheduling problems and the need to work at and move between both campuses meant that some team members began visits earlier at USC Columbia. Following the visits, additional time was also required to examine and review certain data in greater depth. The areas in which data were reviewed follow:

Average Class Size (Performance Funding Indicator 3A1)
Financial Support for Reform in Teacher Education (Performance Funding Indicator 9A)
Student Residency
Scores of Graduates on Licensing and Certification Examinations (Performance Funding Indicator 7D)
Transferability of Credits (Performance Funding Indicator 8A)
Availability of Faculty to Students Outside of the Classroom (Performance Funding Indicator 2E)

The team members appreciate the hospitality and support provided by the University of South Carolina during the visit. Special thanks are owed to Mr. Stan Davis at USC Spartanburg and Ms. Kay Coleman at USC Columbia, who served as coordinators and liaisons with the team during the visit, and to the many administrators, staff and faculty who provided support and responded to questions posed by team members.

The main body of this report summarizes the purpose for verifying each element, the method used to do the verification, observations and/or findings as a result of the verification, and any recommendations for the institution or the Commission. As is true with any case where complex processes and data are being verified, there were a number of instances where initial problems or discrepancies were resolved through more detailed examination and/or explanation.¹ Detailed data (where it does not violate privacy), background and supporting materials, and individual team members' complete reports are available in the Commission offices. In addition, individual team members' complete reports were furnished to the institution if the more detailed data therein were deemed to be helpful.

The final section of the report consecutively lists all findings and recommendations in the report, and the Appendix lists those individuals who were interviewed or who assisted the team as the data were examined.

¹ Staff at USC Spartanburg have reviewed the report and indicate that they are in process of addressing the recommendations.

Performance Funding Data Elements

Average Class Size (Performance Funding Indicator 3A1)

- I. Purpose: To verify that course enrollments are accurately reported to the Commission by the institution.

- II. Method: A random sample of (10) lower division, (10) upper division and (5) graduate courses was selected by the Commission from the Fall 1998 CHEMIS course data. Detailed data on the 25 courses was checked to confirm the accuracy of the course number, section, level of course, enrollment type, course credit hours, and course enrollment. Computer screens were used to check these data. If differences were found between the data on the computer screens and the CHEMIS data, class rolls and individual records were examined to determine that the differences were appropriate.

- III. Observations: All reported course data matched with the data on the computer screens or were reconciled with class rolls except for one course. The mathematics course SMTH W127 001 had one student enrolled who was auditing the course and was included in CHEMIS. A representative of USC Columbia stated that this student paid tuition and was therefore included in the headcount for that course. Also, since the USC computer system is updated daily and the audit visit was several months after freezing the data for CHEMIS, there were several cases where the lower division and upper division enrollment numbers were not in agreement with CHEMIS data. These issues were resolved when it was explained that the cause of the students' status change was receipt of additional transfer credits after freezing the data.

- IV. Recommendations: None

Financial Support for Reform in Teacher Education (Performance Funding Indicator 9A)

- I. Purpose: To determine if the institution's reported listing of grants and expenditures for teacher education as stipulated in the measure agrees with copies of funded grant proposals and actual expenditure records.

II. Method: All the expenditures for grants to support reform in teacher education for FY 1994-95, FY 1995-96, FY 1996-97, and FY 1997-98 were verified. This was done by comparing the expenditure totals listed on the spreadsheet provided to the Commission by USC Spartanburg with the matching account on a computer printout (for the fiscal years that were no longer maintained on the system) or a computer screen. All of the teacher education grants were examined to identify any numerical reporting discrepancies and whether a grant qualifies under the "teacher reform" label.

III. Observations and Findings: Discrepancies existed between the data submitted for performance funding and the detailed expenditures on the spreadsheets for all 73 projects during the four fiscal years that were reviewed. Specifically, it was discovered that budgeted amounts rather than actual expenses were reported. When recalculating the data for the data verification team member, institutional representatives identified an additional 42 projects over the four-year period that were eligible for submission. This still resulted in negative adjustments of \$119,816 for FY 1994-95, \$125,073 for FY 1995-96, \$83,974 for FY 1996-97, and \$60,876 for FY 1997-98 (a total of \$389,789 over four years).

IV. Recommendations: USC Spartanburg should submit a corrected report on Financial Support for Reform in Teacher Education for FY 1994-95 through FY 1997-98 to the Division of Planning, Assessment, and Performance Funding. In addition, the institution should develop clear guidelines for completing the reports dealing with Financial Support for Reform in Teacher Education.

Student Residency

I. Purpose: To verify that student residency classifications, which are used by the Commission and the institutions for determination of tuition and fees, performance funding, calculation of the MRR, and determination of qualification for student scholarship programs, are accurately reported to the Commission by the institutions.

II. Method: A random sample of 150 undergraduate students and all 8 degree-seeking graduate students enrolled at USC Spartanburg during Fall 1998 were selected from the Commission on Higher Education Management Information System (CHEMIS). Data verified included permanent address, address of next of kin, high school graduation date, location of high school, and a series of residency questions on the application. CHEMIS residency data represents residency for fee purposes. Beginning with Fall 1998, it also provides a breakdown for eight exceptions granted to students not meeting the State's residency requirements which enable them to receive in-state tuition and fees. Therefore,

team members also verified that exceptions were correctly coded for revised CHEMIS requirements.

Data verification included reviewing records housed on two campuses, USC Spartanburg and USC Columbia. Student admissions files and residency application files are maintained in paper form in the Admissions office on the Spartanburg campus or on microfiche for applications and residency files received in earlier semesters at the USC Columbia campus. At the time it is received at the Columbia campus, the information in these files is added to the USC system student database from which the Commission eventually receives its information. Thus, the data verification process involved assessing the paper and fiche files for each of the 158 students and comparing this information to the computer files maintained at USC Columbia.

