

USC Lancaster Faculty Meeting Minutes

February 6, 2026

Please note: Minutes are not verbatim and as such, pronouns may be mixed in the comment sections.

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Faculty Meeting Minutes

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USC Lancaster Faculty Meeting Minutes

February 6, 2026

CALL TO ORDER: 12:34 PM by E. Easley

CORRECTION/APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the December 2025 faculty organization meeting were approved.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS:

Dean of the Campus – Dr. Courtney Catledge, report submitted (Appendix 1).

- Enrollment reported at 2,276 (slightly below last year's record).
- Multiple faculty searches underway; three nearing completion.
- Urgent need to hire recruiter during peak recruitment season.
- Strong academic performance among student-athletes (men's soccer, women's soccer, volleyball, baseball).
- Baseball season underway; Valentine's weekend home opener.
- Discussion of potential basketball program; barriers include facilities, housing, and funding.
- Guidance Counselor Lunch and Carolina Day participation upcoming.
- Horizon Grant opportunity available.
- Promoted Give for Garnet (priorities: Soccer, Travel Study, Archaeology Lab).
- Commencement scheduled for May 2.
- No local measles cases; outbreak noted in Upstate SC.
- Students required to have two MMR vaccinations (~97% immunity).

Questions and/or Comments:

- B. Obi-Johnson – Should previously vaccinated adults get MMR boosters?
 - C. Catledge – It is not currently recommended
- S. Penuel - Would there ever be a chance that we could vary the athletics offerings, say women's basketball, men's basketball?
 - C. Catledge – We have to consider associated costs and facilities with adding additional athletics offerings. This topic has come up in multiple venues.
 - N. Lawrence – Housing is also an issue for our existing population of student athletes.

Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs – Dr. David Roberts report submitted (Appendix 2).

- Faculty review forms forthcoming.
- Tenure/promotion candidates encouraged to identify outside reviewers early.
- Professional Activities form reminder.

- CCSSE survey to be administered online; faculty may provide class time.
- Early Alert submissions encouraged.
- Travel Study proposals for Summer 2027 due March 13.
- New hires in Health and Nursing announced.
- Four faculty searches ongoing.
- Acknowledgment of faculty engagement and campus contributions.

Questions and/or Comments: None

Academic Success Center – Dr. Pat Lawrence, report submitted (Appendix 3)

- ASC numbers are holding steady despite challenges from winter weather and illness
- Expanded evening tutoring offerings
- Invitation to instructors to schedule tutor visits to their classrooms
- Thanks to IT for AV updates in the Studio and new Gallery space, and invitation to partner for event hosting in both spaces

Questions and/or Comments: None

Business Office – Buddy Faile

- Gregory YMCA roofing project (completion mid-March, weather dependent).
- Parking lot repaving to follow roofing completion.
- Rose Garden renovation scheduled post-commencement through early/mid fall.
- Starr Hall office upgrades planned (Admissions, Registrar, Disability Services).
- AssetWorks System
 - Online maintenance and custodial reporting system (AssetWorks) now live.
 - Users authenticate, select issue type, upload photos if needed.
 - Confirmation and resolution notifications sent to submitter.

Questions and/or Comments:

- A. [Kate] Holland – Who do the AssetWorks requests go to?
 - B. Faile – Butch Lucas (Maintenance) and Buddy Faile (Business Office)
- P. Parker – Can users of the AssetWorks system indicate urgency?
 - B. Faile – No, [he] and Butch will assign priority as reports come in
- M. Lemhouse – Is the AssetWorks system ready to to use now?
 - B. Faile – Yes

CPHE Standards & Procedures Working Group – Dr. Pat Lawrence

- Sharing updates about the purpose and recent activity of the working group
- Inviting FO to review the new information shared in CPHE newsletter and share feedback (turnaround time is tight)

Questions and/or Comments:

- S. Penuel – Is the group seeking structural feedback (not just evidentiary?)
 - P. Lawrence – They are asking for substantive feedback on the process/procedures at this time
- S. Cruise – Is this politically motivated and will the organization change if the the current political climate changes?
 - P. Lawrence – There are many different viewpoints and motivations represented in this organization. Some people in the organization do want to streamline the accreditation process while some express desire to combat “woke” influence. Accreditation has, historically, impeded political influence on higher education, so this organization might remove that speedbump.

*Human Resources – Written Report (Appendix 4)**Indian Land Location – Bernard Totten, report submitted (Appendix 5)*

- Highlights from written report including Medford Library service and new study hours on Fridays
- Mad City Money event on February 24 featuring Palmetto College’s Dan Richards
- Rotary event partnership (date TBA, sometime in spring) “Dining Around Indian Land”

Questions and/or Comments: None*Medford Library – Written Report (Appendix 6)**Security & Emergency Management – Antonio Seat, report submitted (Appendix 7)*

- Department renamed from Law Enforcement & Security to Security & Emergency Management.
- New USC-aligned uniforms and branding.
- Website updated to reflect non-law enforcement status.
- Escort services available 8:00 a.m.–12:00 a.m.
- Advisement team forming to funnel proactive safety concerns.
- Active shooter training to align with Columbia campus standards.

Questions and/or Comments: None

Student Success & Retention – Written Report (Appendix 8)

TRiO – Written Report (Appendix 9)

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:

USC SYSTEM COMMITTEES:

System Affairs – Dr. Suzanne Penuel, report submitted (Appendix 10)

- BLS & BOL degrees are being examined. One recommendation is adding a Dance option to the BLS degree.

Questions and/or Comments:

- P. Lawrence – Do we have capacity to teach dance classes?
 - S. Penuel – Not on this campus but Palmetto College does at other location(s) (Columbia)
- Z. Byrd – Will dance classes be taught online?
 - S. Penuel – Possibly
- P. Parker – The finance classes listed as changes to BLS/BOL degrees have prerequisites

LOCAL COMMITTEES:

USCL FO Executive Committee – Dr. Liz Easley, report submitted (Appendix 11).

- Approximately 77 older FO meeting files not ADA compliant; documents from 2020 forward are compliant.
- Working to remediate and repost older documents.
- USCL-owned social media accounts must meet ADA standards beginning in April.
- Reviewing document storage and archiving procedures.
- Goal to centralize motions and institutional records for continuity.
- Bylaws updated to reflect December motions.
- CPHE revisions in open comment period; possible additional faculty feedback.

Questions and/or Comments:

- M. Lemhouse – If anyone has questions about making ADA-compliant documents online I would be happy to meet with you in the library to go over the basics.

Free Expression & Academic Freedom Committee – Pat Lawrence

- Developing local procedures aligned with University Policy 6.0.
- Consulting stakeholders including Security and campus leadership.
- Draft procedures to return to Senate for review and legal approval.
- Monitoring national developments related to curriculum restrictions and faculty speech protections.

- Discussed institutional cases illustrating long-term risks of reactive policy decisions.

Questions and/or Comments: None

Research & Productive Scholarship Committee – Dr. Pat Lawrence

- \$50,000 allocated this year; majority awarded in primary cycle.
- Approximately \$7,500 remaining; mini-grant cycle announced.
- Mini-Grant Details:
 - Deadline: February 15.
 - Open to eligible faculty and staff in teaching roles.
 - Partial funding possible depending on application volume.

Questions and/or Comments:

- F. [Evan] Nooe – Who is eligible for the mini grants?
 - P. Lawrence – Faculty and staff in teaching roles who did not receive funding in the most recent cycle
- A. [Kate] Holland – What is the funding pool for the mini grant cycle?
 - P. Lawrence - \$7500
- S. Cruise – If selected for the mini grant, would that exclude us from funding during the next cycle?
 - P. Lawrence – Yes, I believe so
- S. Criswell – Are staff eligible?
 - P. Lawrence – Yes.

T&P Committee – Written Report (Appendix 12)

OTHER SYSTEM COMMITTEES:

Faculty Senate – Written Report (Appendix 13)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

SPECIAL ORDERS: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- E. Moon-Kelly – d The Winds of Time (I am a member) will be performing Classical, folk, and early American musical favorites at Christina Chastain's Studio Lofts in Lancaster, SC on 2/21/2026.
 - Christina Chastain's Studio Lofts: <https://www.chastainsstudio.com/>

- Winds of Time: <https://www.charlotteconcertband.org/swing-582480.html>
- S. Sellhorst – Asheley Schryer will be leaving USCL and should be recognized for significant contributions to advising and campus initiatives.
- N. Lawrence – Valentine’s weekend baseball opener will be live-streamed and archived with captions.
- B. Obi-Johnson - Dr. Amy Gerald was nominated for Garnet Apple Innovation in Teaching Award.

