

September 24, 2013

Dr. Richard Chapman, Provost
Office of the Provost
Francis Marion University
P. O. Box 100547
Florence, South Carolina 29502-0547

Dear Richard,

It was our pleasure to have you and Dr. Hester visit our campus. It was kind of you to share with us the status of your plans to expand Francis Marion University outside the Pee Dee area by opening a campus in the Lowcountry.

Regarding your offer to the College of Charleston for us to collaborate with Francis Marion University in this project by offering supporting and general education courses to students enrolled in the FMU degree completion programs, please know that the College of Charleston faculty and staff are committed to serving the educational needs of our region and state. We have a history of collaborating with other institutions both in the Charleston areas and throughout the state. Currently we have many formal collaborative agreements with other institutions and we are currently in the process of developing additional collaborative agreements, with the terms and conditions of each agreement usually stated in a memorandum of understanding (MOU). We would certainly be open to discussing a collaborative agreement with FMU.

In keeping with past practice and our respect for the responsibilities of the State Commission on Higher Education (CHE), the College of Charleston would expect that our collaboration with FMU would be for a CHE-approved program. Additionally, out of respect for Trident Technical College, the Citadel and MUSC, we would ask for their inclusion in the development and execution of the MOU, as the programs you propose to provide are currently being offered by one or more of those institutions.

As with the development of any MOU, I would suggest we complete the following tasks before decisions are made:

1. Conduct a "needs assessment" to ensure that there is a higher education void not being addressed by our existing local institutions, that the need is supported in sufficient numbers as to make this a viable endeavor, and that Mt. Pleasant is the appropriate location to address this need. If FMU already has conducted a needs assessment, we would welcome the opportunity to review the supporting data.
2. Engage the CHE and the other public higher-education institutions on the topic of program duplication, to make certain any duplication concerns are addressed to the satisfaction of all parties.

3. Facilitate a discussion involving CHE and the state's public research and comprehensive universities regarding the precedent that will be established if FMU operates a facility and/or offers coursework in Mt. Pleasant. Without such a discussion, this endeavor may be interpreted as *carte blanche* for any public institution to open a campus anywhere in the state.

These are complex issues, and they deserve our careful and full attention. I and others at the College of Charleston stand ready to review the issues with you and to move forward in meeting the needs of the Lowcountry and the State of South Carolina.

Sincerely,



George W. Hynd
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Cc: Brig. Gen. John L. Finan, USAF (Ret.), Chairman, SC Commission on Higher Education
Dr. Richard C. Sutton, Executive Director, SC Commission on Higher Education
Dr. Mary Thornley, President, Trident Technical College
Dr. Mark S. Sothmann, Interim President, Medical University of South Carolina
Lt. General John W. Rosa, President, The Citadel