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University of South Carolina
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Student-Trustee Liaison Committee

March 16, 2012

The Student-Trustee Liaison Committee of the University of South Carolina Board of Trustees met on Friday, March 16, 2012, at 12:30 p.m. in the 1600 Hampton Street Board Room.

Members present were: Ms. Leah B. Moody, Chair; Mr. J. Egerton Burroughs; Mr. W. Lee Bussell, Sr.; Mr. Thomas C. Cofield; Mr. Hubert F. Mobley; Mr. Miles Loadholt, Board Chairman; and Mr. Eugene P. Warr, Jr., Board Vice Chairman. Mr. Charles H. Williams was absent.

Other Board members present were: Mr. Herbert C. Adams; Mr. Chuck Allen; Dr. C. Edward Floyd; Dr. C. Dorn Smith, III; Mr. John C. von Lehe, Jr.; Mr. Thad H. Westbrook; and Mack I. Whittle, Jr.

Others present were: President Harris Pastides; Secretary Amy E. Stone; Vice President for Student Affairs and Vice Provost for Academic Support Dennis A. Pruitt; Vice President for Communications Luanne M. Lawrence; Vice Provost and Executive Dean for Extended University Chris C. Plyler; General Counsel Walter (Terry) H. Parham; Senior Vice Provost and Director of Strategic Planning Christine W. Curtis; Director of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships Edgar Miller; Director of Governmental and Community Relations and Legislative Liaison Shirley D. Mills; Associate Director of State Relations Trey Walker; Special Assistant to the President J. Cantey Heath, Jr.; Associate Vice President for Business and Finance and Medical Business Affairs Jeffrey L. Perkins; Professor in the Department of Psychology, College of Arts and Sciences, and Chair of the Faculty Senate Sandra J. Kelly; Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and Director of Undergraduate Admissions Scott Verzyl; Former SGA President Columbia Joe Wright; Director of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships; Student Government Association (SGA) Advisor, USC Aiken, Ahmed Samaha; USC Beaufort, Kate Tornborg-Vermilyea; SGA Advisor, USC Columbia, Jerry Brewer; SGA Advisor, USC Lancaster, Laura Humphrey; SGA Advisor, USC Salkahatchie, Jane Brewer; SGA Advisor, USC Sumter, Dan Kiernan; SGA Advisor, USC Upstate, Laura Puckett-Boler; University Technology Services Production Manager, Justin Johnson; and Board staff members Terri Saxon, and Vera Stone.

SGA representatives present were: USC Aiken: SGA President Roberto Aragon and Secretary/Treasurer Cori Echols; USC Beaufort: SGA President Erica Moore, Vice President S. LeAnn

Weathers and Secretary General Michael Alexander; USC Columbia: SGA President Kenny Tracy, Vice President Chase Mizzell, and Treasurer Coy Gibson; USC Lancaster: SGA President Lauren Beam and Secretary/Treasurer John Michael Catalano; USC Salkehatchie: Senator Daniel Hernandez; USC Sumter: SGA President Christopher “Chris” Sumpter, and SGA Officers Shamone Garcia, Velda McCoy, David Clark, and Ron Jasper Felder; USC Union: SGA President Brittany Moss and Vice President Derrick Means; and USC Upstate: SGA President Ana Osuna, Vice President Candace Choice, and Freshman Class President Alexander Dukes.

I. Small Group Discussions over Lunch: A luncheon was held which gave students an opportunity to talk with Trustees and University officials. Following the luncheon, Chair Moody called the meeting to order, welcomed and invited everyone to introduce themselves. Mr. Wes Hickman introduced members of the media who were in attendance.

Ms. Moody stated that the agenda had been posted, the press notified as required by the Freedom of Information Act, the agenda had been circulated to Committee members and a quorum was present to conduct business.

Ms. Moody thanked those who drove from system campuses for coming to the meeting and said that she hoped they had an opportunity to meet with the Board of Trustees members from their area.

II. Campus Reports:

A. Chair Moody called on the newly elected Student Government Officers who were in attendance to present their projected goals for the coming year.