ADJOURNMENT: 2:02 PM

ATTENDING:

Sahar Aghasafari, Connor Austell, Christopher Bundrick, Zoe Byrd, Andrea Campbell, Courtney Catledge, Stephen Criswell, Susan Cruise, Elizabeth Easley, Samantha Etim, Amy Gerald, Annette Golonka, Jose Guruceaga, Darris Hassell, Alissa (Kate) Holland, Amy Hood, Ernest Jenkins, Mary Allison Jobe, Nicholas Lawrence, Patrick Lawrence, McKenzie Lemhouse, Tamika Lewis, Lynette Martek, Fernanda Marques Burke, Erin Moon-Kelly, Angela Neal, Franklin Evan Nooe, Bettie Obi-Johnson, Philip Parker, Suzanne Penuel, Bridgett Plexico, Jeff Rammage, Kim Richardson, David Roberts, Deborah Rowell, Antonio Seat, Peter Seipel, Sarah Sellhorst, Anita Sharma, Nahid Swails, Brittany Taylor-Driggers, Lauren Thomas, Bernard Totten, Matt Williamson, Jerrod Yarosh, Andrew Yingst

ABSENT:

Shemsi Alhaddad, Marybeth Berry, Dwayne Brown, Li Cai, Steven Campbell, Jill Castiglia, Logan Cocklin, Mark Coe, Walter Collins, Kimberly Covington, Maxie Ron Cox, Lucius Stanley Emanuel, Rebecca Freeman, Garane Garane, Lisa Hammond, Claudia Heinemann-Priest, Jason Holt, Christopher Judge, Howard Kingkade, Dana Lawrence, Vincent Lewis, Brandon Newton, Allan Pangburn, Leigh Pate, Micheal Sherrill Jr., Suzette Taylor, Richard Vanhall, Tania Wolochwianski

Faculty Secretary: Document submitted by M. Lemhouse on February 27, 2026 for faculty and staff review.



UNIVERSITY OF
South Carolina
LANCASTER

**Report to the USC Lancaster Faculty Organization
February 6, 2026**

**Dr. Courtney Catledge
Regional Palmetto College
Dean**

People

Enrollment

As of January 30, 2026, Spring enrollment stands at 2276. These numbers reflect a strong enrollment for the Spring semester. Recruitment plans are underway for summer and fall 2026.

Faculty/Staff searches in progress:

- Accounts Receivable Manager
- Admission Counselor (Recruiter)
- Assistant Professor of Biology
- Instructor of Psychology
- Instructor of Sociology
- Assistant Professor/ Instructor of Computer Science

Athletics

The breakdown of fall 2025 grades for all USC Lancaster Athletes:

Men's Soccer: 17 players at a 3.0 or better, 2 of whom received a 4.0

Women's Soccer: 18 players at a 3.0 or better, 7 of whom received a 4.0

Volleyball: 4 players at a 3.0 or better

Baseball: 36 players at a 3.0, 5 of whom received a 4.0

Baseball kicked off the season with an away game last weekend at East Georgia State College. Upcoming game schedule can be accessed at [this link](#).

Employee Support

Please remember that **the university offers work-life balance and wellbeing support** through our [Employee Assistance Program](#) (EAP). These services are helpful in times of stress and adjustment.

USC Lancaster in our Communities

USC Lancaster admissions, academic affairs, and financial aid will present at the Guidance Counselor luncheon on February 13, 2026.

We will connect with residents at **Sun City Carolina Lakes and Tree Tops later in February for registration for a second 8-weeks course.**

USCL leadership and students will be attending **Carolina Day** at the statehouse on **February 17th.**

Other items...

Horizon Education Grants were created to celebrate and support educators working with students PreK through college, in the communities of Great Falls and Fort Lawn, SC, and all of Lancaster County. They are designed with two primary goals in mind:

To tie innovative, collaborative teaching and learning to the goal of Building and Supporting a Healthy Community; To promote and support the development of our students' full potential to succeed as outlined in the "Profile of the SC Graduate."

Collaboration across grade levels, school campuses, and communities is highly encouraged. Every educator in our service area is eligible for both an individual classroom grant **AND** a team grant each year. The Spring 2026 deadlines include January 18th, February 15th, March 15th, and April 19th, 2026.

W. Brent Burgin Lunch and Learn on February 27 2026 at the NASC- a lecture by Prof. Deborah Rowell, Instructor of Criminal Justice at USC Lancaster, PhD Candidate. "The Dark Side of Women's History: How Female Serial Killers Defy the Narrative."

Pop-Up Art Market at the USC Lancaster Native American Study Center on Saturday February 21st from 10 am – 4 pm featuring, Blue Heron Group, Catawba Nation, and Amanda Wilson, Catawba Nation.

There is an upcoming production by the Lancaster Players- "**Hairspray.**" *Come out and support on February 27th and 28th at 8 pm and March 1st at 2 pm*

Representing the system campuses, **President Amiridis presented FY 2026 budget requests to the House Ways and Means Higher Education Sub-committee** (Jan 29, 2026). The meeting went well with great dialogue between the University and the house members.

Representing the system campuses, **President Amiridis will present FY 2026 budget requests to the Senate Finance Committee Hearing later this month (February 2026).**

The inaugural meeting of the **USC Lancaster Staff Organization** took place on Friday January 30th, 2026, with good participation. It was offered in a hybrid format to promote participation. Lunch was provided and the discussion was centered around role and responsibilities of the organization as well as the structure and bylaws. Special thanks to the staff organization, leadership team and all those who participated.

AssetWorks is now live for faculty, staff, and students to report maintenance and custodial concerns.

Save the date – Give 4 Garnet 2026

Give 4 Garnet is a one-day, eight-hour, and one-minute celebration of the University of South Carolina system that will begin at 5:59 a.m. on March 25 and end at 2 p.m. on March 26. It provides an opportunity for students, employees, alumni, family, and friends to come together virtually and demonstrate their support. Specific emphasis this year is USCL Soccer, Travel Study, and the Fred “Henry” Shute Archaeology Lab Fund.

Commencement 2026: Planning is underway for an outdoor commencement ceremony on Saturday, May 2 at 11:00 am. This year’s speaker is still being confirmed. The ceremony will take place just in front of the Crawford Rose Garden. The pre-ceremony and post-ceremony receptions will both take place in the Arnold Special Events Room in Bradley.



UNIVERSITY OF
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LANCASTER

David Roberts, Interim Associate Dean for Academic & Student Affairs

REPORT TO THE FACULTY ORGANIZATION
February 6, 2026

- 1. Faculty Review Schedule for 2026-2027.** Faculty eligible for promotion and faculty required to undergo reviews will be notified by March 1. Review statuses will be verified on the Review Intent Form that is due by March 15.
- 2. If you have not yet filled out your online Professional Activities Form,** please do so as soon as possible.
- 3. Survey about USCL Faculty Service and Scholarship.** Shemsi Alhaddad, our USCL Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research, has put out a call to complete a survey of faculty service and scholarship activities. The deadline is February 13th. It is open to all faculty (full time and part time, regardless of title or rank). We would like 100% participation from full-time faculty. **Please check your email for the invitation.**
- 4. CCSSE Survey.** We will be doing the CCSSE Survey this Spring Semester. The survey will be administered online this time. The Office of Academic and Student Affairs, as well as Student Life, will be working to get as much student participation as possible. Please pay close attention to the emails you receive regarding this survey.
- 5. Thank you to everyone who has already submitted early alerts for the spring 2026 semester.** We appreciate your commitment to student success!
To submit an alert, please complete [this form](#). If you have multiple alerts to submit, you can email Zoe Byrd at zmburd@email.sc.edu. In the email, please include the student's name, student ID, reason for alert, class name, and recommendation (contact Professor, tutoring, withdraw from class, counseling, etc.).

Below are resources and information frequently shared when contacting students for alerts:

- If a professor recommends a student withdraw from a course:
 - Remind student of the withdrawal date or direct to the [Academic Calendar](#) for important withdrawal deadlines.
 - Recommend student speaks with their academic advisor and Financial Aid. Withdrawing can have academic and financial impacts, so we always want to make sure students can make an informed decision when withdrawing.
- If a student is struggling with the course material or is scoring poorly on quizzes/tests:
 - Direct them to the [Academic Success Center](#).
 - The ASC offers in-person and virtual one-on-one appointments, as well as labs and studio drop-in hours. They also offer a great study strategies session that every student can benefit from.
 - Direct them to contact their professor with questions, concerns, or issues.
- Additional resources/quick links that are helpful to students
 - [Counseling Services](#)
 - [Student Disability Resource Center](#)
 - [Financial Aid and Veteran Affairs](#)
 - [Academic & Student Affairs](#)
 - [USC Lancaster Information Technology](#)
 - [Columbia DoIT Help Desk](#)
 - [Blackboard Support](#)
 - [Bookstore](#)
 - [Community Services and Resources](#)
 - [Student Food Pantry](#)

6. Travel Study Requests. The Student Affairs Committee reviews and recommends applications for travel study courses. Proposals for Summer 2027 courses are now being accepted. The deadline for submission is March 13, 2026. For more information please see this link: [Travel Study - USC Lancaster | University of South Carolina](#)

7. I want to thank Ken Cole for all the work he is doing as both Director of Financial Aid and the Interim Executive Director of Enrollment Affairs. Some of the events he is overseeing and keeping track of are:

- High School Counselor Appreciation Luncheon on Friday, February 13th.
- Spring Open House will be on Saturday, March 21st (9:00 – Noon).
- He is in the midst of working with Art Faculty for a USCL Arts Focus Day at local high schools.

8. New Lancer Orientation dates are set.

Session I – June 11th

Session II – June 25th

Session III – July 9th

Session IV – July 16th

Session V – July 30th

Lancer Enhance – August 13th

9. New Hires

a. Laren Thomas, Director of the Health Coach Training Pathway and Instructor of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior.

b. Samantha Etim, Nursing Instructor and Simulation Lab Coordinator.

