

# USC AIKEN STRATEGIC PLAN – MAY 2008 UPDATE

## I. Excellent Academic and Co-Curricular Programs

### A. Modify/Enhance the curriculum to promote the development of engaged learners and principled citizens

#### 1. Revise the general education requirements

##### *Actions taken:*

- ✓ General Education Review Committee continued to meet regularly during the 2007-2008 academic years
- ✓ Five members of Gen Ed Review Committee attended the AAC&U Institute on General Education in May 2007 and four others attended the AAC&U Conference in January 2008
- ✓ Committee developed a proposal approved by Faculty Assembly in April for an Inter-Curricular Enrichment requirement for all students who are admitted beginning August 2009
- ✓ Committee's goal is to present additional recommendations in 2008-2009 for implementation in Fall 2009.

#### 2. Increase participation in dynamic experiential learning opportunities (e.g., study abroad, travel courses, service learning, internships, etc.)

##### *Actions taken:*

- ✓ A new exchange program has been developed with a university in France. The first students will participate in the exchange during 2008-2009.
- ✓ The ad hoc Global Studies Committee has been re-established. The committee has identified two major speakers who were invited to campus: Dr Mia Bloom, Political Scientist from the University of Georgia who spoke on the global spread of suicide terrorism (April 2007) and Dr. Jude Fernando, an anthropologist from Clark University, who spoke on the topic of comparative roles of governmental and non-governmental institutions in sustainable development and humanitarian assistance in March 2008.
- ✓ In Spring 2008, the University took advantage of an opportunity to host two scholars from China—one a professor of marketing and one a professor of Chinese theatre. They worked with the School of Business Administration and the Department of Visual and Performing Arts, respectively, and gave presentations to campus, community, and professional groups.
- ✓ During the 2008-09 academic year, USCA will host a Fulbright Scholar from India.

##### *Effectiveness Measures:*

- a. Monitor numbers of students who participate in study abroad courses, service learning, and internships.
  - ✓ The number of students who have participated in study abroad has steadily increased from 2 in 2003 to 55 in 2007. The number who have been participating in service learning and internship type courses has been, on average, 716 students per year over the past 5 years.

- b. Monitor attendance of students at campus international events and programs.

### 3. Establish several learning communities by Fall 2008

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Several learning communities will be available to students in Fall 2008 (one for honors program students, one on leadership, etc.). These will involve two linked courses and the opportunity for students to live in close proximity to one another in the new residence hall.

*Effectiveness Measures:*

- a. Monitor academic performance and retention of students who participate in a learning community.

### 4. Increase linked course offerings

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Several faculty members designed and offered linked courses in 2007-2008.

*Effectiveness Measures:*

- a. Monitor number of students who participate in linked courses and results of SETs for linked courses
  - ✓ SET results for these courses are not yet available

### 5. Expand participation in the Honors Program

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ The Director of the Honors Program took several important steps to increase participation in and prestige of the Honors Program. These included establishment of an Honors Program lounge in H&SS, and complimentary bookstore or copier debit cards. Each honors student was also invited to have dinner at the PSHS with the Chancellor, EVCAA and Director of the Honors Program
- ✓ Prior to the development of the new Honors Program, there were ten to fifteen students each year enrolled in the program. The new program began in 2005-2006 with 10 students. The following year, 23 students participated, and in 2007-2008, there were 32 enrolled.
- ✓ The first student graduated from the Honors Program in December 2007; seven are graduating in May 2008.

*Effectiveness Measures:*

- a. Monitor academic performance of honors students.
  - ✓ During the 2007-2008 academic year, the Director of the Honors Program established a process for regular monitoring of honors student performance. Of the 32 students in the program in Spring 2008, 6 have a 4.0 GPA; 24 have a GPA between 3.5 and 3.9; and 2 with GPAs below 3.5 (3.3 and a 3.4) are on probation.

### 6. Expand ADP initiatives

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ For 2007-2008, ADP programs included the Constitution Day student panel presentation and the ADP film series. The First Year Reading Experience (FYRE) and the Freshman Convocation were linked to ADP; all freshmen were required to attend. Approximately 50 faculty members participated as discussion leaders.

***Effectiveness Measures:***

- a. Monitor participation numbers at ADP programs and events
  - ✓ Attendance at ADP film showings continues to decrease.
- b. Survey student satisfaction with ADP programs.
  - ✓ Results of surveys of faculty and students about Freshman Convocation were very positive.

**B. Increase support for faculty to develop effective teaching strategies and techniques**

**1. Establish a faculty committee on teaching improvement**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ A senior advisory council on teaching has been established. Members are available to work individually with faculty who wish to consult with them, and several have offered teaching workshops

**2. Produce a quarterly newsletter on innovative teaching strategies**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ The Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) has included a number of website features such as videotaped workshops on topics ranging from creating podcasts to understanding generational learning styles. No action has been taken on producing a newsletter. The CTE website has numerous links to a variety of resources for faculty.