III. Findings and Observations: Of the 150 undergraduate students sampled, 93 percent (139 students) are charged in-state rates because they meet the qualifications for South Carolina residency, three percent (five students) are charged out-of-state tuition, and four percent (six students) are charged in-state tuition because of one of three qualifying exceptions. Of the eight graduate students, 100 percent are identified as in-state students for tuition and fee purposes.

The following issues were identified during the data verification process:²

USC Spartanburg maintains policies on certain tuition waivers that differ from those followed by USC Columbia, resulting in several errors.

It is suggested that in order to improve residency assessments for transfer students within the USC system, the system may wish to explore a process that would result in the transfer of originals or copies of all application/residency files from the originating campus to the host campus.

1. Two students were not appropriately coded as exemptions, although neither of these errors resulted in incorrect tuition being assessed and one graduate student who was coded on the CHEMIS file as an in-state student was, in fact, an out-of-state student not taking any courses during the fall 1998 semester.
2. Insufficient information was available to validate the residency code for one student who was coded on the CHEMIS file as an in-state student. No information was available as to what the student had done during a break in enrollment.

It was noted that USC Spartanburg does not collect sufficient information regarding the residency status of students applying for admission. Documentation on the application form is not always available on the residency status of students during breaks in their

² The detailed report of the verification team member is being provided to the institution so that they will be familiar with each circumstance and be able to make appropriate corrections on individual cases. The report is also available for examination in the Commission offices.

enrollment. In addition, more specific information is needed concerning graduate student residency beyond the student's permanent address and the question whether or not a student is a resident of South Carolina. More specific information needs to be available regarding residency during breaks in enrollment.

USC Spartanburg does not distinguish between in-state and out-of-state students for tuition and fee purposes when it establishes contracts with school districts. In the future, it is suggested that contracts with school districts or other entities include a tuition differential for students not eligible to receive in-state rates.

IV. Recommendations:

1. USC Spartanburg should submit corrected codes for the errors listed in the first finding, and should ensure that a process is in place to prevent such errors in the future.
2. USC Spartanburg should revise its application forms, particularly the graduate form, to include more information on residency. In addition, students with breaks in enrollment (beyond a summer session) should automatically complete the full residency form to assure that these students have not lost the in-state status.

Scores of Graduates on Licensing and Certification Examinations (Performance Funding Indicator 7D)

I. Purpose: To verify that pass rates on licensure and certification examinations have been accurately calculated and reported.

II. Method: Pass Rates reported to the Commission on the NCLEX (nursing) examinations and the NTE Professional Knowledge and Specialty Areas examinations (teachers) were compared with source documents or otherwise reviewed for the years 1995 through 1998 to determine if they were accurately recorded and reported to the Commission.

III. Observations and Findings: USC Spartanburg has both associate degree and baccalaureate degree nursing programs, graduates of which take the same licensing examination to become registered nurses. However, the results for the two groups of graduates are reported separately to the institution and, probably due to student coding errors, sometimes include students from the wrong program. When the individual program chairs have attempted to correct data for graduates of their programs with the testing service, the new (corrected) reports often correct the data for one program without correcting it for the other. The staff found that the institution is not:

- Submitting updated scores to CHE as the testing service reports corrected test results;

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- Consistently reporting scores for the ADN and BSN programs; figures the institution submitted to CHE for the December 1996 and May 1997 graduating classes did not include ADN graduates;
- Consistently monitoring the test reports and comparing the number of students tested to the number of students in each graduating class; and
- Consistently requesting that the testing service make corrections, and reviewing corrected reports for errors.

Therefore, the data verification team was unable to validate the NCLEX pass rate numbers the institution reported to the Commission for the April 1995 test date (29 tested, 27 passed) or for the December 1996 test date (38 tested, 32 passed).

Of the significant number of NTE Professional Knowledge and Specialty Area Exam results that were sampled, all matched with what was reported to the Commission.

IV. Recommendations: USC Spartanburg should review its data for the above two nursing test dates and submit corrected information to the performance funding staff at the Commission. It is further recommended that the School of Nursing implement a process whereby the test reports for both programs are systematically reviewed, tabulated, compared, corrected, and monitored in a coordinated manner.

Transferability of Credits (Performance Funding Indicator 8A)

I. Purpose: To verify that the information submitted by the institution that indicates the extent to which the criteria stipulated in the Commission's "Policy and Procedures for Transferability of Credits" document is accurate.

II. Method: Verification of the data for this indicator involved three activities: 1) a comparison of courses in the College's published guide for potential transfer students to courses on the Commission approved Statewide Articulation Agreement (list of 74 technical college courses); 2) a review of a Commission generated random sample of 50 transfer student's transcripts to verify that the College appropriately accepted coursework on the Statewide Articulation Agreement and the Statewide transfer blocks; and 3) discussions with the Director of Admissions and other University staff about compliance with specific areas of the indicator.

III. Observations and Findings: The USC Spartanburg catalog includes its transfer credit policies and the State Policies and Procedures for transfer in public two-year and four-

year institutions in South Carolina. The catalog contains the disclosures required by the legislation, including transfer officers and suggested courses for transfer. There is no evidence of fees or encumbrances to transfer. It was verified from printouts of the transcripts of each of the 50 students in the transfer sample that USC Spartanburg accepted all coursework required by the Statewide Transfer Agreement. As a constituent campus of the University of South Carolina, USC Spartanburg has begun to use the SPEEDE/ExPRESS standard for sending receiving, and confirming the receipt of student transcripts by electronic means.