10. Faculty Searches and Committee Chairs:

a. Assistant Professor of Biology: Dr. Annette Golonka Committee Chair

b. Assistant Professor or Instructor of Computer Science: Dr. Bettie Johnson Committee Chair

c. Instructor of Psychology: Debbie Rowell Committee Chair

d. Instructor of Sociology: Dr. Susan Cruise Committee Chair

11. Recent Faculty Accomplishments.

a. Aghasafari, S., Cai, L. & Malloy, M (Accepted Publication). “Visualizing Protein Structure: Integrating AI, Graphic Storytelling, and Media Arts in STEAM-Based Chemistry Education.” *Journal of Chemical Education*. This is one of the most competitive and highly regarded journals in chemical education.

Aghasafari, S., & Needles, T. (Accepted). “Enhancing STEAM Education Through Media Arts: A Multidisciplinary Approach.” *Connected Arts Networks, Art Education*.

b. Stan Emanuel was featured in WalletHub’s recent article Credit Cards for People with No Credit. You can find it here: https://wallethub.com/credit-cards/no-credit/#expert=Stan_Emanuel

c. Ernest Jenkins gave a presentation on “Honoring Local Connections to the American Revolutionary Era” to the Lancaster Breakfast Rotary Club on January 14, 2026.

- d. **Chris Judge** was asked by SC Humanities to serve as State Scholar for the Smithsonian’s traveling exhibit *Americans*, which is an exploration of how deeply intertwined American Indians are in the history, popular culture and identity of the United States. The exhibit stops in six SC museums beginning with the NASC in Fall 2026.

Chris was asked by the Director of the SC State Museum to serve on the Advisory Committee for their new exhibit *American Battleground: South Carolina’s Revolution*, opening to the public on June 27, 2026.

- e. **Pat Lawrence** was elected to the Modern Language Association Delegate Assembly as the representative for academic freedom.
- f. **McKenzie Lemhouse** took on the editor-in-chief role for *South Carolina Libraries* in December. This free access, peer reviewed journal is the official publication of the South Carolina Library Association (SCLA). As part of this role, she also assumed a seat on the board of directors for the SCLA.
- g. **Evan Nooe** was awarded a 2026 James G. Stofer Annual Meeting Travel Grant from the American Historical Association.

He was a discussant for the roundtable “Pioneer Lies and the Making of US History” at the 2026 American Historical Association Annual Meeting

Evan was interviewed by South Carolina’s PBS affiliate eTV for a forthcoming documentary titled “Our Story Too: Women, Native Americans, and African Americans in the Revolutionary War.”

- h. **Jeff Rammage** joined the Lancaster County Chamber Board of Directors

12. Upcoming Events.

The Winds of Time, of which Erin Moon-Kelly is a member, will be performing classical, folk, and early American musical favorites at Christina Chastain’s Studio Lofts in Lancaster, SC on February 21, 2026. Information can be found in these two links:

Christina Chastain's Studio Lofts: <https://www.chastainsstudio.com/>

Winds of Time: <https://www.charlotteconcertband.org/swing-582480.html>

Report to the USC Lancaster Faculty Organization

Academic Success Center

Pat Lawrence, Director

Announcements

- Please continue spreading the word about remote and evening tutoring. Busy students may benefit from help with nursing, chemistry, Spanish, writing, philosophy, statistics, and other subjects during this convenient time.
- Automatically generated reports are going out to faculty who have requested them. Let us know if you give credit to students for tutoring and would like to be notified when they visit us.
- The ASC will be closed March 9-13 for Spring Break.

Recent and Upcoming Events

Our new event and instructional space, tentatively called “the Gallery,” now features AirMedia technology, thanks to IT Director Blake Faulkenberry. This technology allows us to hold more dynamic and interactive workshops and presentations, with contributors screen casting from around the room. This tech was also installed the Studio, so expect to see it in use soon.

We are also working with campus art faculty to develop a collection of art from local and student creators to decorate the Gallery. Selection of artwork and early planning began in the fall, and we look forward to completing the project this spring. If you want to take advantage of this cool new space, please reach out with your group or unit’s event.

We are in early planning stages for Health Sciences reviews for BIOL 243/244. These sessions, run by the exceptional Kennedy Bumbrey, will take place in coordination with faculty in advance of exams. If other faculty would like to coordinate review sessions in our areas of coverage—or would like to hold their review sessions in our cool space—let’s do it.

Summary of Tutoring Data

Year-to-year trends: In January, we held the same number of sessions as the previous January. Given that reduced staff and weather-related service disruptions reduced our tutoring availability, this is good news. The appointments were distributed among a marginally lower number of students, though we served more students than in January 2024.

Session distribution trends: We’re seeing typical distribution among the academic divisions, with STEM (including Math Lab) making up more than half of our student contacts. We saw a higher proportion of students holding virtual appointments, which makes sense given the weather challenges and our increased number of virtual hours. We saw very few dual enrollment or student-athlete clients, unfortunately.

(See charts below for data breakdown.)