1. USC Columbia: SGA President Kenny Tracy stated that his goals included sustainability around campus which included additional recycling bins, student leader services, organizational outreach, open a food pantry, and a bike share program to transport students more easily to classes. Efforts are underway to meet with the Transportation administrator regarding parking issues. SGA will work closer with the staff of EPI (English Program for Internationals) to integrate more international students with the university.

Also, SGA is working with “Think College” wherein SGA visits schools in South Carolina and talk with students in grades seven through nine about the opportunities that college has to offer. This is an effort to help them focus on their grades and hopefully they will come to the University as well.

2. USC Lancaster: SGA President Laura Beam reported the USC Lancaster recently held SGA elections and a “Teacher of the Year” competition. The teacher will be announced during “Spring Fling” on April 19th. Various activities were held during Black History Month which

included a quiz bowl and a “soul food cook-off”. Two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) was raised during that event. In May, several professors and students will attend a study abroad trip and will receive English credit.

This year, the athletics teams at USC Lancaster were more diversified and included students from Mexico, Ecuador, and Australia; the baseball team is ranked 13th nationally. The women’s and men’s tennis teams are performing extremely well; and the women will move on to the nationals if they win one more game. The men’s soccer team is academic national champions, and the women’s soccer team had a 9 and 8 season.

Finally, several advisors attended a conference in Charlotte, NC and received information on how to make improvements to the school’s orientation program.

B. Chair Moody called on the outgoing student leaders who were in attendance to present a report from their respective campuses on significant activities.

1. USC Aiken: SGA President Roberto Aragon reported that USC Aiken Chancellor Thomas L. “Tom” Hallman would retire on June 30th. A search is underway for his successor. A 17- member search committee, which includes student representation, has been appointed. Interviews will begin in the spring and final recommendations will be forwarded to President Pastides for his consideration and final approval.

The men’s and women’s basketball teams won the Peach Bowl Conference and advanced on to the NCAA Division II championship tournament. The women’s team won 27 games.

Recently, USC Aiken hired two senior administrators. First, Mr. Ernest Pringle, Vice Chancellor for Information and Chief Information Officer. He holds a master’s degree in public administration and a bachelor’s degree in information systems, both from the University of South Carolina. He has 19 years of information technology experience, of which, 18 have been in higher education. Previously, he served as the Assistant Dean for Information Technology at USC School of Law in Columbia. Second, Mr. Joseph Sobieralski, Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance. Previously, he served as the Director of Business and Finance, Auxiliary Enterprises and University Life at George Mason University in Virginia. He has a wealth of experience in higher education and private industry.

Last week, USC Aiken broke ground on a \$1.3 million pedestrian bridge. This bridge will cross over the Robert M. Bell Parkway connecting academic and housing to the convocation center. The project is projected to be completed in 2013.

SGA elections will be held on March 29th and they are some great candidates.

2. USC Beaufort: SGA President Erica Moore reported that SGA elections will be held next week, and she is unopposed.

SGA will expand their recycling program; and work toward a smoke-free campus.

SGA held a diversity forum to discuss issues that affect their campus. Topics included religion, sexual orientation, first amendment rights versus the Carolinian Creed; the attendance was very good. Also, they implemented a recycling program.

3. USC Columbia: Former SGA President Joe Wright commended all outgoing student leaders, and thanked them for their leadership. Then, he gave an overview of the activities happening on the Columbia campus which included working with USC Law Enforcement regarding campus safety.

He said he had been recruited to serve on the National Campus Leadership Committee which consults with the White House. In April, he will travel to the White House to discuss issues regarding keeping college affordable for students and high interest rates.

He congratulated the new leaders, thanked the Board for their service, and stated that his last board meeting will be in April.

4. USC Salkehatchie: Senator Daniel Hernandez reported that the most exciting happening at USC Salkehatchie is that the men's basketball team just played in the Region 10 championship game. However, they lost by six points. This was first time in the school's history that USC Salkehatchie made it through the quarter finals and the semi-finals. Baseball and softball are in season now.