**3. Fund department subscriptions to disciplinary journals on college teaching**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ No action taken

**4. Expand programs and resources provided by the Center for Teaching Excellence**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ A larger number and variety of programs were offered in 2007-2008; many of these were recorded and made available to faculty through the CTE website. New workshop titles included Recognizing and Assisting Troubled Students and Creating Podcasts.
- ✓ Four faculty members (1 from Education, 1 from Mathematics, 2 from English) received funding to attend the Winter 2008 Lilly Conference on teaching effectiveness in North Carolina

***Effectiveness Measures:***

- a. Develop an evaluation instrument to determine effectiveness of faculty development workshops
  - ✓ An evaluation instrument was created and used at each of the faculty development workshops offered this year. Results have been used to identify topics for new workshops and to make improvements to those offered regularly. In response to faculty requests, workshops on advanced Blackboard, advanced Power Point, podcasting, and addressing classroom challenges were added.
- b. Monitor attendance at faculty development workshops
  - ✓ Twenty-one workshops were offered to 229 attendees in 2007-08.

**C. Expand initiatives that promote student retention and academic success**

## **1. Establish First Pace, a provisional admission program**

### ***Actions taken:***

- ✓ Based upon data from institutional studies, First Pace was established as a provisional admission program

### ***Effectiveness Measures:***

- a. Track number of students who successfully complete First Pace, the number who enroll as full-time students, and the number who earn a 2.0 GPA or higher in their first semester.
  - ✓ In Summer 2007, 38 students were admitted to First Pace, and 32 successfully completed the program. Of these, 30 completed the Fall 2007 term at USC Aiken and 27 returned for Spring 2008. Fifty percent earned a Fall semester GPA of 2.0 or higher.

## **2. Establish a schedule for raising probation and suspension levels**

### ***Actions taken:***

- ✓ New probation and suspension regulations were adopted and will go into effect for the 2008-2009 academic year

### ***Effectiveness Measures:***

- a. Track the number of students who are placed on probation and the percentage who subsequently improve their GPA to a satisfactory level within a semester/ within a year
  - ✓ After the new regulations go into effect in 2008-2009, a study will be conducted
- b. Track the number of students who are suspended, the number who are subsequently readmitted, and the percentage who graduate within six years of their original matriculation.
  - ✓ After the new regulations go into effect in 2008-2009, a study will be conducted

## **3. Establish a Grade Forgiveness Policy**

### ***Actions taken:***

- ✓ A new grade forgiveness policy has been adopted and implemented in 2007-2008

### ***Effectiveness Measures:***

- a. Track the number of students who receive grade forgiveness and the grades they make in the courses they repeat.
  - ✓ Fall 2007 was the first semester in which a student could take advantage of the grade forgiveness policy. Information on numbers of students who chose the option and their grades will not be available until the summer.

## **4. Establish an online BSN completion program**

### ***Actions taken:***

- ✓ An online BSN completion program was developed and approved. Academic year 2007-08 was the first year the program was offered.

### ***Effectiveness Measures:***

- a. Monitor the number of students who enroll and their academic performance compared to that of students in the traditional program.
  - ✓ 2007-2008 is the first year of the online BSN completion program. Results on the performance of the 15 students in the program are not yet available. An enrollment of 18 is anticipated for Fall 2008.

## 5. Establish a First Year Reading Program

### *Actions taken:*

- ✓ A First Year Reading Program was inaugurated in Fall 2007. All incoming freshmen received copies of The Color of Water by James McBride and participated in small group discussions led by faculty members on the day before Fall classes began.

### *Effectiveness Measures:*

- a. Survey students and faculty following August book discussion sessions
  - ✓ Surveys yielded very positive results. Ninety-six percent of the incoming freshmen reported that they read the book (although about 1/3 of those confessed to having read half or less) and that the greatest impact of their reading and discussion was in the areas of personal development and their perceptions of others.
  - ✓ Thirty-one of the 51 faculty members who served as discussion leaders responded to a survey with the following results: 100% agreed that materials provided in the preparation workshop were helpful, nearly 2 out of 3 agreed that the amount of time scheduled for the discussion was sufficient; and 80% reported that most of the students in their groups actively participated.

## 6. Establish Freshman Convocation

### *Actions taken:*

- ✓ In August 2007, the First Year Reading Program discussion sessions were immediately followed by a Freshman Convocation ceremony to celebrate and set an appropriate academic tone for the beginning of the students' college careers.

### *Effectiveness Measures:*

- a. Solicit feedback from participants
  - ✓ Feedback from faculty was overwhelmingly positive. Suggestions for improvement are being incorporated into plans for the August 2008 event.

## 7. Continue to maintain small class sizes, where feasible and appropriate, to promote student/faculty interaction

### *Actions taken:*

- ✓ Class size is monitored and reported in annual program reviews. In 2008-2009, Academic Council will conduct a comprehensive analysis to update recommendations on optimum class sizes across disciplines.

### *Effectiveness Measures:*

- a. Monitor class size and student faculty ratio via annual program reviews
  - ✓ Average class size across the campus is 18, and the student/faculty ratio is 14:1

## 8. Continue to provide opportunities for faculty and staff to participate in national teleconferences on topics related to student success and retention

### *Actions taken:*

- ✓ Several teleconferences have been made available during 2007-2008

***Effectiveness Measures:***

- a. Monitor the number of faculty and staff who participate in teleconferences. Track the results of any changes to policies and procedures that are developed based on information/ideas from teleconferences.
  - ✓ Steps have not yet been taken to track participation or changes made as a result of participation

**9. Promote ongoing discussion and adoption of consistent academic standards and expectations**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ No new action was taken in 2007-2008

**D. Review degree offerings to ensure continuing viability of existing programs and to capitalize on new and emerging degree opportunities**

**1. Determine the viability of existing degree programs**

- a. As academic units present periodic formal reports on program effectiveness to the Assessment Committee, they should pay particular attention to the issue of continued viability of degree programs with consistently low enrollments. A recommendation to continue such a program should be accompanied by a detailed plan for enhancement or expansion

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ The University Planning Committee developed a recommendation in Fall 2007 that the BIS program be eliminated. Due to some confusion about procedural next steps, the recommendation has only recently been submitted to the Courses and Curricula Committee that will consider it in Fall 2008.