IV. Recommendations: None

Availability of Faculty to Students Outside of the Classroom (Performance Funding Indicator 2E)

I. Purpose: To determine whether the institution used recommended administration procedures to survey students on the availability of faculty outside of the classroom and on the availability of faculty advisors.

II. Method: The persons responsible for coordinating the administration of the surveys was interviewed and memoranda, answer sheets, and results and their analysis were examined.

III. Observations: USC Spartanburg used a standard written faculty evaluation, modified slightly for certain academic majors, to determine the availability of faculty outside of the classroom.

Written surveys on academic advisement were administered during the day and night class hours with the highest volume of students in class. These "cluster" samples produced a sufficient number of responses that were carefully analyzed, not only for the availability of the advisor, but for student satisfaction with various elements of the advising experience. The information that was obtained was disseminated and used to improve the advising process.

IV. Recommendations: None

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Financial Support for Reform in Teacher Education

Finding: Discrepancies existed between the data submitted for performance funding and the detailed expenditures on the spreadsheets for all 73 projects during the four fiscal years that were reviewed. Specifically, it was discovered that budgeted amounts rather than actual expenses were reported.

Recommendation: USC Spartanburg should submit a corrected report on Financial Support for Reform in Teacher Education for FY 1994-95 through FY 1997-98 to the Division of Planning, Assessment, and Performance Funding. In addition, the institution should develop clear guidelines for completing the reports dealing with Financial Support for Reform in Teacher Education.

Residency

Findings:

1. Two students were not appropriately coded as exemptions, although none of these errors resulted in incorrect tuition being assessed and one graduate student who was coded on the CHEMIS file as an in-state student was, in fact, an out-of-state student not taking any courses during the fall 1998 semester.
2. Insufficient information was available to validate the residency code for one student who was coded on the CHEMIS file as an in-state student.

Recommendations:

1. USC Spartanburg should submit corrected codes for the errors listed in the first two findings, and should ensure that a process is in place to prevent such errors in the future.
2. USC Spartanburg should revise its application forms, particularly the graduate form, to include more information on residency. In addition, students with breaks in enrollment (beyond a single summer session) should automatically complete the full residency form to assure that these students have not lost the in-state status.

Scores of Graduates on Licensing and Certification Examinations

Finding: The data verification team was unable to determine the origin of the NCLEX pass rate numbers the institution reported to the Commission for the April 1995 test date (29 tested, 27 passed) or for the December 1996 test date (38 tested, 32 passed).

11/4/99

Recommendation: USC Spartanburg should review its data for the above two nursing test dates and submit corrected information to the performance funding staff at the Commission. It is further recommended that the School of Nursing implement a process whereby the test reports for both programs are systematically reviewed, tabulated, compared, corrected, and monitored in a coordinated manner.

Appendix

List of Data Verification Team Members

Mr. Michael Brown, Coordinator – Financial Analysis
Ms. Renea Eshleman, Coordinator – Licensing
Mr. Richard Mattox, Retired Administrator, Clemson University
Dr. Aileen Trainer, Coordinator, Performance Funding
Mr. Alan Krech – Sr. Exec. Asst. for Policy and Administration (Chairman)

List of Individuals Interviewed or Assisting the Team

Dr. Jim Charles, Professor – School of Education, USC Spartanburg
Ms. Kay Coleman, Research Administrator – USC Columbia
Dr. Jimmie E. Cook, Dean – School of Education, USC Spartanburg
Mr. Stan Davis, Director of Continuous Improvement – USC Spartanburg
Dr. Jimmy Ferrell, Div. Chair, B.S.N. Program, School of Nursing – USC Spartanburg
Ms. Donna Hawkins, Director of Financial Aid – USC Spartanburg
Ms. Brenda Josey, Residency Officer, USC Columbia
Ms. Elaine Marshall, Asst. to the Vice Chancellor for Grants Admin. – USC Spartanburg
Ms. Michelle Morrell, Asst. Dir. of Admissions – USC Spartanburg
Ms. Kary Murphy, Registrar and Coord. for Advisement & Retention – USC Spartanburg
Ms. Carol Rentz, Div. Chair, A.D.N. Program, School of Nursing – USC Spartanburg
Ms. Donette Stewart, Director of Admissions – USC Spartanburg
Mr. Jonathan Trail, Coordinator of Inst. Research – USC Spartanburg
Ms. Gail Stephens, Registrar, USC Columbia

**Summary Report of the Data Verification
Team Visit
to
the University of South Carolina Regional Campuses
August 1999**

Introduction

During August and September of 1999, a team of staff members reviewed data submitted by the University of South Carolina Regional campuses for the Commission on Higher Education to verify data submitted for performance funding and the Commission on Higher Education's Management Information System (CHEMIS).

The areas in which data were reviewed were:

- Average Class Size (Indicator 3A1)
- Student Residency (Indicators 6D and 8C)
- Scores of Graduates on Licensing and Certification Examinations (Indicator 7D)
- Transferability of Credits (Indicator 8A)

The team members appreciate the hospitality and support provided by the University of South Carolina system during the visit. Special thanks are owed to Ms. Kay Coleman who served as the coordinator for the team during the visit, and to the many administrators, staff and faculty who provided support and responded to questions posed by team members.

The main body of this report summarizes the purposes for verifying each element, the method used to do the verification, observations and/or findings as a result of the verification, and any recommendations for the institution. Detailed data (where it does not violate privacy), background and supporting materials, and individual team members' complete reports are available in the Commission offices. The final section of the report lists all findings and recommendation in the report, and the Appendix lists those individuals who were interviewed or who assisted the team as the data were examined.