SGA events included a Student-Administration Forum in February to discuss concerns, ideas and future plans. Other events included intramural events, a St. Patrick's Day celebration, Sophomore Appreciation for basketball, Garnet and Gold Night, a shoe drive for the "Soles for Souls" project, "Wet and Wild Day" and tomorrow there will be a "Community Day" in Allendale sponsored by Governor Nikki Haley's Original Six Foundation to bring health care and other services to citizens in the area. On April 10, an academic reception will be held to recognize all scholarship recipients for 2012-13 as well as academic discipline award winners for this past year. Dr. Mary Anne Fritzpatrick, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, will be the guest speaker. An athletic banquet will be held on April 20th and their commencement on April 30th.

5. USC Sumter: SGA President Chris Sumpter reported that SGA is working on incorporating Liberal Arts and having programs that will enhance the Arts industry. Some events held on

campus were: a week-long canned food drive to support the homeless shelter and the local Salvation Army; an “Earth Day” project to assist with the beautification of the campus as well as making the environment cleaner for generations to come; and a “Spring Fling”.

Inclosing, Mr. Sumpter stated that Dean Les Carpenter will be retiring soon; and a search committee will be conducting a search for his successor.

6. USC Union: SGA President Brittany Moss said SGA elections will be next week and the new officials sworn in on April 10th. USC Union will have their first ever club baseball team, sanctioned by the National Club Baseball Association. Some other teams in their division includes: Duke University, East Carolina, Davidson College, and UNC Willington.

With the formation of the baseball team, USC Union voted to return to its former mascot from the 80s and be known as the USC Union Bantams. A women’s club softball team will be added in spring 2014.

SGA also purchased and installed new workout equipment in the Truluck Activity Center for students, faculty, and staff to utilize. Workout equipment included two treadmills, a weight machine and free weights donated by a staff member, Tony Gregory; USC Columbia donated five stationary bikes.

USC Union held a Miss USC Union pageant and Kaitlin Wade was crowned. The event raised \$800 to support the Alzheimer’s Association.

Relative to community service, USC Union Continuing Education is offering free income tax preparation to low income residents. To date, 150 individuals have been served.

In February, Faith Lane, a road than runs through the middle of campus, was closed. That space will now be used as “green space” which will include a fountain and a park area for students to study or relax.

USC Union will also host their Second Annual Upcountry Literary Festival. The festival will include fiction writers, playwrights, historians, poets, musicians and poet-musicians. The keynote speaker for the festival is Fred Chappell, a former Poet Laureate of North Carolina. More than 20 authors and presenters will attend the free two-day event. She invited everyone to attend.

7. USC Upstate: SGA President Ana Osuna reported that an Investiture Ceremony was planned for the new USC Upstate Chancellor Thomas F. Moore on April 13th followed by a community picnic. SGA is assisting with the planning. This will be the third Investiture in the history of their university. On April 11, students will host a fun event for Chancellor and Mrs. Moore called “Bow Ties and Barbecue”. This event is for students only and there will be food, music, and games.

Ms. Osuna stated that Dr. Marsha Dowell, Senior Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs will be retiring in June; therefore, a search is underway for her successor and the finalists are visiting the campus.

In May, a ceremony will be held to officially rename two buildings in honor of two previous Chancellors: Dr. Olin B. Sansbury, Jr. and Dr. John C. Stockwell. The buildings will be named: “The Olin B. Sansbury, Jr. Campus Life Center and the “John C. Stockwell Administration Building”.

She reported that the monthly “Breakfast with the Chancellor” has been successful on both campuses - Greenville and Spartanburg. This initiative provides students an opportunity to voice their concerns to the administration.

In an effort to increase community awareness and promote school spirit, SGA is working with Athletics in hopes of painting the USC Upstate Spartans logo on the road leading up to the campus.

SGA elections are underway and will be finalized on March 29th.

Chair Moody thanked all SGA representatives for their informative reports and for their leadership. She stated that all the reports were received for information.

III. Federal Financial Aid Programs Report: Chairman Moody called on Scott Verzyl, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and Director of Undergraduate Admissions, USC Columbia. He shared recent and pending changes to financial aid programs that may affect USC students.