Contact Information

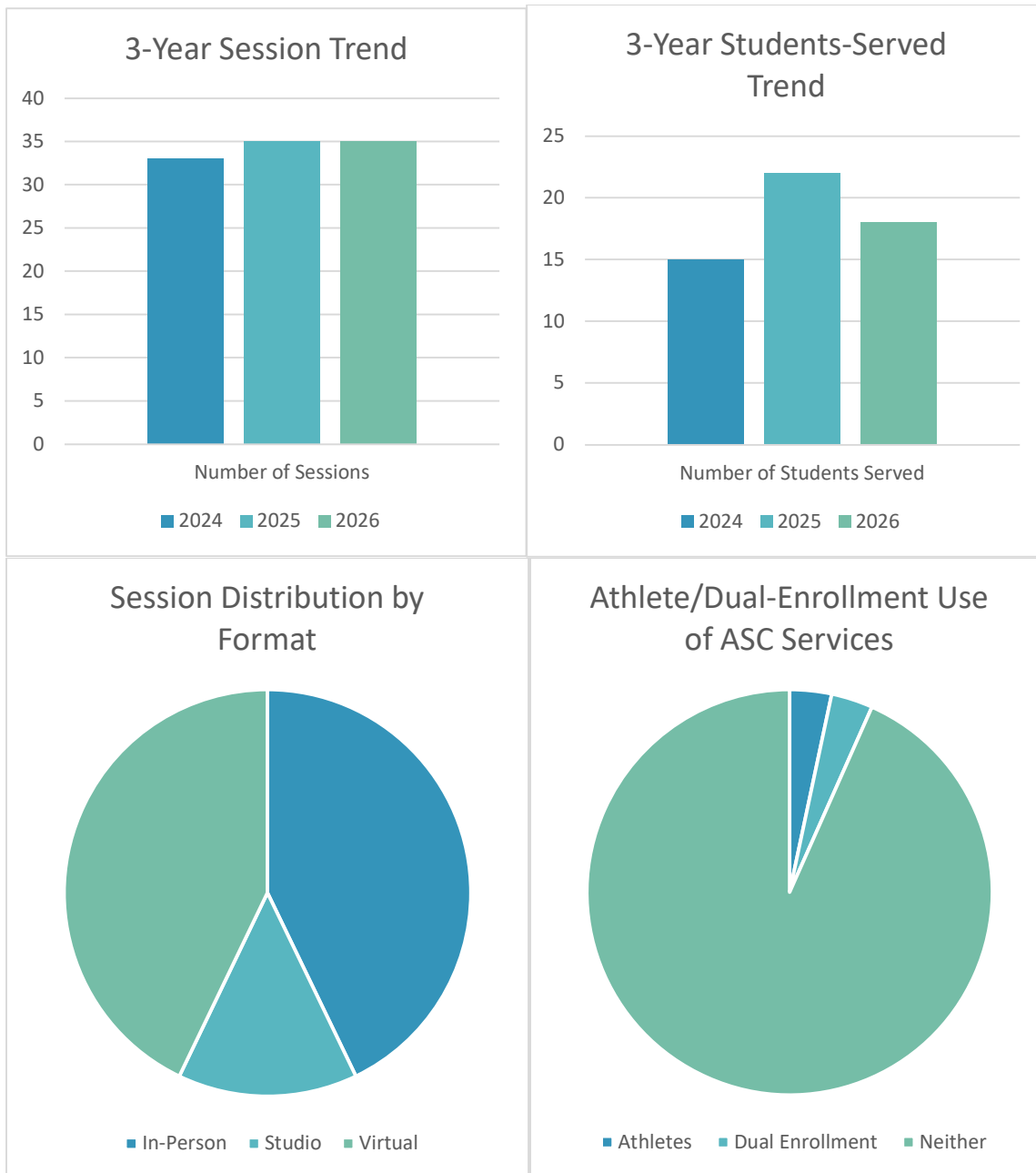
Phone: 803-313-7113

Web: sc.ed/lancaster/asc

Patrick Lawrence, Director: pslawren@mailbox.sc.edu

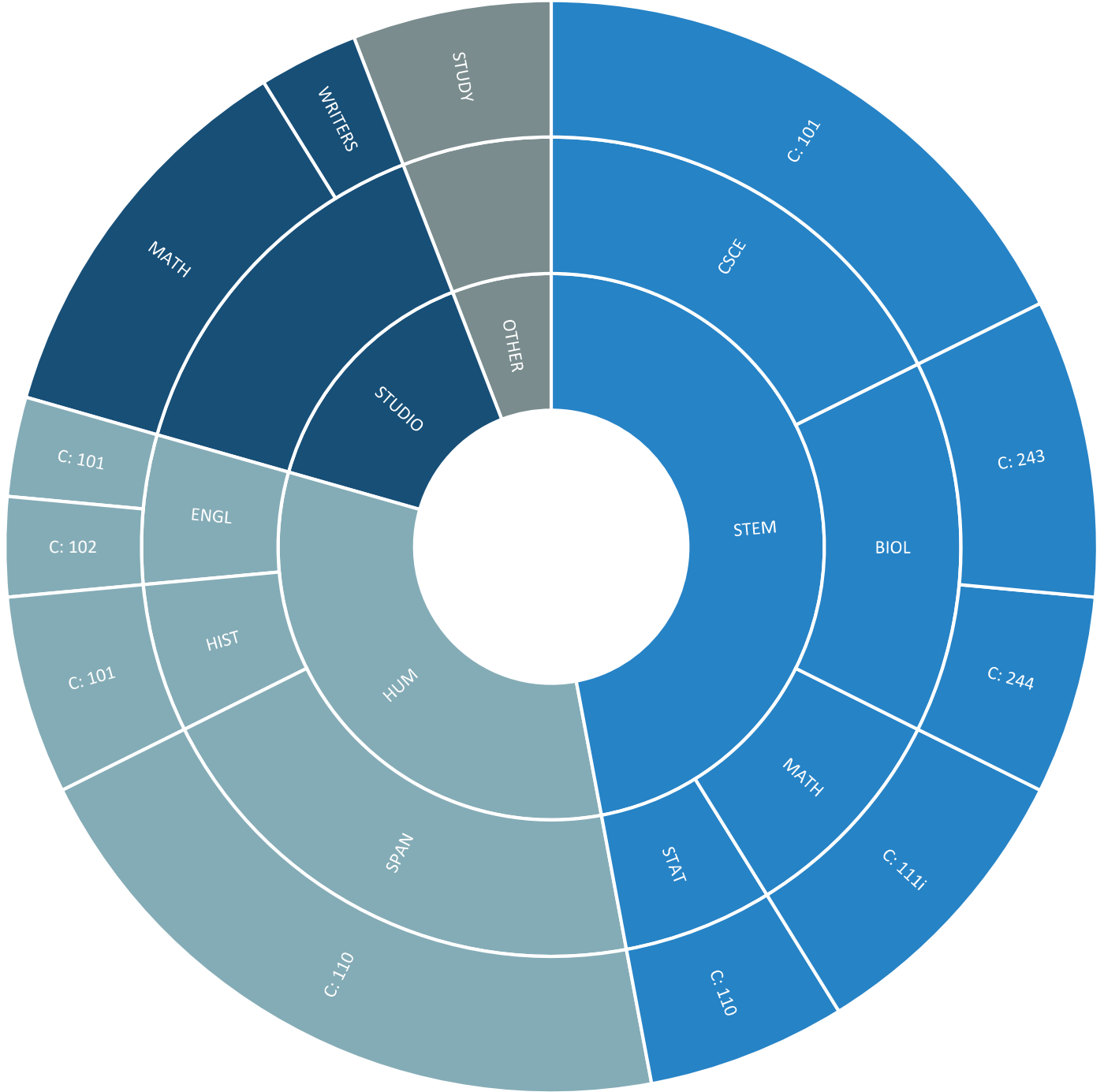
Elaine Connor, Academic Success Coordinator: etconnor@mailbox.sc.edu

Appendix: October Tutoring Data



¹ Note that the student-athlete and dual-enrollment data is only collected for conventional tutoring appointments. For this reason, the total number of sessions listed here excludes studio numbers.

Session Distribution by Field and Course



FROM: Tracey Mobley Chavous, PHR - Director of Human Resources

MEETING: Faculty Organization Meeting- February 6, 2026

TODAY'S DATE: February 4, 2026

ATTACHMENTS: ZERO

INFORMATION ITEMS:

1) 2025 W-2

2025 W-2s are available in the HR/Payroll system.

If you elected to receive your W-2 electronically please take the following steps to review, print, or save your 2025 W-2.

- 1) Log into the HR/Payroll System hcm.ps.sc.edu
- 2) On the Employee Self Service screen choose the Payroll tile
- 3) Select the W-2/W-2c Forms Tile
- 4) Ensure that the Tax Year is 2025
- 5) Select View Form
- 6) If you need instructions on filing your W-2 select the square under the heading filing instructions.

Those who did not choose to receive the 2025 W-2 electronically will receive their copy via mail. It will be mailed to the address that is stored in the HR/Payroll system.

Questions about W-2s should be directed to the USC Payroll Department via email payroll@mailbox.sc.edu. When communicating with the USC Payroll Department share your legal name and USC ID so that you may be easily identified and assisted efficiently.

2) 2026 State ORP Open Enrollment

Current participants of the State Optional Retirement Program (State ORP), administered by the SC Public Employee Benefit Authority (PEBA), may participate in the open enrollment period until March 1, 2025.

During the annual open enrollment, State ORP participants may change their State ORP service provider or, if eligible, make a one-time, irrevocable election to join the South Carolina Retirement System (SCRS).

Changes should be made through the [Member Access Account](#). Changes made during the open enrollment period become effective April 1, 2026.

Additional information and employee resources are available at <https://peba.sc.gov/state-orp> and <https://peba.sc.gov/sorp-oe>.

3) MoneyPlus Dependent Care Spending Account and Medical Spending Account

Remember March 31, 2025, is the deadline to request reimbursement from 2024 funds in your Dependent Care and Medical Spending Accounts.

Any funds left in a Dependent Care Spending Account will be forfeited after the reimbursement deadline.

Money left in a Medical Spending Account on December 31, 2024, is eligible to be carried over. Up to \$640 of those funds carried over into the 2025 plan year.

Please contact AsiFlex with questions about Dependent Care and Medical Spending Accounts. <https://www.asiflex.com/scmoneyplus/>

4) Applying for Extended Leave of Absence (Family and Medical Leave – FMLA)

An employee should request an Extended Leave of Absence for absences that are greater than 3 days. Leave may be requested for an employee's own health condition or to provide care to an immediate family member.

Employees may submit these requests directly to the USC Benefits Department through the HR/Payroll System or the appropriate forms may be shared directly with me via email, fax, mail, or hand delivery and I will submit them for review on behalf of the employee.

Employees should request to receive the appropriate forms as soon as they become aware of the need to be away from work for more than 3 days. Division Chairs and supervisors may also request that forms be sent to an employee.

Notifying me via email or telephone will allow me to start the process.

For more details about Family and Medical Leave and other leave benefits please view this website

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/human_resources/benefits/time_away/index.php

5) Employee Assistance Program

Please remember that the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a confidential resource provided by the University to help employees and their family members through difficult times.

Our EAP vendor McLaughlin Young Group (Mygroup) provides the following types of services: Counseling, Online Services, Legal and Financial Assistance, Savings Center, and Online Seminars.

Except for fees associated with the purchase of legal documents, the EAP provides up to six counseling sessions per person, per issue, per year at no cost to university faculty, staff, and their immediate household members.

Employees and their dependents have access to counselors 24 hours a day 365 days a year by calling 800-633-3353 or 704-529-1428. To access resources on-line, log into www.mygroup.com and click on Current Participants and Employee Resources. Use the username "USC" and password "guest." You may also download the MyGroup app which is available at the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.

For more information about the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) please view this website https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/human_resources/benefits/employee_wellness/eap/index.php



Bernard Totten
Director of Corporate and Community Outreach /
Coordinator of USCL Indian Land Location

REPORT TO THE FACULTY ORGANIZATION

Friday, February 6, 2026

MEDFORD LIBRARY SERVICES AT INDIAN LAND

Medford Library services are now available at the Indian Land campus to support students, faculty, and staff. During scheduled service hours, library faculty provide walk up Ask a Librarian support, reference help, book pickup and delivery, and laptop access. These services are open to all currently enrolled USCL students as well as faculty and staff. The goal is to increase access to academic support and strengthen engagement at the Indian Land site. Special thanks to Rebecca and Mckenzie for their flexibility.