**2. Explore development and/or modification of degree programs in response to regional research and employment opportunities as well as market demands**

- a. The Chancellor and appropriate academic administrators will explore development of science and engineering related degree programs in response to demands for scientists and engineers at the Savannah River Site and in area industries

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ In response to area needs, conversations are underway about expanding engineering education in the Aiken area.

- b. Academic units will explore opportunities to increase enrollment through articulation agreements, innovative scheduling, on-line course delivery, or other methods as appropriate

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ Conversations are underway with the USC College of Engineering about expanding engineering education in the Aiken area.
- ✓ New degree programs are being considered in biology, education, art, Spanish, and nursing education.
- ✓ An online BSN completion program was developed and approved. Academic year 2007-08 was the first year the program was offered.

- ✓ The Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures developed a draft proposal for a major in Spanish, but consideration of it will not advance until the two vacant tenure-track positions in Spanish are filled.
- c. **Data on local and national market/employment demands and forecasts will be monitored by the IE Office and taken into consideration when considering new programs**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Preliminary steps have been taken to identify informational sources on local and national market and employment demands. These data will be available to faculty via a website maintained by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.
- d. **When appropriate, consultants will be employed to explore the feasibility of proposed programs**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ A consultant recommended by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design visited in Fall 2007 and issued a very favorable report on the feasibility of establishing an art major at USC Aiken. The art faculty have taken steps to address some recommendations made by the consultant and to begin drafting a new program proposal.

**3. Departments will investigate the need for additional online or hybrid course offerings**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ As indicated above, the School of Nursing has established an online RN to BSN Completion program. The School of Business Administration has developed online versions of many of its courses, and individual courses in other disciplines (political science, education, etc.) are being offered. The greatest need is for a wider range of general education courses to be made available online or in hybrid format.

<b>II. Dynamic Student Centered Environment</b>
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**A. Develop and reach enrollment targets by effectively managing the recruitment and retention of students**

**1. Continue to use the Enrollment Planning Team to address enrollment management issues**

- a. **Continue to analyze data, conduct research, communicate facts, concerns, and issues and make recommendations to the campus community regarding the recruitment and retention of students**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ The Enrollment Planning Team (EPT) continues to identify trends, issues and policies which may impact the graduation rate and student enrollment at USCA. Based on issues/initiatives identified in the Strategic Plan, the EPT responds through Action Teams by addressing various issues and either provides a solution or brings recommendations to appropriate entities on campus. Recommendations may be in the form of needed resources, revisions to or the establishment of new policies, as well as suggesting enrollment goals for the campus. The EPT Year End Report is in the process of being redesigned so that key indicators are documented and shared with the

campus community. While the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and the Enrollment Services division provide much of the administrative support for this effort, staff and faculty throughout the campus are involved in analyzing data, communicating findings and making recommendations.

**2. Attract an increasingly diverse and qualified student body**

- a. Increase the proportion of students who are successful in USCA’s challenging academic environment**
- b. Increase the entering freshmen class by 4% annually**
- c. Strive for and maintain a demographic profile of students that mirrors the demographic profile of all citizens in South Carolina**
- d. Expand recruitment of students beyond the CSRA**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ The process of increasing the proportion of students who are successful is being continued by “reshaping” the student body. Freshmen, Transfer and Change of Campus admission requirements have been increased.
- ✓ The introduction of a Provisional Admissions program (Summer Bridge- First Pace) as well as the establishment and transformation of the Academic Success Center continue to enhance these efforts.
- ✓ New probation and suspension policies along with intervention programs which will be introduced this fall will also assist more of our students in becoming successful.

	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008
First Time Freshmen	609	674	620	645 (Goal)

Race	2006 SC Census Data	Fall 2007 USCA Student Body
White (non Hispanic)	65%	64%
Black	29%	26%
American Indian	.4%	.2%
Asian	1.1%	1.3%
Hispanic	3.5%	1.8%
Other or not reported	1%	6.7%

- ✓ With a desire to provide better connections with prospective students (and their parents) and to expand and focus our freshman recruitment in our new geographic target areas, the Office of Admissions in February 2006 implemented a territory-based counseling approach. Application activity over three years of admission cycles was analyzed and the splitting of the state into three geographic territories (with out-of-state students being grouped in with one counselor’s in-state duties) was agreed upon. The territories are Upstate, Midlands, and Lowcountry/out-of-state. This approach has been incorporated into recruitment activities (recruitment travel, the Teacher Cadet program, contact with guidance counselors, etc). Recruiters for the Midlands, Lowcountry, and Upstate have been establishing themselves in the high schools in their territories and continue familiarizing themselves with their target schools/regions. Further, particular emphasis has been placed on our twelve target counties (Anderson, Greenville, Spartanburg, York, Greenwood, Richland, Florence, Sumter, Horry, Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester).