He stated that a college degree is more important than ever, and financial aid is just as important. Therefore, it is imperative that students and SGA leaders play a role in the financial aid arena. He listed four key ways: 1) Education – As the rules are changing, students need to educate themselves on the issues, the changes, and how the changes will impact them, and why the rules are being implemented. Some of these changes are directed for unscrupulous for-profit institutions, but they apply to all schools that receive federal aid; 2) Apply for Financial Aid - Encourage students to apply for aid early and prior to the deadline; 3) Respond to the Office of Financial Aid – The Financial Aid Office may have new processes or require different items than in the past; therefore, it is important to follow through and be open to guidance from staff so that the process will go smoothly and minimize delays; 4) Be an Advocate yourself - SGA leaders are in positions to have their voices heard by state and federal leaders. Use the power of your offices to advocate for financial aid for students. He stated that President Pastides is an advocate and had been in Washington recently. He met with every one of South Carolina’s elected officials because financial aid is one of his top concerns.

Mr. Verzyl called on Dr. Edgar Miller, Director of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships, to discuss changes to the federal rules.

Dr. Moore stated that in 2010-2011, the university assisted 26,000 out of 31,000 students in some manner with financial aid. He noted that their loan default rate is only two percent.

He stated that the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2012 came about as the result of a heated discussion regarding budgetary problems within the federal Pell Grant program. The maximum Pell Grant award remains \$5,550; and a minimum of \$550. The maximum Pell Grant EFC (Expected Family Contribution) is \$4,995, down from \$5,273 this year). The income threshold for an automatic zero EFC is reduced from \$30,000 to \$23,000 (was actually to increase to \$32,000 for 2012-13). The maximum length of eligibility of Pell Grants is reduced from 18 to 12 semesters for full-time semesters (or equivalent). The Act eliminates Title IV Aid eligibility for students without a high school diploma (exceptions for home schooled students and those in an eligible program prior to July 1, 2012); temporarily eliminates interest subsidy on Direct Subsidized Loan during the six month grace period for loans after July 1, 2012 and before July 1, 2014.

He reported that the Budget Control Act (BCA) of 2011 eliminates Direct Subsidized Loans for graduate students effective for loans made for loan periods beginning on or after July 1, 2012; terminates borrower incentives that encouraged on-time repayment (borrowers will see a slightly greater reduction in their loan proceeds). He stated that the Act does not lessen the amount a student could borrow but it means that interest will now accrue on the full amount the student can borrow on the full amount of the loan. Previously, up to \$8,500 of student's annual loan amount (based on need) could have been subsidized and therefore protected from interest accrual while the student is enrolled and for six month after graduation.

In addition, there is a special direct consolidation loan for "Split borrowers". This opportunity is available until June 30, 2012, and only for certain borrowers of FFEL and Direct Loans. The eligible borrowers are being notified by federally designated servicers. The basic purpose of the opportunity is to get FFEL loans repaid early and reduce the benefits being paid to the commercial lenders of these loans.

Further, he stated that the "Pay as You Earn" Income Based Repayment (IBR) Plan reduces maximum annual payment amount from 15 percent to 10 percent of discretionary income and reduces the life of the loan from 25 to 20 years when the balance is forgiven.

Additionally, he said that 130,000 letters had been presented to the Congressional committees from students who were protesting rising tuition.

Currently, there is House Bill 4170 referred to as the “10 for 10 repayment plan”. This Bill will limit loan repayment to 10 years and the repayments will have to be 10 percent of discretionary income. At the end of the 10 years, and if the person has been responsible, the rest of the loan would be canceled with a cap of \$45,520.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is taking on the private loan environment and is providing an avenue for students to voice their concerns about their billing and/or repayment loans.

Chair Moody stated that the report was received for information.

IV. Other Matters: Dr. Dennis A. Pruitt, Vice President for Student Affairs and Vice Provost for Academic Support, spoke briefly about the dangers of drugs and alcohol and how those students who chose to engage in these types of risky behavior endanger themselves as well as others and must be held accountable. He stated that a Consultant is coming in to meet with the President and other institutional leadership to describe our campus climate and to help us discuss what our next steps might be in addressing high risk and self-destructive behaviors we are seeing in our students - which will include more accountability, more education, and more enforcement of our campus standards.

There being no other matters to come before the Committee, Chair Moody declared the meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy E. Stone
Secretary