Library service dates and times:

Thursday, February 5, 5:00pm to 7:00pm
Friday, February 13, 9:00am to 1:00pm
Tuesday, February 17, 9:00am to 11:00am

(Continued)

Thursday, February 19, 5:00pm to 7:00pm
Friday, February 27, 9:00am to 1:00pm
Tuesday, March 3, 9:00am to 11:00am
Thursday, March 5, 5:00pm to 7:00pm
Tuesday, March 17, 9:00am to 1:00pm
Thursday, March 19, 5:00pm to 7:00pm
Friday, March 27, 9:00am to 1:00pm
Tuesday, March 31, 9:00am to 11:00am
Thursday, April 2, 5:00pm to 7:00pm
Friday, April 10, 9:00am to 1:00pm
Tuesday, April 14, 9:00am to 11:00am
Thursday, April 16, 5:00pm to 7:00pm
Friday, April 24, 9:00am to 1:00pm

INDIAN LAND ADVISORY BOARD

Our next advisory board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 4, from 11:30am to 12:30pm at the USC Lancaster Indian Land location. The meeting will focus on practical discussion and shared problem solving related to student engagement and workforce connection, with emphasis on internships, mentorship, job shadowing, professional projects, workforce partnerships, and direct hiring pathways. Dan Richards from Palmetto College will join the meeting to share updates on Palmetto College programs, available offerings, and how these options support employee education and workforce development. Light refreshments will be provided.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Indian Land Fall Festival:

USCL Indian Land participated in the 2025 Indian Land Fall Festival, connecting with residents, students, and local business leaders. Our presence at the event increased community awareness of USCL's educational and workforce initiatives, while reinforcing our ongoing partnerships in the area. 2026 Indian Land Community Festival. We are excited to share that the 2026 Indian Land Community Festival, hosted by the Rotary Club of Indian Land, is officially approved and scheduled for Saturday, April 25, 2026, from 10:00 AM –8:00 PM at Indian Land Middle Schools. This year's festival will feature more vendors, sponsors, and activities. Festival information and sponsorship links are available at <https://indianlandcommunityfestival.com>.

(Continued)

Non-Credit Course Offerings:

Work is underway with the Sun City, Tree Tops, and Greenway Square communities to expand noncredit course offerings. Early conversations show strong demand and interest in college level courses and seminars. Coordination is taking place with community lifestyle directors to survey residents, gather course recommendations, and share current course offerings to align programming with community interest.

Dining Around Indian Land:

Approval has been secured for a Dining Around Indian Land event planned for this spring, with details to be announced. The event will take place at the CrossRidge One building at 3000 WorldReach Dr., Indian Land SC 29707, also known as City of Lights. The space was secured at no cost through partnership support from CrossRidge and INSP. This event will focus on fun and community engagement in the Indian Land area. Flyer coming soon.

Event “Hot Chocolate and Donuts”:

The “Hot Chocolate and Donuts” student engagement event has been postponed due to recent snow and has been rescheduled. The new date is Monday, February 9, from 9:00am to 3:00pm at the Indian Land location. The event will serve students throughout the day, including both morning and afternoon classes, and is intended to encourage connection, visibility, and informal engagement with students on campus.

** Tuesday evening class will receive fresh treats and warm drinks as well.*

LEADERSHIP LANCASTER

I want to share that I am enjoying being part of Leadership Lancaster through the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce. The experience has provided strong exposure to the region through site visits to MUSC Lancaster Medical Center, Lancaster area schools, and local businesses such as Nutramax. The recent Myrtle Beach retreat weekend offered focused team building and relationship development across the cohort, strengthening collaboration and leadership connections.

FACILITIES UPDATE

Nothing to report currently.

Medford Library Faculty Meeting Report

February 6, 2026

SERVICE STATISTICS AND PROGRAMS FOR FALL 2025

- 6,464 LibGuide views
- 447 Study and Lounge Area Reservations
- 24 Conference Room uses
- 34 Computer Lab uses
- 49 Community computer uses
- 9 Instruction Classes
- 13 Book a Librarian

CIRCULATION STATISTICS FOR FALL 2025

- 317 General collection items
- 25 AV collection items
- 28 Graphic Novel items
- 23 Juvenile collection items
- 20 New Book collection items
- 9 Oversize collection items
- 18 On Display items
- 173 Special Collection items
- 49 Reserve items

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Library Services at Indian Land Campus
 - The library will be providing drop in Book-a-Librarian hours and book delivery services at the Indian Land Campus. The schedule for the services is available at <https://usclancaster.libguides.com/c.php?g=322991&p=2163858>.
- Blind Date with a Book Display – February 1 – 15
 - Each book includes 1 bookmark, 1 button, and a small pack of stickers.
- Lancer Health Fair – February 24, 11:00 am to 2:00 pm
 - Join us for the Lancer Health Fair at Medford Library. This event is open to everyone. We will be highlighting all of the different health resources on campus available to students, faculty, and staff, including tours of our new Quiet Wellness Room.
- The library is collaborating with the D.E.F.I.N.E. club to celebrate Women's History Month. More details coming soon.

GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Spring Break (March 9-13) Hours

- Monday - Thursday 8 am to 6 pm
 - Friday 8 am to 12 pm
- Instruction classes are available in person and virtually. [Request a library instruction class](#) today.
- [Book a Librarian](#) is available for you and your students.

PUBLISHED? LET US KNOW SO WE CAN BUY YOUR BOOK!

- [Request we purchase materials.](#)

HELPFUL LINKS

- Place materials on [Reserve](#)
- Reserve the [library computer lab](#)
- Reserve the [library conference room](#)
- Document the impact of your scholarly activities with these [Tools for Tracking Tenure & Promotion.](#)
- Check out [resources for faculty and staff.](#)



USC LANCASTER
Security & Emergency Management – Safety Team

Agenda/Discussion Items

- New Look/Rebranding
 - New Name-Security and Emergency Management – Safety Team
 - Changes have already been made on website
 - Uniforms
 - See attachment
- Advisement Team
 - Staff, Faculty and Students
 - Teams consist of 1 – 3 people per group
 - Deadline to sign up is February 21st
- Campus Bulletin Boards
 - “You are not alone,” staff, faculty and students who need security – safety team, will assist them to their vehicle or to another building after dark
 - See attachment
- Training Opportunities-Mental Health-Temika Lewis
- Training Opportunities- Active Shooter- USC Main Campus Trainer
 - Security and Safety Staff

Student Success and Retention

USCL Faculty Organization Report

February 6, 2026

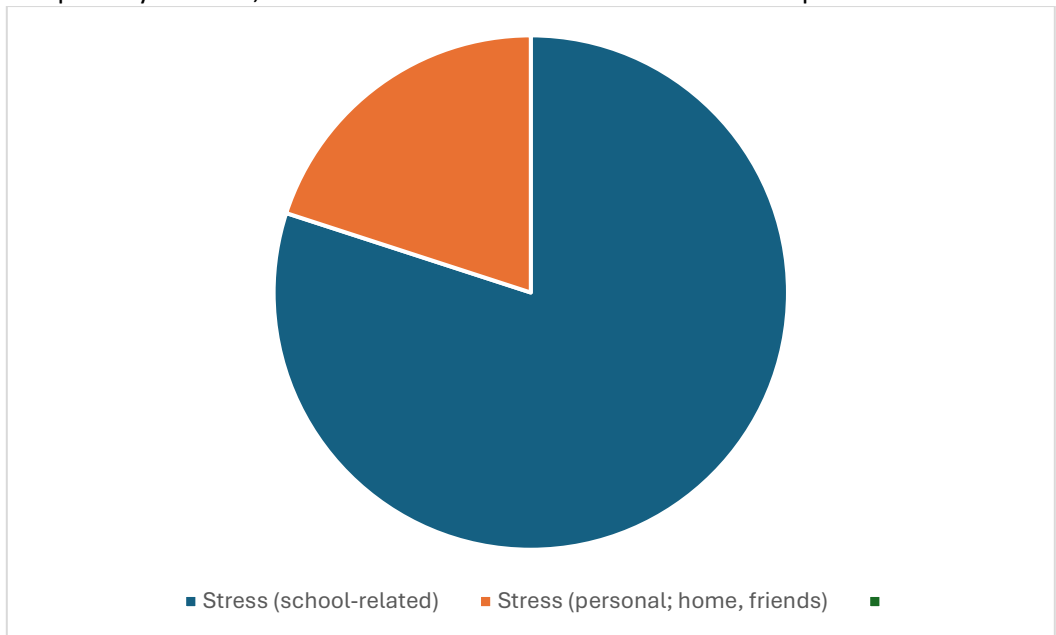
- Faculty advisors were sent their advisee lists this week (Wednesday, February 4).

Counseling Services

Monthly Status Report (January 2026)

Consistent with trends observed in prior years, counseling appointment requests declined during the month of January, a pattern that is expected to shift as the semester progresses. The majority of students seeking counseling reported academic-related stress as their primary concern, while a smaller number identified home and personal stressors.

FORMAT	
In-person	8
Tele-health	2
Phone	0
Total	10



Mental Health and Wellness Club: This semester, the Mental Health and Wellness Club will offer a variety of student-centered events, beginning with the 2nd Annual Paints & Poems on February 25 in celebration of Black History Month. Additionally, Counseling Services, in partnership with Natalie Calhoun, will host a student-athlete open forum this month for USCL student-athletes, creating intentional spaces for connection, conversation, and support.

**Information provided by Tamika Lewis, MA, LPC, NCC*

Early Alerts

Shout out to Zoe! On Wednesday, February 18th, Zoe Byrd will present her poster titled "Early Alert: Connecting with Students Where They Are" at the 2026 Region 1 and Region 2 Conference for NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising. It will be held in Providence, Rhode Island. This will be Zoe's second time presenting at NACADA; last year she presented a concurrent session titled "Supporting Students Beyond the Initial Advising Session" at the NACADA Region 3 and Region 7 Conference on March 6th, 2025 in Memphis, Tennessee.