**B. Enhance student success and persistence through increased engagement in and out of the classroom**

- 1. Aggressively implement strategies that increase student engagement with academic and curricular life (e.g. increased use of technology in and out of the classroom; Blackboard, blogging, podcasting and vodcasting; interactive and participatory classroom approaches; learning communities)**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ In 2007-08, the Center for Teaching Effectiveness increased the number of Blackboard workshops (at the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels) for faculty and also offered workshops on podcasting.
  - ✓ Most of the faculty in the School of Nursing use student response pads to promote interactive learning and the Department of History, Political Science and Philosophy invested this year in a classroom set of response pads for shared use by faculty.
  - ✓ Several learning communities have been created for Fall 2008.
  - ✓ The School of Nursing has established an online RN to BSN completion program.
  - ✓ Several pairs of faculty members have recently developed linked courses.
  - ✓ Approximately \$18,000 was awarded for student academic travel in 2007-08 to allow students to attend conferences with faculty mentors.
- 2. Aggressively implement strategies that increase the amount of time students interact with faculty, staff, and other students outside of the classroom**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ At the initiative of the Director of the Honors Program, every student in the Honors Program was invited to have dinner with the Chancellor, the EVCAA and Director of the Honors Program.
  - ✓ The Chancellor has also hosted dinners and breakfast meetings for small groups of student leaders.
  - ✓ Through the Live to Lead Leadership program, emerging student leaders are matched with faculty and staff mentors who meet with them several times during spring semester. The Live to Lead students also read a common book and participate in a book discussion with the Chancellor.
  - ✓ The number of students participating in student organizations and activities and community service projects has increased in the past few years. The number of students joining Greek organizations has increased by 43% over the past 4 years (with most of the growth in the last 2 years). The number of students participating in community service through the Alternative Fall and Spring Break trips has grown from 6 in 2006-07 to 65 this year. Participation in intramural sports has increased over 5% from last year.
- 3. Adjust class sizes as necessary to ensure effective student-instructor interaction**
    - a. Develop mechanism for periodic review of class size and appropriateness of size given subject matter and institutional commitment to individual attention**

- b. Conduct comprehensive review of current classroom spaces and configurations. Evaluate adequacy of space in light of class size review**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Class size is monitored and reported in annual program reviews.
- ✓ In 2008-2009, Academic Council will conduct a comprehensive analysis to update recommendations on optimum class sizes across disciplines. Attention will be given to determining increases to class size that may be effected without negatively impacting student learning outcomes.

**C. Increase effectiveness of academic advising**

- 1. Review and, where appropriate, implement advising consultant's recommendations which included increasing the size of the professional advising staff, redistributing advising loads by increasing the number of trained advisors in disciplines with a large number of majors, offering more training for academic advisors, etc.**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ The Academic Success Center has offered several workshops for academic advisors during Spring 2008.
  - ✓ The Academic Success Center added a staff member in summer 2007. This individual serves as an academic advisor and coordinates the First pace provisional admission program.
  - ✓ One of the administrative specialists in the School of Nursing has been trained to serve as an academic advisor.
  - ✓ The Department of Exercise Science has taken steps to address excessive advising loads by having some freshman advisees work with a member of the advising staff in the Academic Success Center.
- 2. Add staff member to serve as Director of the First Pace program and as an academic advisor**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ A new staff member assigned as coordinator of First Pace was added to the Academic Success Center in the summer of 2007
- ✓ During the 2007-2008 academic year, the Academic Success Center has offered four workshops to 63 participants on topics ranging from policy changes (e.g., grade forgiveness) to appreciative advising to DARS.

- 3. Enhance efficiency by increasing advisors' use of electronic resources**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ The Academic Advising Handbook is being made available to advisors online.
  - ✓ Most of the significant increases in electronic resources for advisors will be linked to the new One Carolina system presently being designed.
- 4. Adjust advising loads so no academic advisor has more than 30 advisees**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ Some academic units have been able to make modest adjustments to faculty advising loads. One of the administrative specialists in the School of Nursing has been trained to serve as an academic advisor, and the Department of Exercise and Sports Science has taken advantage of the availability of staff in the advisement office to help with advisement in the major.

**D. Assess adequacy and utilization of and satisfaction with housing and associated services**

**1. Monitor need for additional on-campus housing**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ The need for additional housing was evidenced by the large number of students on the housing waiting lists the past several years. A new facility with 300 new beds has been constructed and will be ready for occupancy later this summer.

**2. Evaluate need for additional staff/support services outside of housing operation to support additional residential students (food service, academic support services, University Police, communications and information technology, student health and wellness (including counseling), student activities (including weekend programming), other areas identified by CHAT)**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ A comprehensive review of the need for additional associated services was conducted by the Campus Housing Action Team (CHAT). The results are delineated in Section V.A.2.
- ✓ In Spring of 2008, the University Housing Department adopted a comprehensive quality of life survey developed by Educational Benchmarking Incorporated to replace the home-grown survey instrument used in past years. This survey will facilitate comparisons with norms from similar institutions.

**E. Develop ways to enhance the sense of community at USCA**

**1. Develop special traditions/ceremonies including those designed to celebrate the beginning and end of students' careers at USCA**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ The first Freshman Convocation was held in August of 2007 and included a First Year Reading Experience.
- ✓ The opening of the Convocation Center and the success of our basketball teams has led to an increase in the number of students, faculty and staff members, and community members attending basketball games.
- ✓ A new student employment position was created by the Student Involvement Office and the Athletic Department to encourage attendance at athletic events.