Performance Funding Data Elements

I. Average Class Size (Performance Funding Indicator 3A1)

Purpose: To verify that course enrollments are accurately reported to the Commission.

Method: A random sample of 50 lower level courses (ten courses for each of the five two-year institutions) was selected for review. Detailed data was checked to verify the accuracy of the enrollment type, course credit hours, and course enrollment. The accuracy of the course level was also verified by review of the corresponding course number.

Observations and Findings: The data reported are accurate and no findings are noted.

Recommendations: None

II. Student Residency (Performance Funding Indicators 6D and 8C, If Applicable)

Purpose: To verify that the student residency classifications, which are used by the Commission and the institutions for determination of tuition and fees, performance funding, calculation of the MRR, and determination of qualification for student scholarship programs, are accurately reported to the Commission.

Method: A random sample of 107 students enrolled at USC Beaufort, 96 students enrolled at USC Lancaster, 36 students enrolled at USC Salkehatchie, 123 students enrolled at USC Sumter, and 36 students enrolled at USC Union, was selected from the Commission on Higher Education's Management Information System (CHEMIS).

Data verification included reviewing records housed at USC Columbia. The residency officers on the individual campuses make decisions regarding residency. Student files are forwarded to Columbia for permanent storage on microfiche once admissions and residency decisions are made.

The data verification process involved assessing the paper and fiche files for each of the students and comparing this information to the computer files maintained through the Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment. According to the primary residency officer at USC, the campuses should be making their residency decisions on the following elements: permanent address, address of next of kin, high school graduation date, location of high school, and a series of residency questions on the application.

Observations and Findings:

The CHEMIS file produces the following results for the USC regional campuses:

A. USC Beaufort: Of the 107 students in the sample, 76 percent (81 students) are charged in-state rates, 10 percent (23 students) are charged at the out-of-state rate, and 14 percent (15 students) are charged in-state tuition because of they are military personnel or their dependents.

The data verification process revealed the following:

1) Insufficient information is available to document the residency status of 49 students due to the following: a) no information is available on the residency status of students during breaks in enrollment other than summer session, b) residency files for students moving from one USC campus to another do not follow the student, c) the documentation for residency decisions is not consistently retained or followed up on when additional information appears warranted, and d) the application form for students who are concurrently enrolled in area technical colleges is insufficient to determine the applicants' residency status.

2) Four coding errors were found. Three of these errors resulted from failure to report students paying in-state fees due to exceptions in the correct exception code. They were all reported on CHEMIS as residents ("1"). In addition, one student that was reported on CHEMIS as a resident ("1") should have been reported as a non-resident ("2").

B. USC Lancaster: Of the 96 students in the sample, 100 percent are charged in-state rates.

The data verification process revealed the following:

1) Insufficient information is available to document the residency status of 30 students due to the following: a) no information is available on the residency status of students during breaks in enrollment other than summer session, and b) the application form for students who are concurrently enrolled in area high schools is insufficient to determine the applicants' residency status.

2) The contracts with area school districts that enable high school students to concurrently enroll at USC Lancaster do not include a tuition differential for students ineligible to receive in-state tuition.

C. USC Salkehatchie: Of the 36 students in the sample, 100 percent are charged in-state rates.

The data verification process revealed the following:

1) Insufficient information is available to validate the residency status on eight (8) students, as no information was available on the residency status of students during breaks in enrollment other than summer session.

D. USC Sumter: Of the 123 students in the sample, 78 percent (97 students) are charged in-state rates, one percent (1 student) was charged at the out-of-state rate, and 21 percent are charged at the in-state rate because they qualify for allowable exceptions. These exceptions include: 23 students who are charged in-state tuition because they are military personnel or their dependents, and two students who are charged in-state tuition because they have scholarships that have been approved by the USC Board of Trustees.

The data verification process revealed the following:

1) Insufficient information is available to document the residency status of 55 students due to the following: a) no information is available on the residency status of students during breaks in enrollment other than summer session, b) the documentation for residency decisions is not consistently retained or followed up on when additional information appears warranted, and c) the application form for students who are concurrently enrolled in area technical colleges and high schools is insufficient to determine the applicant's residency status.

2) The contracts with area school districts and private high schools, which enable high school students to concurrently enroll at USC Sumter, do not include a tuition differential for students ineligible to receive in-state tuition.

E. USC Union: Of the 36 students in the sample, 100 percent are charged in-state rates.

The data verification process revealed the following:

1) Insufficient information is available to validate the residency status on 20 students due to the following: a) no information is available on the residency status of students during breaks in enrollment other than summer session, b) the documentation for residency decisions is not consistently retained or followed up on when additional information appears warranted, and c) the application form for students who are concurrently enrolled in area technical colleges and high schools is insufficient to determine the applicant's residency status.

2) The contracts with area school districts and private high schools that enable high school students to concurrently enroll at USC Union do not include a tuition differential for students ineligible to receive in-state tuition.

Recommendations:

1) Findings A1, B2, C, D1, and E: The regional campuses need to develop procedures to ensure that all information necessary to make an accurate decision on residency is collected, as indicated in the findings and discussion above.¹

2) Finding A2 - the coding errors at USC-Beaufort should be corrected for fall 1998.²

3) Findings B3, D2, and E2: All future contracts with local school districts and other entities should include a tuition differential for students not eligible to receive in-state tuition.³

III. Scores of Graduates on Licensing and Certification Examinations (Performance Funding Indicator 7D)

Purpose: To verify that pass rates on licensure and certification examinations were accurately calculated and reported.