Submit an early alert: To submit an alert, please complete [this form](#). If you have multiple alerts to submit, you can email Zoe Byrd at zmbryd@email.sc.edu. In the email, please include the student's name, student ID, reason for alert, class name, and recommendation (contact Professor, tutoring, withdraw from class, counseling, etc.).

Below are information/resources frequently shared when contacting students for alerts:

- If a professor recommends a student withdraw from a course:
 - Remind student of the withdrawal date or direct to the [Academic Calendar](#) for important withdrawal deadlines.
 - Recommend student speaks with their academic advisor and Financial Aid. Withdrawing can have academic and financial impacts, so we always want to make sure students can make an informed decision when withdrawing.
- If a student is struggling with the course material or is scoring poorly on quizzes/tests:
 - Direct them to the [Academic Success Center](#).
 - The ASC offers in-person and virtual one-on-one appointments, as well as labs and studio drop-in hours. They also offer a great study strategies session that every student can benefit from.
 - Direct them to contact their professor with questions, concerns, or issues.
- Additional resources/quick links that are helpful to students
 - [Counseling Services](#)
 - [Student Disability Resource Center](#)
 - [Financial Aid and Veteran Affairs](#)
 - [Academic & Student Affairs](#)
 - [USC Lancaster Information Technology](#)
 - [Columbia DoIT Help Desk](#)
 - [Blackboard Support](#)
 - [Bookstore](#)
 - [Community Services and Resources](#)
 - [Student Food Pantry](#)

**Information provided by Zoe Byrd, Academic Advisor for Arts and Business, Early Alert Coordinator*

Leadership Distinction

Celebration of Lancer Excellence

The Celebration of Lancer Excellence will be held on Thursday, April 9 from 11:30-1:00pm in Medford Library. Please encourage your students to share their beyond the classroom experiences in research, internships, service, study abroad, peer leadership, and more! We are accepting applications for posters, art displays, and creative performances. Student may sign up using the online [registration form](#).

Discover USC

Discover USC will be held on Friday, April 24, 2026, at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center. Registration for [presenters](#) and [reviewers](#) is open. Visitors who will not be serving in one of these roles are welcome to drop in without registering. Registration deadlines:

- [Presenters](#) must register by Wednesday, March 4, 2026.
- [Reviewers](#) must register by Friday, March 27, 2026.

For more information, please visit [DISCOVER USC, Sponsored by the Office of the Vice President for Research - DISCOVER USC, Sponsored by the Office of Research | University of South Carolina](#)

**Graduation with Leadership Distinction is a program through the Center for Integrative and Experiential Learning (CIEL) at Columbia. Asheley Schryer and Dr. Liz Easley are the CIEL Fellows for the Lancaster campus.*

Student-Athlete Success Programming

- We currently have 112 student-athletes enrolled for Spring 2026, including a few additions and some who did not return after the fall semester.
- With baseball season beginning, all professors who have baseball student-athletes enrolled in their courses have been contacted and provided with the team's competition schedule. Student-athletes are strongly encouraged to communicate early and proactively with their professors regarding any anticipated class absences.
- Meetings are also being conducted with student-athletes who experienced academic challenges last semester. These meetings are intended to help them organize their responsibilities and connect with available campus support resources.
- If any faculty or staff members have questions or concerns regarding a student-athlete, please contact Natalie Calhoun at ncalhoun2@sc.edu.

**Information provided by Natalie Calhoun, Student-Athlete Success Coordinator.*

STUDY TRAVEL

There are two study travel trips in May 2026. Please encourage your students to reach out for more information.

Trip Location: England, Scotland, and Wales*

Dates: May 2026 (online pre-departure lectures begin May 4; travel dates: May 11-20)

Course: HIST 101 with Dr. Kim Richardson Full Itinerary and Cost

**This trip is in collaboration with the Lancaster County Chamber and USCL.*

Contact Kim Richardson

with questions (krichard@mailbox.sc.edu).

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: FEBRUARY 10

Trip location: Seville and Alicante, Spain

Dates: May 8-17, 2026

Course: PHIL 103 - Special Topics in Ethics and Values with Dr. Peter Seipel

Cost: 10-11 students \$3,450 per student; 12-13 students \$3,300 per student (note: this doesn't include the flights)

Contact Peter Seipel with questions (pseipel@mailbox.sc.edu).

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: FEBRUARY 27



Matt Williamson
Director and Principal
Investigator Office of Federal TRiO
Programs

REPORT TO THE FACULTY ORGANIZATION

Friday, February 6, 2026

OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Enrollment and Status Update

- We are currently serving 119 freshmen and sophomores from low-income and first-generation (LIFG) backgrounds, as well as students with disabilities.
- Recruitment is going well. We are required to serve a minimum of 165 qualifying students prior to August 31, 2026.
- Two-thirds of our enrollment need to be students who we consider to be double-qualifiers, i.e. students who are either (1) LIFG or (2) low-income and disabled (LID). One-third of the students with disabilities we serve must also be students from low-income families.
- If you know of a student who may benefit from the vital services our OSP project provides or who may qualify as LIFG or LID, please refer them to **Mark Ammons** at rmammons@email.sc.edu or **Andrea Campbell** at campbe99@mailbox.sc.edu.

USCL Cares Winter Clothing Drive Kickoff Event

- The Kickoff Event for the Winter Clothing Drive was an enormous success with 65 students in attendance on January 15.
- A warm thank you to everyone who contributed. A special thank you to OSP graduate **Joaquin Espinoza** and **Jose Guruceaga Burgos** for their help.

OSP Welcome Back Luncheon

- The OSP Welcome Back Luncheon was held on January 20 with 41 students attending. A pat on the back for OSP students inviting their peers so they could see if they qualify as a project participant.

Study Abroad Info Session

- Thank you to **Dr. Kim Richardson** and **Asheley Schryer** for presenting the "Travel Study Opportunities & Funding Workshop" to our OSP students on January 27. Thanks also to USCL alum **Kennedy Fritz** of the **Lancaster County Chamber of Commerce** for presenting as well (see below).
- A total of 37 students were in attendance.



USC Columbia Transfer Workshop

- On February 3, we hosted **Alison Scheide** from USC's Office of Undergraduate Admissions (see below). 36 students attended.





USCL's Annual Pre-Super Bowl Celebration

- We hosted this event on February 4. 67 students attended.

Careers in Science Lecture Series

- The initial Careers in Science Lecture of the Spring 2026 semester will be held on Wednesday, February 18. **Erick Crawford** (Crawford Funeral Home) will present on careers in mortuary science.


 Careers in Science
LIFE AFTER DEATH



SPEAKER	WHEN & WHERE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erick V. Crawford • CFO of Crawford Funeral Home • Graduate of the American Academy McAllister Institute of Funeral Service 	<p style="text-align: right;">February 18th, 2026 12:20-12:55 p.m in TRiO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">COMPLIMENTARY LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED</p>

- Future lectures are being scheduled for March and April.
- Huge thanks to **Dr. Bettie Johnson** for once again planning the lectures and allowing our students to benefit from them.

OSP Spring Break Trip to Colonial Williamsburg

- March 9-13: We are submitting a proposal for this student travel opportunity to the Department of Education (ED) for approval.
- If we are unable to secure prior approval from ED, then we are tentatively making plans for day trips to both Asheville, NC and Charleston, SC before the Spring 2026 semester ends.

Upcoming Events

- February 17: **Carolina Day 2026** in Columbia
- February 25: **SGA Discussions with Deans**

UPWARD BOUND

Enrollment Update

- We are in the fourth year of our current grant cycle. The reporting period for the current year will close on May 31, 2026. At present, we are officially serving 55 participants from grades 9-12 at Andrew Jackson, Buford, and Lancaster High Schools. We are required to serve a minimum of 62 qualifying participants each year. To qualify, participants must have completed the 8th grade, be between the ages of 13 and 19, and have a need for academic support to pursue a program of postsecondary

education. All participants must be either from low-income families or be potential first-generation college students – or be determined to have a high risk for academic failure.

- We are currently reviewing summer pre-admits alongside 45 outstanding applications. This position allows us to not only meet, but most likely exceed, our required minimum enrollment of 62 participants. The maximum number we are authorized to report is 74.

Academic and Recruitment Sessions

- **Mark Ammons** and **Matt Williamson** held a recruitment session at Buford High School on January 22. We connected with 32 potential participants and are excited to review their applications.
- We are currently working with the counseling staff at our three target schools to arrange in-person academic session visits with our current participants for the Spring 2026 semester. We are planning two sessions per month at each school. In addition, plans are being made to have several Zoom meetings with parents who are unable to attend on-campus sessions. There is no doubt that this new approach to recruit and provide services to participants in this manner will be a “game changer” as we seek to increase the numbers of participants from rural Lancaster County schools.