**2. Encourage the development of social and academic events to bring students, faculty and staff together outside the classroom, and provide funding for such events**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ The first Research Day was held in April of 2008. Forty-seven students working with 24 faculty mentors participated and prizes totaling \$800 were awarded for the 6 best projects.

- ✓ Graduating honors students presented their capstone projects to the campus community in April 2008. This event will be held each semester.

### **III. Superior Faculty and Staff**

#### **A. Recruit and retain high quality faculty and staff**

**1. Maintain competitive incoming salaries and address salary compression for continuing faculty and staff through additional annual budget allocations for pay increases above state funded levels with the goal of achieving, then maintaining, average USCA salaries at the average of the appropriate peer group salary**

- a. Request that the Campus Budget Committee allocate \$150,000 per year to supplement state salary pay increases for staff. Staff salaries were an average of 10% below the appropriate peer averages as of Spring 2006 based on a study done by the Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance in Spring 2006. Approximately \$450,000 in salary (plus fringes) would be needed to bring USCA salaries up to the averages.**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ An additional \$100,000 was allocated for 2007-08 to fund staff PFPs.
- ✓ An additional \$61,000 has been budgeted for the 2008-09 year. \$25,000 of this amount will be awarded to the operations department.

- b. Request that the Campus Budget Committee allocate \$75,000 annually to supplement state salary pay increases of for faculty. Based on the IE study of faculty salaries, there is a mean inequity of only 0.4% as of 05-06. This is significantly less than the staff salary inequity.**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ An additional \$50,000 was allocated for 07-08 to fund faculty salary inequities.
- ✓ An additional \$35,000 has been budgeted for the 08-09 year to increase the amounts given for rank promotions

- c. Maintain competitive salaries for incoming staff by hiring above the minimum of the pay band when qualifications permit**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Funds are budgeted to refill positions above the minimum of the pay band (same salary as when person left) and hires are made at that level when qualifications permit.

- d. Maintain competitive salaries for faculty by hiring at the median of peer salaries for the appropriate rank/discipline**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ The University faces challenges in some disciplines in our ability to hire at the median of salaries offered by our peers. For 2008-09, we have been able to fill 12 of 15 faculty vacancies. In several instances, top candidates withdrew to take more attractive offers elsewhere. Three vacancies in highly competitive areas (Criminal Justice and Spanish) will be filled with temporary instructors.

**2. Enhance programs by adding faculty and staff positions as the need is demonstrated through the appropriate institutional planning processes**

- a. Hire additional full-time faculty to reduce the use of adjunct faculty as the need is shown through the Program Review process**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ The four full-time faculty positions added for 2007-08 reduced the use of adjunct faculty in the respective areas (anatomy, chemistry, sociology, and math). A total of 19 faculty positions have been added since Fall 2002.

- b. Hire additional full-time faculty as the need is demonstrated by enrollment growth and documented through the Program Review process**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Four full-time faculty were added for 07-08 (anatomy, chemistry, sociology, math).

- c. Hire sufficient new staff positions as the need as demonstrated through growth in current programs or in added programs/services as documented through new program proposals or the Program Review process**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Two full-time staff were added for 07-08 (admin. asst. business & finance and advisement counselor) and a total of 13 have been hired since 2005 to include 4 Operations staff for the Convocation Center.

**3. Increase financial support for scholarly and creative activities of faculty**

- a. Request that CBC allocate an additional \$15,000 annually for two years to bring the departmental travel funds to \$600 per faculty member**

- b. The Partnership allocated an additional \$10,000 for a total of \$32,000 in HAS awards for faculty scholarly and creative activities beginning in 2006-2007**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ The Office of the EVCAA provided nearly \$16,000 in additional funds for faculty travel during the 2006-2007 year.

- ✓ In 2007-08, the Partnership increased its pool of funds to \$35,000. The EVCAA added \$27,000 to cover the \$62,000 requested for professional travel by faculty

**4. Develop and fund an annual (student-nominated) award for teaching excellence for a part-time Instructor each year**

- a. Aiken Partnership will fund a \$1000 award beginning with 2006-2007. HAS will develop guidelines for the award consistent with current faculty teaching award**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ The money was allocated and HAS developed guidelines for the award. This strategy has been fully implemented.

**5. Determine and implement additional means of generating faculty release time to allow them to engage more with students and scholarly activities**

- a. **Academic Council and FWC will develop a plan in the 2006-2007 year. Some suggested items for review are hiring additional professional staff advisors, limiting the number of committee assignments, and/or implementing a 4-3 teaching schedule**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Funds have been allocated beginning with the 2008-09 year to fund a 4-3 teaching load for all tenure track faculty in their fourth year. In April 2008, Faculty Assembly approved a policy limiting faculty to no more than 2 Faculty Assembly Committee assignments each year.

- b. **Increase the number of sabbaticals from 4 to 6 at an estimated cost of \$20,000 over the next 3 years**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Due to budget constraints the number of available sabbaticals remains at four

6. **Redesign the current annual evaluation rating system for faculty from three levels of evaluation (merit, satisfactory, unsatisfactory) to allow more discrimination among performance levels**

- a. **Academic Council will submit a formal recommendation to FWC for their review in 2006-2007 year**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ The proposal was submitted in 2006-2007 but did not gain support from the Faculty Welfare Committee.