Method: Pass rates for USC Lancaster students enrolled in the joint nursing program with York Technical College are reported to the Commission by York Technical College for performance funding purposes. This data is not disaggregated by campus. Because of the agreement with CHE to allow reporting of these data by York, no verification of USC Lancaster was required.

Observations and Findings: None.

Recommendations: None.

IV. Transferability of Credits (Performance Funding Indicator 8A)

Purpose: To verify that the information submitted by the institution that indicates the extent to which the criteria stipulated in the Commission's "Policy and Procedures for Transferability of Credit" document is accurate.

Method: Verification of the data for this indicator involved two activities: 1) a review of all of the students' transcripts who have transferred from the state's technical colleges to verify that the College appropriately accepted coursework on the Statewide

¹ Personnel in the system office and on the specific campuses have initiated the process of implementing this recommendation. In-house discussions on "Best Practice" have already taken place, and a system-wide meeting to address system-wide modifications is scheduled for the middle of November.

² USC Beaufort is in the process of correcting the coding errors identified during the visit.

³ System personnel are reviewing the use of contract courses system-wide. As this analysis occurs, system personnel will be discussing the use of a pricing differential with Commission staff in more detail.

Articulation Agreement and the Statewide transfer blocks; and 2) discussions with the staff in the USC Registrar's Office about compliance with specific areas of the indicator.

Observations and Findings:

Records of transcripts for all students transferring to the USC Regional Campuses from two-year technical colleges in fall 1998 were provided. All showed that the University is honoring all coursework in the Statewide List of 74 common courses. Similarly, all Fall 1998 transcripts from the two-year branches of the University of South Carolina show all coursework at those campuses is given due consideration under the statewide transfer and articulation agreement.

All five of the USC Regional Campuses are SPEEDE/EXPRESS compliant.

Recommendations: None

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

I. Residency (Performance Indicators 6D and 8C)

Findings

A. USC Beaufort:

1) Insufficient information is available to document the residency status of 49 students due to the following: a) no information is available on the residency status of students during breaks in enrollment other than summer session, b) residency files for students moving from one USC campus to another do not follow the student, c) the documentation for residency decisions is not consistently retained or followed up on when additional information appears warranted, and d) the application form for students who are concurrently enrolled in area technical colleges is insufficient to determine the applicants' residency status.

2) Four coding errors were found. Three of these errors resulted from failure to report students paying in-state fees due to exceptions in the correct exception code. They were all reported on CHEMIS as residents ("1"). In addition, one student that was reported on CHEMIS as a resident "1" should have been reported as a non-resident ("2").

B. USC Lancaster:

1) Insufficient information is available to document the residency status of 30 students due to the following: a) no information is available on the residency status of students during breaks in enrollment other than summer session, and b) the application form for students who are concurrently enrolled in area high schools is insufficient to determine the applicants' residency status.

2) The contracts with area school districts that enable high school students to concurrently enroll at USC-Lancaster do not include a tuition differential for students ineligible to receive in-state tuition.

C. USC Salkehatchie:

1) Insufficient information is available to validate the residency status on eight (8) students, as no information was available on the residency status of students during breaks in enrollment other than summer session.

D. USC Sumter

1) Insufficient information is available to document the residency status of 55 students due to the following: a) no information is available on the residency status of students during breaks in enrollment other than summer session, b) the documentation for residency

decisions is not consistently retained or followed up on when additional information appears warranted, and c) the application form for students who are concurrently enrolled in area technical colleges and high schools is insufficient to determine the applicant's residency status.

2) The contracts with area school districts and private high schools, which enable high school students to concurrently enroll at USC Sumter, do not include a tuition differential for students ineligible to receive in-state tuition.

E. USC Union

1) Insufficient information is available to validate the residency status on 20 students due to the following: a) no information is available on the residency status of students during breaks in enrollment other than summer session, b) the documentation for residency decisions is not consistently retained or followed up on when additional information appears warranted, and c) the application form for students who are concurrently enrolled in area technical colleges and high schools is insufficient to determine the applicant's residency status.

2) The contracts with area school districts and private high schools that enable high school students to concurrently enroll at USC Union do not include a tuition differential for students ineligible to receive in-state tuition.

Recommendations:

1) Findings A1, B2, C, D1, and E: The regional campuses need to develop procedures to ensure that all information necessary to make an accurate decision on residency is collected, as indicated in the findings and discussion above.

2) Finding A2 - the coding errors at USC Beaufort should be corrected for fall 1998.

3) Findings B3, D2, and E2: All future contracts with local school districts and other entities should include a tuition differential for students not eligible to receive in-state tuition.

Appendix

List of Data Verification Team Members

R. Lynn Kelley, Coordinator – Academic Affairs
Richard Mattox, Retired Administrator, Clemson University
Joe Pearman, Coordinator – Finance, Facilities, and MIS
Aileen Trainer, Coordinator - Planning, Assess. & Performance Funding

List of Individuals Interviewed or Assisting the Team

Kay Coleman, USC Columbia
Gail Stephens, USC Columbia
Mary David, USC Beaufort
Rebecca Parker, USC Lancaster
Terry Young, USC Union
Star Kepner, USC Beaufort
Liz Whately, USC Salkehatchie

**Summary Report of the Data Verification
Team Visit
to
Lander University
October, 1999**

Introduction

During October of 1999, a team of staff members visited Lander University for the purpose of verifying the Lander University data that are submitted in reports in support of the performance funding process, and CHEMIS (Commission on Higher Education Management Information System).