STUDENT CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

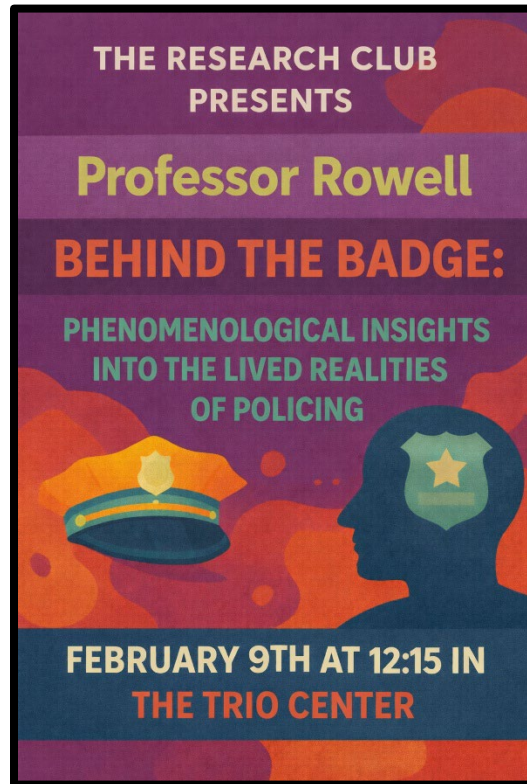
D.E.F.I.N.E. and G.E.N.T.S.

- D.E.F.I.N.E. held its end-of-the-semester holiday celebration on December 4. They will also help with boxing the Winter Clothing Drive items for distribution to **United Way of Lancaster County** for the **Lancaster Area Coalition for the Homeless (LACH)** and to victims of Hurricane Helene in Western North Carolina.
- Both the D.E.F.I.N.E. and G.E.N.T.S. organizations are cosponsoring a Valentine’s fundraiser called “All You Need Is Love... and a Great Photo” (see below). For \$5.00, students will receive a free cupcake along with a Valentine’s Day photo.

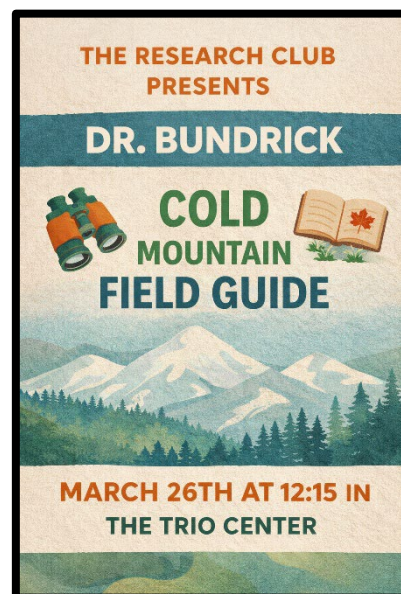
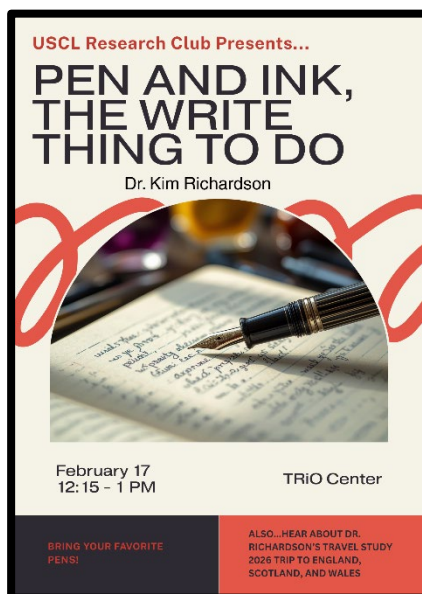


USCL Research Club

- The initial Research Club presentation will be held on February 9. Professor Debbie will present “Behind the Badge: Phenomenological Insights into the Lived Realities of Policing” (see below).



- We will be hosting additional presentations on February 17 and March 26 (see below).



COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

USCL Cares Angel Tree Campaign

- Spearheaded by OSP and Student Nursing Association (SNA) students, donations from the Angel Tree Campaign were delivered to **Brooklyn Springs Elementary School, Clinton Elementary School, and Southside Early Childhood Center** on December 17.
- Thanks to your generosity, **157** gifts were collected this past year.

USCL Cares Winter Clothing Drive

- Thank You LANCER NATION! Because of your giving spirit, **173** items have been collected for this year's Winter Clothing Drive.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Notes Concerning the Government Shutdown

- Details will be forthcoming in next month's report on the effect of the recent partial government shutdown, if any, on our program operations.

Supporting Federal TRiO Programs

- Members of Congress need to hear from you, their constituents, so they understand what is happening locally and its immediate, very real impact on the lives of the students we serve.
- Your advocacy for TRiO can make a difference. If anyone is interested in learning how you may support bipartisan funding efforts to assist our TRiO grant projects at the USC Lancaster campus, please contact **Mark Ammons** at rmammons@email.sc.edu or **Matt Williamson** at mwilliam@mailbox.sc.edu.

Direct Financial Support

- Anyone interested in supporting TRiO initiatives here at USCL may contribute to our designated fund through the **Educational Foundation of the University of South Carolina Lancaster**. Financial donations may be made via the QR code on the slide listed below.

SUPPORT USC LANCASTER'S OFFICE OF FEDERAL TRIO PROGRAMS



SCAN HERE



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#LancerNation

#TRiOWorks

System Affairs Report
Jan. 23, 2026

Committee co-chairs: Tekla Johnson and R. Mac Jones

Topics:

- Faculty Workplace Incivility and Faculty Progressive Discipline
- Grievance procedure
- Proposed changes to BLS and BOL

- I. **Faculty Workplace Incivility and Faculty Progressive Discipline proposals.** We recommended that these proposals be sent to the Policy Committee and then to the full faculty, in accordance with previously agreed-upon procedure.
- II. **Grievance procedure proposal.** The faculty submitted changes to our grievance procedures last year and got provost's office feedback in August recommending three minor changes. System Affairs agreed to fix a typo, to specify that grievance-related communications be sent through our university email addresses, and to tighten up vague phrasing in a section about failure to meet deadlines to mirror Columbia's more specific language. A plan for grievance committee training will be proposed this spring.
- III. **Recommended changes to BOL and BLS degrees.** We voted unanimously to approve a dance major option for the BLS, as suggested by Steve Lowe. While dance majors are by no means particularly high-earning college graduates, the current Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook indicates that the number of jobs in dance-related fields (choreography, teaching, arts administration, dance itself) is likely to increase more than most in the foreseeable years. The major option for the BLS will require an additional major option to accompany dance, along with a cognate. USC anticipates relationships with the Joffrey Ballet as well as with the Palmetto Conservatory of Dance.

Please also see the list below and weigh in if you haven't already. We've asked Steve Lowe, who in his capacity as PC Academic Advisory chair sent us the proposals below, to talk more with the committee about rationales for the changes.

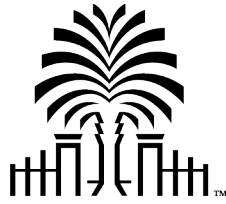
Not on the list, but requested for addition to the BOL requirements by a USCL faculty member: ACCT 225, *Introduction to Financial Accounting*, "User-oriented approach to the study of financial accounting and reporting topics related to business decisions." Three credits, no pre-requisites. Your thoughts on adding this requirement?

From: Lowe, Steve <LOWESH@mailbox.sc.edu>

Greetings system affairs members.

At our last academic advisory meeting, we discussed the following to forward to system affairs for consideration and a vote of the senate. On our agenda was consideration of a number of courses that we would like to add to the curricula of the Liberal Studies or Organizational Leadership degree programs. Many of these courses have been used as substitutes for courses already in those programs, but new financial aid regulations require all courses to be part of a student's curriculum.

Course or requirement	Substitute Course	Explanation/Justification
GFL 122-level	Approved substitution	Students with courses other than SPAN 109/110 have no access to 122-level courses. Also, many students who have SPAN 109/110 (or the equivalent) have not taken a language class in years.
ENGL 463 (BOL)	ITEC 242 and MGMT 250	Often, students entering the BOL have taken one of the substitute courses.
ITEC 264 (BOL)	MGSC 290	Very similar courses; many students have taken MGSC 290
Statistics requirement (BOL) Current: PSYC 220, SOCY 392, STAT 201	Add STAT 205 and 206	205 is Elementary Statistics for the Biological and Life Sciences; 206 is Elementary Statistics for Business
ACCT 324 (BOL major reqs.)	SPTE 240 and JOUR 303	Note: students would not be able to get credit for more than one of these three courses
JOUR 201 Principles of Public Relations (BOL major reqs.)	MKTG 350 Principles of Marketing	Students could get credit for one or the other; or, we could add MKTG to the curriculum
BOL major reqs.	FINA 341 Management of Risk and Insurance, 363 Introduction to Finance , and 364 Financial Institutions; MGMT 402 Managing Teams in the Workplace and 403 Leadership in Organizations; RETL 351 Retail Entrepreneurship	Have been requested to be added to the curriculum
Cognate (BLS)	Align BLS cognate with requirements of the College of Arts & Sciences	Currently, we require courses at the 300-level or above; CAS has several disciplines in which 200-level courses are accepted for cognate credit; see https://academicbulletins.sc.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/#text and scroll down to Cognates
RELG cognate	Add RELG 270	Currently not included in the CAS list
ENGL 431A Children's Literature (English cognate only)	ISCI 325 Children's Literature	Courses are similar but sufficiently different to include in cognate only



UNIVERSITY OF
South Carolina
LANCASTER

FO Executive Committee
Faculty Organization Report
February 6, 2026

The USCL Faculty Organization Executive Committee met on Wednesday, February 4, 2026. Topics of discussion included:

1. Updating FO Minutes Posted on Website for Accessibility

- a. Antonio Mackey identified approximately 77 files that need to be updated for ADA compliance
- b. Executive committee will meet to work on updating these files

2. Review Policies and Procedures

- a. Will develop some procedures for saving documents and archiving information for continuity's sake as committees change over
 - i. For example: Where are motions (passed or failed) saved?