**B. Recruit and retain increasing numbers of qualified minority faculty and staff members**

1. **Seek ethnic, racial and gender diversity among faculty and staff at all levels by developing search strategies and policies that ensure a diverse pool of qualified applicants**

- a. **Search committees and Director of HR/AAO will review search strategies**
- b. **Chancellor will meet at least annually with key members of the local African American community to inform them of known faculty vacancies, seek their help in recruitment efforts, as well as address other issues of mutual interest**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ An Inclusion Advisory Council has been formed and meets at least twice annually with the Chancellor.

- c. **Encourage USCA minority graduates to pursue advanced degrees and maintain communications about position openings on campus**

2. **Develop external relationships with institutions such as professional associations, peer institutions and community-based organizations that will support campus diversity goals**

- a. **Establish external advisory boards for African American student and International student areas**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ A sub-committee of the Inclusion Advisory Council has been formed to advise on student issues.

3. Engage members of the Aiken community as a support system to make newly recruited minority faculty feel welcome in the community
  - a. Seek community members to mentor/sponsor new African American faculty members as they move to the Aiken community

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ A sub-committee of the Inclusion Advisory Council has been formed to focus on recruitment and retention issues for faculty and staff.

<b>IV. “Strong Community Relations”</b>
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**A. Expand USCA partnerships with K-16 education**

**1. Increase the amount and depth of outreach and collaboration across the University with K-16 education**

- a. **Maintain an inventory in the Academic Affairs Office of the current efforts in this area to include the number of programs and number of K-12 students and teachers currently served**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ The Academic Affairs Office maintains an inventory of outreach efforts involving P-12 education but does not currently track of numbers of participants. In some areas, we have very good numbers (RPSEC, English Department sessions with high school teachers, Garcia Theatre project, for example), but have not compiled and monitored them.

- b. **Expand as appropriate and improve upon the number of academic and administrative units who have recurring collaborative interactions with K-12 students and teachers**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ We have increased the number of programs in recent years (Garcia Theatre Project, Language Arts Festival, Diversity Conference in School of Education, etc.). There are also examples of faculty and staff using outcomes from an event to make an improvement in the next offering.

- c. **Each unit should annually report on these activities in the Program Review process to include the number of programs conducted and the number of K-12 students and teachers served each year**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ We have not currently asked units to include the information in their program reviews but collect the information at a different time.

**2. Increase collaborative interactions between USCA and Aiken Technical College (ATC)**

- a. **Track the number of collaborative interactions between USCA and ATC each year to include programs such as joint guidance counselor events, meetings between the Chancellor and President, interactions between academic departments, and Martin Luther King Day program**

**Actions taken:**

- ✓ We have continued to have a number of collaborative interactions between the two institutions including jointly sponsoring the MLK Day program, joint enrollment services initiatives, departmental interactions including discussions with education and business and regular meetings between the Chancellor and ATC President. No formal tracking is currently underway.
  - ✓ The EVCAA chairs the Aiken Technical College General Education Advisory Board which meets once a semester.
- b. Track the status of the Parallel Advisement for Transfer Students (PATS) program to include enrollment in the program at ATC and the number of ATC students transferring to USCA**

**Actions taken:**

- ✓ The number of students in the PATS program and who later transfer to USCA has been tracked. Since its inception, there has been a change in the way students are accepted into the program; students wishing to participate in the PATS are now required to have successfully completed developmental courses at ATC prior to signing a PATS contract.

Year entered ATC	# signing contracts	# to later enroll @ USCA
2002-2003	125	26
2003-2004	45	20
2004-2005	62	24
2005-2006	43	18
2006-2007	26	2
2007-2008	24	2

**B. Increase engagement of USCA alumni to build lifelong relationships with USCA**

**1. Increase consistent communications and programming for USCA Alumni**

- a. Develop and implement a communications plan to keep alumni informed about USCA and ways to get involved (including print publications, website and electronic communications)**

**Actions taken:**

- ✓ The Alumni Relations Office maintains an inventory of all communications to alumni. Alumni Relations has specifically worked directly with departments across the campus encouraging them to develop at least one newsletter to alumni each year. The services of the Marketing Office are offered for graphic design and the Advancement Office prepares the mailing list and pays for postage. The following departments/areas produced alumni newsletters in the past year: Biology/Geology, Business, Chemistry/Physics, Communications, English, History/Political Science/Philosophy, Languages, Literatures and Cultures, Psychology, and the Honors Program.

**Effectiveness Measures:**

- a. Alumni satisfaction with communication efforts from USCA will be assessed through an annual online survey.
  - ✓ An online alumni survey has been conducted in the summers of 2006 and 2007 to collect information on alumni satisfaction. From this 2007 survey 94.8% indicated that

the monthly electronic newsletter was very important or somewhat important; 91.7% indicated that the USCA Magazine was very important or somewhat important; 80.1% indicated that the academic department printed newsletters were very important or somewhat important; and 79.9% indicated that the annual printed alumni newsletter was very important or somewhat important.

- b. Alumni satisfaction with the overall academic program will be assessed through the alumni survey.
  - ✓ A printed alumni survey is distributed to a two-year cohort of alumni with the last survey completed in 2007.