The areas in which data were reviewed include:

- Availability of Faculty to Students Outside of the Classroom (Indicator 2E)
- Average Class Size (Indicator 3A1)
- Ratio of Full-time Faculty as Compared to Other Full-time Employees (Indicator 3C)
- Student Residency (Indicators 6D and 8C)
- Scores of Graduates on Licensing and Certification Examinations (Indicator 7D)
- Transferability of Credits (Indicator 8A)
- Financial Support for Reform in Teacher Education (Indicator 9A)

The team members appreciate the hospitality and support provided by Lander University during the visit. Special thanks are owed to Dr. Susan Guinn who served as the coordinator with the team during the visit, and to the many administrators, staff and faculty who provided support and responded to questions posed by team members.

The main body of this report summarizes the purposes for verifying each element, the method used to do the verification, observations and/or findings as a result of the verification, and any recommendations for the institution. Detailed data (where it does not violate privacy), background and supporting materials, and individual team members' complete reports are available in the Commission offices. The final section of the report lists all findings and recommendation in the report, and the Appendix lists those individuals who were interviewed or who assisted the team as the data were examined.

Performance Funding Data Elements

I. Availability of Faculty to Students Outside of the Classroom (Performance Funding Indicator 2E)

Purpose: To determine whether the institution used recommended administrative procedures to survey students on availability of faculty outside of the classroom and on the availability of faculty advisors.

Method: The person responsible for coordinating the administration of the surveys was interviewed and memoranda, answer sheets, and results were examined.

Observations and Findings: Lander University used two collection instruments in response to this performance measure.

Faculty availability was assessed through a questionnaire that was administered to students during class time. The question was properly stated, actual response documentation was on hand, and the reliability of reported results was validated through testing a random sample of student/class responses.

1. The inclusion of evaluations of part-time faculty was difficult to test since some part-time faculty teach credit courses while others are responsible for zero-credit labs. The data provided did not distinguish between these two populations.¹

2. CHE guidelines recommend that students have a mechanism to inform confidentially administrators if instructors fail to follow procedures. Although the institution was confident that this situation, if it occurred, would be identified, no evidence was found that the students were aware of their responsibilities in this regard.²

Advisor availability was assessed through the inclusion of a question in the "Additional Questions" section of the ACT questionnaire. The wording was slightly modified from that prescribed by CHE but the modification did not effect the student's responses. The scale used in the ACT was reversed from that prescribed. The results, however, had been reported in the prescribed format. The reporting of aggregate data was tested and found to be reliable.

The recommendation in the Performance Funding Workbook that the data be reported by class level was not satisfied since the ACT report did not include this analysis. The

¹ The institution's computer system already contains this information. The institution plans to have reports prepared using this data for future data verification visits.

² Lander's Academic Council has agreed to modify the Student Handbook to include information concerning students' rights and responsibilities with regard to Faculty and Advisor Availability questions, including how students may register complaints about the administration of the survey's.

instructions for the administration of the advisor availability performance indicator recommend that the data be disaggregated by class level. Although the CHE does not analyze the data at this level, it may be of some interest to the University to confirm their support of students as they progress through the university system.³

Recommendations:

1. The current roster of teaching faculty includes an annotation of full or part-time instructor status. Including an additional indicator for zero-credit lab part-time instructors would provide the reconciling documentation necessary to determine the applicable faculty coverage required by CHE.
2. Lander University should document procedures to protect student anonymity and the confidentiality of results.

II. Average Class Size (Performance Funding Indicator 3A1)

Purpose: To verify that course enrollments are accurately reported to the Commission.

Method: A random sample of 20 lower level course, 20 upper level courses, and 10 graduate level courses was selected by the Commission from the Fall 1998 CHEMIS course data. Detailed data was checked to verify the accuracy of the enrollment type, course credit hours, and course enrollment. The accuracy of the course level was also verified by review of the corresponding course number.

Observations and Findings: The data reported are accurate and no findings are noted.

Recommendations: None

III. Ratio of Full-time Faculty as Compared to Other Full-Time Employees (Performance Funding Indicator 3C)

Purpose: To verify the classification of employees as full-time faculty.

Method: A sample of 10 employees classified as full-time faculty was selected for review. The reviewer validated their assignment as full-time faculty by assessing the employee's employment status, rank and primary responsibility through review of the faculty employment letter and the faculty contract.

Observations and Findings: All classifications appear adequate and no findings are noted.

³ Although not currently produced in report format, Lander indicates that the institution has access to the data and can provide information by class level, if needed.

Recommendations: None

IV. Student Residency (Performance Funding Indicators 6D and 8C)

Purpose: To verify that the student residency classifications, which are used by the Commission and the institutions for determination of tuition and fees, performance funding, calculation of the MRR, and determination of qualification for student scholarship programs, are accurately reported to the Commission.

Method: A random sample of 125 undergraduate students and 50 graduate students enrolled at Lander University in Fall 1998 was selected from the Commission on Higher Education's Management Information System (CHEMIS).

Decisions regarding residency are made by the residency officer in Lander University's Admissions Office. On their application forms, applicants are asked if they are South Carolina residents and whether they have resided in South Carolina for the past twelve months. Once the residency officer determines the applicant's residency status, a code of in-state or out-of-state is added to the student database. Students receiving in-state tuition rates due to the exceptions identified in statute and regulation are coded on the database as resident students. The residency office detailing which exceptions are associated with these students maintains a separate spreadsheet. The exceptions due to scholarships are not maintained on the data system.

The data verification process involved assessing each application file and comparing this information to the computer files maintained through the Registrar's Office.