3. Revisions to the CPHE standards and policies

- a. The Executive Committee met with Dr. Pat Lawrence on Monday February 2 to discuss revisions to the Standards and Procedures for CPHE
- b. Revisions were shared on February 4, 2026, via the newsletter emailed to faculty
- c. An open comment period has opened for 4 weeks—through end of business on March 4, 2026
 - i. Will be requesting feedback from faculty for a collective statement
 - ii. Individual comments directly to CPHE are also encouraged particularly for process concerns

4. Amendments to the Bylaws and Compiler Policies

- a. Based on motions passed during the December 2025 meeting, the bylaws and compiler policy have been updated
- b. These will appear on the website this week

USCL Tenure and Promotion Committee

Report to the Faculty Organization

2/6/2026

Submitted 2/4/26 by Brittany Taylor-Driggers, chair

2025-26 USCL T&P Committee members: Steven Campbell, Susan Cruise, Kate Holland, Kim Richarson, Peter Seipel, and Brittany Taylor-Driggers

Spring Update:

The T&P committee is hard at work reading files and scheduling meetings.

A big THANK YOU to everyone for submitting your FIF files!

The committee will meet February 11, 2026, to discuss one First Year Review file. We expect to submit our review of this file by February 16th, 2026.

We have several meetings scheduled during February (and possibly March) to review all Faculty Information Forms (FIFs) for tenure-track/tenured faculty. FIF reviews are expected to be complete by April.

We are also scheduled to discuss eight post-tenure review files the week of February 24th, 2026, and plan to submit our reviews by mid-late March.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email me.

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA FACULTY SENATE

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

This session was held in person at the Russell House Theatre

PRESIDING CHAIR LIAM HEIN

The minutes from the December 3 meeting were approved.

Report from the Provost

Provost Fitzpatrick gave an update on the status of PTF guidelines across the university. In October 2023, a memo was issued requiring units to begin developing a second promotional step beyond Senior Instructor due to concerns about limited advancement opportunities. This action was taken in anticipation that Faculty Manual revisions might not pass in a timely manner. The Faculty Manual revisions were approved in 2024, followed by State HR approval of new faculty titles in October 2024. The College of Education became the first unit with approved PTF criteria (October 2024), using college-wide guidelines with department-level committees.

The Provost outlined the responsibilities of the Office of Faculty Affairs, including Review of tenure-track and PTF criteria, Tenure and Promotion file reviews, governance and committee support (including UCPTF and Board of Trustees), and faculty manual oversight, civility investigations, grievance processes, and policy development.

For faculty going up for promotion under the existing guidelines, they cannot transfer into a new title series until new guidelines are approved. The Provost thanked faculty, Senate members, and Office of Faculty Affairs staff for sustained efforts over a multi-year process.

Guest Speaker: Dr. Cathy Ford, Co-Founder, Stand Together for Higher Ed

****Dr. Ford's PowerPoint presentation is available on the Faculty Senate website with the materials from the January 14th, meeting.****

Here is the overview of information: Stand Together for Higher Ed is a faculty-led, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization focused on protecting academic freedom, strengthening shared governance, and protect the public mission of higher education. Stand Together is not a union or an institutional advocacy shop. They help build collective capacity so faculty and staff can make their own informed decisions in their own contexts about how to protect academic freedom and shared governance. Dr. Ford emphasized narrative change—helping faculty and staff across the country tell authentic public stories about how valuable higher ed is to the public good in local and state contexts—as a complement, not a replacement, to governance and advocacy. The point is to provide a different story in contrast to the distortions of higher ed that have taken root in public discourse. Dr Ford focused on one initiative through Stand Together, Reclaim the Narrative. The initiative trains faculty and staff to share local, human-centered stories through op-eds, letters to the editor, social media, and media interviews. Reclaim the Narrative focuses on faculty and staff voices, not institutional messaging, and has a flexible, voluntary, and locally adaptable framework. There is a 3-hour workshop available, if interested in learning more.

A toolkit with templates and guides is available online at <https://www.standtogetherhighered.org/resources>

Reports of Faculty Standing Committees

- **Committee on Curricula and Courses:** Michael Dickson presented the committee report and called for approval for 9 new courses. The committee motion was unanimously approved. **Steering Committee** submitted a proposal to approve the replacement for UCPTF, which was approved.

All proposals are available for review on the Faculty Senate webpage.

Report of the Chair

Chair Hein then gave a reminder about the April deadline to make all online materials accessible. CTE developed many 30 minutes sessions to address this. You can go to the CTE website: https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/cte/workshops/digital_accessibility_microlearning_series/index.php

CPHE is behind schedule. They are meeting with the faculty for Responsible Education and Accreditation next week to talk about the evidentiary guidelines they have developed. The second call for comments for CPHE is now planned for early February. Please review the materials posted by FAC to make an informed comment. Those comments will be de-identified and combined before being submitted by Chair Hein. Michael Dickson, Philosophy is a faculty representative in discussions with CPHE. If you have comments about the process, please email him at dickson@sc.edu

Chair Hein requested that units please elect senators in the spring, so they are available to come to orientation in August and ready to serve for the fall semester. Our Senate website is accurate, to our knowledge. If you see an error, email hein@sc.edu to get it corrected. We need nominations for the Faculty Senate Chair-Elect. The call will go out in February and into March; the election will be held in April. Please consider nominating your colleagues. Nominees cannot be in an administrative position but does not need to be a full professor. The call for committee members Goes out in January for the 23 committees and goes out to all faculty members. Then the Steering Committee will meet and evaluate representation before nominating members for Senate approval.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

None

Good of the Order

The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 2:30 pm in the Russell House Theater.

Adjournment

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah M. Rowell

Instructor of Criminal Justice

February 5, 2026

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA FACULTY SENATE

Wednesday, February 4, 2026

This session was held in person at the Russell House Theater

PRESIDING CHAIR LIAM HEIN

The minutes from the January 14, 2026 meeting were approved.

No report from the President

Report from the Provost

The Provost's report focused solely on AI in the USC system. She stressed that students will use AI regardless, so promoting ethical fluency is key. USC has purchased licenses for ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, and others, with the justification that these licenses ensure safe use without risking confidential data. She highlighted existing AI tools like the USC Campus Resource Guide, Cocky Scholar, and Garnet Guide, plus support and training programs such as the Garnet AI Foundry, the IT Group's café drop-in hours, The Center for Teaching Excellence, the Carolina Grant and Innovation Hub, the Provost AI Fellows program, and Thomas Cooper Library.

Following two AI retreats, she noted USC leads nationally in AI efforts. She reiterated the importance of AI fluency and indicated that she is piloting a program where AI student interns assist faculty in research and teaching. Currently in the USC Columbia Honors College, this pilot will train students on AI tools and pay them to work with faculty on research and teaching projects. She mentioned a pilot AI fluency assessment with 450 participants, now integrated into University 101, emphasizing ethics and professor-specific AI use expectations. Students who complete U101 will receive a digital badge.

The Office of Student Conduct is developing AI-related academic integrity guidelines. The Provost cautioned that current AI detection tools are ineffective, hence her reluctance to purchase them. The ASPIRE grant now has an AI program to provide faculty with the opportunity to pursue AI research, and the University is developing an Advising and Registration Companion chatbot called "ARC," that will assist students with common questions—aiming to free advisors from transactional tasks. Additionally, Enrollment Management is seeking AI-based transcript review tools. She acknowledged the schools and colleges moving ahead with embedding AI into their processes, including HRSM, the Business School, CIC, the School of Education, and the Law School.

The floor was opened for questions, which covered how the University is managing the ethical, political, and environmental issues inherent in AI use, the size of the incoming Freshman class and current housing projects, and the University's protocol for responding to the death of a student.

Reports from Faculty Standing Committees

- *Committee on Curriculum and Courses* provided the month's proposals (linked in the agenda) without any special comments. A motion was raised to approve the proposals. The motion passed.
- *Faculty Advisory Committee* withdrew the proposed changes to the faculty manual due to last-minute revisions. It will be brought before the Faculty Senate for notification at next month's meeting.

Report from the Chair

The Chair noted the deadline to be in compliance with the [Department of Justice Rule on Digital Accessibility](#) is April 2026. He directed senators to the educational resources provided by the [Center for Teaching Excellence](#).

Regarding CPHE, the Faculty for Responsible Education and Accreditation met on January 26th to share suggestions for Evidentiary Guidance. CPHE has opened the [draft evidentiary guidelines](#) for [public comment](#).

The Chair reiterated the need to have new faculty senators elected by the spring semester, so they can attend orientation. He also solicited calls for chair-elect nominations. There were 89 volunteers for Faculty Senate committees.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

None

Good of the Order

The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be March 4, 2026, at 2:30pm in the Russell House Theater.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Logan Cocklin

Director of Archives

February 5, 2026