	2001	2003	2005	2007
Alumni Satisfaction with overall academic program	5.47 on 6 point scale	5.42 on 6 point scale	5.28 on 6 point scale	5.19 on 6 point scale

- c. Efficiency in maintaining good contact information on alumni will be assessed through the percentage of alumni with “good” contact information.
  - ✓ Keeping updated alumni contact information in our database has been a high priority. Out of a total of 11,125 addressable alumni, there are currently less than 200 bad addresses in Millennium. This means that we have accurate information and can effectively communicate with 98.3% of our alumni. Addressable alumni do not include those who are deceased or who have requested “Do Not Mail” or “Do Not Solicit” attributes.

**2. Develop and implement a plan for consistent programs and events to attract alumni back to campus or to reconnect with USCA that includes involvement with current and prospective students**

- a. **Create a program, for young alumni (alumni of the last five years), that focuses on involvement and a lower minimum giving level**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Programming specifically for young alumni has been a priority of our Alumni Council in recent years with the addition of an event for young alumni during Steeplechase weekend.

- b. **Develop and implement programs in Career Services and Admissions to involve alumni.**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Some initial efforts have been made to build programs utilizing alumni in Career Services and Admissions. Our Alumni Council has worked hard to assist with the Career Panel event each year by contacting alumni to participate. More work can be done in this area.

- c. **Continue to promote traditional alumni events such as Homecoming and other reunions**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ A number of alumni events have been held including Homecoming, Golf Classic, Alumni Annual Meeting, and reunions for Academic, organizational, and Graduation Year groups.

***Effectiveness Measures:***

- a. Alumni satisfaction with alumni program offerings and quality will be assessed through an annual online survey and through surveys for specific events
  - ✓ An online alumni survey has been conducted in the summers of 2006 and 2007 to collect information on alumni interest in various program offerings and events. Evaluations are also conducted after major alumni special events such as the Annual Alumni Golf Classic and Homecoming. For the 2008 Alumni Golf Classic, evaluations ranged from 8.3 to 9.6 on a 10 point satisfaction scale. For the 2008 Homecoming, evaluations ranged from 7 to 10 on a 10 point satisfaction scale.
- b. Alumni satisfaction with alumni events will be assessed through growth in event attendance. The overall number of alumni participating in events will increase by 10% each year.
  - ✓ Alumni event participation continues to grow as shown below. There was a 30% increase from 2005-2006 to 2006-2007.

	2004	2005	2006	2007
Alumni Event Attendance	121	200	296	389

*Number of Alumni attending the following events: Homecoming, Career Panels, Golf Classic, Alumni Annual Meeting, and Reunions (academic, organizational or grad year)*

**3. Increase current student understanding of the role of alumni through programming, education, and contact with alumni**

- a. **Develop and implement a plan to educate current students about their role as alumni through on-campus programs**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ A senior class gift program was started in 2007 with 45% of the 2007 senior class contributing to this effort titled "Give \$7 in 2007."

- b. **Begin the Student Alumni Ambassador program in Fall 2006 to assist with this effort**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ The Student Alumni Association program began in Fall 2006 and continues to grow and develop. This year the group raised \$200 for a scholarship and participated in events such as Grad Finale, Fall Athletic Alumni Weekend, and Family Weekend.

**C. Substantially expand financial support of USCA through annual contributions and major gifts**

- 1. **Raise \$26 million through the Capital Campaign over next seven years with major gifts effort**

- a. **Work with consultant - Grenzebach, Giler and Associates - to conduct feasibility study for the campaign and determine resource needs for successful campaign in Fall of 2006**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ The campaign feasibility study was completed with results being received by our campus in late 2007. The University system has made the decision not to proceed with a full capital campaign at this time. However, the consultant was very positive about the USCA's potential. The consultant stated: "Analysis of target-asks and interview gift indications suggest that USC Aiken does have a prospect pool under development and

cultivation that by the end of the campaign will allow the Aiken campus to achieve its fundraising goal. One important characteristic of Aiken’s gift potential resides in the indication from study interviewees that nearly half ranked USC Aiken as first or second on their list of philanthropic interests.” At this time, USCA is preparing to participate in a mini-campaign for scholarships that will be initiated system-wide by July 1, 2008.

- b. Develop a cultivation/solicitation plan for each major gift prospect to include an estimated timetable for making “an ask”**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ A cultivation/solicitation plan will be developed for each major gift prospect for the scholarship campaign beginning July 2007 with (timeline to be determined after scholarship campaign planning meeting).

- 2. Increase donor participation and the average size of gifts to USCA through annual fund efforts (examples: Family Fund, Alumni Annual Fund and Friends Annual Fund)**

- a. Maintain the participation rate in the Family Fund at 80% or higher over the next five years**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ The participation rate of faculty and staff in the annual Family Fund campaign has grown from 56% in 2003-2004 to more than 80% in both 2005-2006 and 2006-2006. In addition to growth in the participation rate the total number of dollars raised over this period of time has grown from \$43,692 to \$54,739. We also strive to be among the highest participation rate and dollar amount raised in the USC System. For 2006-2007, USC Aiken had the highest participation rate and the third highest dollar amount raised.