Observations and Findings:

According to CHEMIS, 93 percent (116 students) of the undergraduate student sample are charged in-state rates because they meet the qualifications of South Carolina residency and seven percent (nine students) are charged out-of-state tuition. Of the 50 graduate students, 100 percent were identified as in-state students for tuition and fee purposes. No exceptions were noted on the CHEMIS file for any student.

However, the following issues were identified during the data verification process:

Lander University has a scholarship policy approved by the Board of Trustees that allows out-of-state students receiving \$50 per semester to receive a tuition waiver to the rate charged to in-state students. The Commission's policy (effective Fall 2000) is that the scholarship must be at least \$250 per semester before this waiver is allowed. Beginning next year, Lander should either adjust its scholarship policy in keeping with the Commission's policy, or students receiving less than \$250 per semester should be coded as non-residents on the data file. However, because the Commission's policy regarding the

\$250 is being phased-in, no corrections to the data submitted in previous years are necessary.

1. Insufficient information is available to document the residency status of 21 students due to the following: a) no information was available on whether the students were independent or dependent, b) if the students were legally dependent on other individuals insufficient information was available on the residency status of those individuals, c) no information was available on the residency status of students during breaks in enrollment, and d) no information was available on the residency status of students concurrently enrolled in area technical colleges.

2. Exceptions to the residency code that allow students to pay in-state tuition rates without meeting the 12-month residency period are not maintained on the institution's database. Exception codes for reasons other than scholarship funding are maintained on an excel spreadsheet that is not accessed when the CHEMIS file is created, nor is scholarship information accessed when the CHEMIS file is created. This resulted in six coding errors.

3. Contract courses with area school districts do not include a tuition differential for students not eligible to receive in-state tuition as required by law.

Recommendations:

1. Lander University should revise its application forms to include more information on applicants including: a) whether the student is financially independent, b) if the student is dependent, information on the residency status of the person they are dependent upon, and c) information on the residency status of students during periods of non-enrollment.⁴

2. Lander University should revise policies and procedures for its CHEMIS file submission to ensure that all exception codes are included. The correct exception codes for all students enrolled in Fall 1998 should be submitted to the Commission.⁵

3. All contact courses with area school districts should include a tuition differential for students not eligible to receive in-state tuition.⁶

V. Scores of Graduates on Licensing and Certification Examinations (Performance Funding Indicator 7D)

⁴Lander University has already responded to recommendation 2.

⁵ The process for linking the exception codes to student residency has been corrected. Revised data has already been received at the Commission.

⁶ The institution has modified its contracts to include the recommended differential.

Purpose: To verify that pass rates on licensure and certification examinations were accurately calculated and reported.

Method: Pass rates for tests taken in 1995-96, 1996-97, and 1997-98 as reported to the Commission on the NCLEX (nursing) examination and the NTE/PRAXIS Professional Knowledge and Specialty Area Examinations for teacher certification were compared to source documents to determine if they were accurately recorded and reported to the Commission.

Observations and Findings:

NCLEX: During verification of the supporting documentation, a variance was noted in the data provided by the Board of Nursing wherein the sum of the tests administered per quarter did not agree with the annual total. In reporting aggregate pass rates, Lander University deferred to the annual total. In addition, supporting documentation for one quarter was not available. The Dean of the School of Nursing was, however, able to provide adequate alternative documentation. The variances noted in years 1995 and 1997 were not significant and did not have a material effect on the percent passing reported to the CHE.

1. Information provided by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) for the NTE/PRAXIS test does not adequately support the analysis of data elements required for this performance measure. Supporting documents provided by ETS did not easily facilitate validation of a) enrollment as a Lander student, b) frequency of test taking, c) date of test-taking, d) pass/fail status of exam (each type of test has a unique threshold for determining pass/fail status), and e) students who took the same subject area or professional knowledge test and had multiple failures.

In order to overcome these issues, a 100% review was performed. With the assistance of Lander personnel, student status was determined and documented by placing an "X" beside the names of non-Lander students. Alignment of test dates and exam options was made and the numeric score for each test was cross-walked to a schedule of required exam scores to determine pass/fail status. Adjusting for each of these variables, new pass/fail rates were computed for each of the three years tested.

2. Supporting documentation for the 97/05 PKE and Subject Area test was not available for review.

Recommendations:

1. In order to better support the analysis of the teacher licensure results, it is recommended that notations such as those described above be used to identify non-Lander students, that a "Pass/Fail" notation be included beside each numerical score, and that students with multiple failures on the PKE or on a subject area exam be uniquely marked as well.

2. The missing teacher licensure data should be reviewed in a timely manner and all documentation be secured and made available upon request.

VI. Transferability of Credits (Performance Funding Indicator 8A)

Purpose: To verify that the information submitted by the institution that indicates the extent to which the criteria stipulated in the Commission's "Policy and Procedures for Transferability of Credit" document is accurate.

Method: Verification of the data for this indicator involved three activities: 1) a comparison of courses in the College's published guide for potential transfer students to courses on the Commission's approved Statewide Articulation Agreement (list of 74 technical college courses); a review of a random sample of 25 transfer students' transcripts to verify that the College appropriately accepted coursework on the Statewide Articulation Agreement and the Statewide transfer blocks; and 3) discussions with the Director of Admissions and other University staff about compliance with specific areas of the indicator.

Observations and Findings:

All transfer guides are in appropriate order. They are comprehensive for Lander and have been custom tailored for each of the 16 technical colleges in the State. They are available in print and on the website of the institution.

Records of transcripts for all students transferring to Lander from two-year public institutions in Fall 1998 were provided. All showed that the University is honoring all coursework in the Statewide List of 74 common lists. In addition, the University has accepted substantially more courses from the two-year technical colleges than the list of 74 requires. Similarly, all Fall 1998 transcripts from the two-year branches of the University of South Carolina show all coursework at those campuses is given due consideration under the statewide transfer and articulation agreement.

The University accurately reported to the Commission that SPEEDE/Express has not yet been installed at the University. A contract had been signed (during the 1997-1998 fiscal year) to provide the necessary software for the University to begin the process of installing the SPEEDE system by January 2000. In view of this action there is no recommendation on this portion of the indicator.

Recommendations: None

VII. Financial Support for Reform in Teacher Education (Performance Funding Indicator 9A)

Purpose: To verify the accuracy of data on grant awards and cash matching contributions from the institution and other sources expended to support teacher preparation or training, including applied research, professional development, and training grants.

Method: Reviewed grant award expenditures (years 94-95, 95-96, 96-97, and 97-98) to verify the expenditure amounts reported. Selected two grants and reviewed grant award and grant proposal documentation to verify that the grant was related to teacher preparation or training.

Observations and Findings:

The expenditure amount reported are accurate and the two grants selected are related to teacher preparation or training. No findings are reported.

Recommendations: None

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Availability of Faculty to Students Outside of the Classroom (Performance Funding Indicator 2E)

Findings:

1. The inclusion of evaluations of part-time faculty was difficult to test since some part-time faculty teach credit courses while others are responsible for zero-credit labs. The data provided did not distinguish between these two populations.
2. CHE guidelines recommend that students have a mechanism to confidentially inform administrators of instructors who fail to follow procedures. Although the institution was confident that this situation, if it occurred, would be identified, no evidence was found that the students were aware of their responsibilities in this regard.

Recommendations:

1. The current roster of teaching faculty includes an annotation of full or part-time instructor status. Including an additional indicator for zero-credit lab part-time instructors would provide the reconciling documentation necessary to determine the applicable full-faculty coverage required by CHE.
2. Lander University should develop and document procedures to protect student anonymity and the confidentiality of results.

Student Residency (Performance Funding Indicators 6D and 8C)

Findings:

1. Insufficient information is available to document the residency status of 21 students due to the following: a) no information was available on whether the students were independent or dependent, b) if the students were legally dependent on other individuals insufficient information was available on the residency status of those individuals, c) no information was available on the residency status of students during breaks in enrollment, and d) no information was available on the residency status of students concurrently enrolled in area technical colleges.
2. Exceptions to the residency code that allow students to pay in-state tuition rates without meeting the 12-month residency period are not maintained on the institution's database. Exception codes for reasons other than scholarship funding are maintained on an excel

spreadsheet that is not accessed when the CHEMIS file is created, nor is scholarship information accessed when the CHEMIS file is created. This resulted in six coding errors.

3. Contract courses with area school districts do not include a tuition differential for students not eligible to receive in-state tuition as required by law.

Recommendations:

1. Lander University should revise its application forms to include more information on applicants including: a) whether the student is financially independent, b) if the student is dependent, information on the residency status of the person they are dependent upon, and c) information on the residency status of students during periods of non-enrollment.

2. Lander University should revise policies and procedures for its CHEMIS file submission to ensure that all exception codes are included. The correct exception codes for all students enrolled in Fall 1998 should be submitted to the Commission.

3. All contact courses with area school districts should include a tuition differential for students not eligible to receive in-state tuition.

**Scores of Graduates on Licensing and Certification Examinations
(Performance Funding Indicator 7D)**

1. Information provided by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) for the NTE/PRAXIS test does not adequately support the analysis of data elements required for this performance measure. Supporting documents provided by ETS did not easily facilitate validation of a) enrollment as a Lander student, b) frequency of test taking, c) date of test-taking, d) pass/fail status of exam (each type of test has a unique threshold for determining pass/fail status), and e) students who took the same subject area or professional knowledge test and had multiple failures.

In order to overcome these issues, a 100% review was performed. With the assistance of Lander personnel, student status was determined and documented by placing an "X" beside the names of non-Lander students. Alignment of test dates and exam options was made and the numeric score for each test was cross-walked to a schedule of required exam scores to determine pass/fail status. Adjusting for each of these variables, new pass/fail rates were computed for each of the three years tested.

2. Supporting documentation for the 97/05 PKE and Subject Area test was not available for review.

Recommendations:

1. In order to better support the analysis of the teacher licensure results, it is recommended that notations such as those described above be used to identify non-Lander students, that a "Pass/Fail" notation be included beside each numerical score, and that students with multiple failures on the PKE or on a subject area exam be uniquely marked as well.

2. The missing teacher licensure data should be reviewed in a timely manner and all documentation be secured and made available upon request.

Appendix

List of Data Verification Team Members

Gary Glenn, Coordinator/Auditor of Planning, Assess. & Performance Funding
R. Lynn Kelley, Coordinator – Academic Affairs
Richard Mattox, Retired Administrator, Clemson University
Joe Pearman, Coordinator – Finance, Facilities, and MIS
Aileen Trainer, Coordinator - Planning, Assess. & Performance Funding

List of Individuals Interviewed or Assisting the Team

Susan Guinn, Director of Assessment and Planning
Susan Wood, Assistant Director of Admissions
Jacquelyn Roark, Director of Admissions
R. Thomas Nelson, Registrar and Director of Institutional Research
Ian M. Hubbard, Director, Financial Aid
Robert Taylor, Director of Graduate Studies
Phillip Bennett, Dean, School of Education
Barbara Freese, Dean, School of Nursing
Ellen Belton, Admin. Asst., School of Education
Whitney Marcengill, Budget Director
Mary Jo Cook, V.P. for Business and Administration