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Family Fund Participation Rate	N/A	N/A	56%	76%	86%	83%

- b. Increase participation rate of Alumni Annual Fund with a target to meet and eventually exceed the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of our peer institutions according to the Voluntary Support of Education (VSE)**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Participation in the Alumni Annual Fund increased from 5.9% alumni participation in 2005-2006 with a total of \$82,000 to 7.8% alumni participation and gifts just under \$100,000 during the 2006-2007 year. Using a group of peer institutions from the Voluntary Support of Education (VSE) report, the mean value of alumni participation was 8.9% for 2005-2006 (the most recent data available) with a high among the group of 25.5% and a low of 0.7%. Our target is to meet and eventually exceed the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of our peer institutions, which is currently 12.9% alumni participation.

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Alumni Giving Participation Rate	2.1%	1.3%	2%	5.4%	5.9%	7.8%

- c. Increase dollar amount of contributions from alumni to the Alumni Annual Fund with a goal to meet and eventually exceed the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile of our peer institutions according to the Voluntary Support of Education (VSE)**

**Actions taken:**

- ✓ Again using the VSE report, the mean value of alumni giving totals was \$468,925 for 2005-2006 (the most recent data available) with a high among the group of \$2,921,830 and a low of \$5,730. Our goal is to meet and eventually exceed the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile of our peer institutions, which was \$188,211 in 2005-2006. More targeted solicitation mailings are being used along with making use of the Carolina Call Center during the Alumni Annual Fund.

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Alumni Monetary Giving Totals	N/A	N/A	\$16,845	\$41,876	\$82,000	\$98,101

- d. Increase size of the USCA Endowment with a target to meet and eventually exceed the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of our peer institutions according to the Voluntary Support of Education (VSE)**

**Actions taken:**

- ✓ In 2006-2007, the endowment grew by 2,335,541 to a total of \$20,002,541 with 18 new endowment funds. Using a group of peer institutions from the Voluntary Support of Education (VSE) report, the mean value of the endowment was \$17,050,457 for 2005-2006 (the most recent data available) with a high among the group of \$58,149,141 and a low of \$193,237. Our target is to meet and eventually exceed the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of our peer institutions. For 2005-2006, the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile value of total endowment value for peer institutions was \$19,469,727 and the total endowment value for USC Aiken was \$17,667,000.

- e. Increase total dollars raised for USCA with a target to meet and eventually exceed the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of our peer institutions according to the Voluntary Support of Education (VSE)**

**Actions taken:**

- ✓ The total raised for 2006-2007 was an all-time high for USC Aiken fundraising with \$3,868,919 raised through cash, pledges and planned gifts. This was a 300% increase in fundraising activity over the previous year. Using a group of peer institutions from the Voluntary Support of Education (VSE) report, the mean value of the endowment was \$2,353,568 for 2005-2006 (the most recent data available) with a high among the group of \$9,195,272 and a low of \$443,781. Our target is to meet and eventually exceed the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of our peer institutions. For 2005-2006, the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile value of total fundraising for peer institutions was \$3,242,857 and the total fundraising for USC Aiken was \$1,274,068.

- f. Increase the total number of donors to USCA by 20% each year**

**Actions taken:**

- ✓ Growth in the total number of donors to USC Aiken is essential for continued growth in the overall dollars raised for the institution. In 2006-2007, our total number of donors grew to 2,488 which is 634 new donors for an increase of 34%. With the efforts of the two gift officers, we hope to continue to grow this number by 20% each year.

**D. Build community pride and commitment to USCA in the local area**

- 1. Increase community involvement and attendance in campus events and programs through a deliberate and structured marketing campaign**

- a. **Develop and implement a marketing campaign aimed at increasing public awareness of USCA and how it benefits the local area to include efforts to increase community involvement and attendance in campus events and programs**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ With more campus events including the opening of the Convocation Center, we have had an increase in advertising and publicity about campus events and programs. However, we have not yet developed a comprehensive marketing campaign to address this action plan.

***Effectiveness Measures:***

- a. Track total dollars raised from non-alumni donors

	2005	2006	2007
Total Dollars from Non-Alumni Donors	\$1,429,707	\$1,192,068	\$3,770,818

- b. Track overall attendance of community persons attending campus events

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Number of Community Persons Attending Campus Events	62,669	57,319	55,318	52,974	94,171

*Includes Cultural Series at the Etheredge Center, Convocation Center Events, Athletic Events, Conference Center Events, and Continuing Education Classes*

- c. Track number of column inches in newspapers to determine coverage of USCA events and activities

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Number of Column Inches in Newspapers	19,126	24,536	22,136	27,504	28,440

- d. Track membership in the Pacer Club as a measure of athletic program support

	2005	2006	2007
Total Membership in Pacer Club	114	133	201

2. **Maintain and strengthen connections to newcomers and retirees in the community through outreach efforts.**

- a. **Offer programs specifically designed for Senior citizens**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ A number of programs were offered for Senior citizens including SeniorNet, Academy for Lifelong Learning, access to the Wellness Center, and undergraduate courses.

***Effectiveness Measures:***

- a. Track number of individuals involved in senior citizen programs/efforts on campus

	2006	2007
Total Number of Individuals involved in Senior Citizen Programs	792	805

*Includes SeniorNet, Academy for Lifelong Learning, Wellness Center and/or seniors taking undergraduate courses*

## V. Enhanced Campus Environment

### A. Strengthen the campus community by increasing the opportunity for students to live on campus

#### 1. Complete construction of a new Residence Hall by August 2008

- a. Charge the Campus Housing Action Team (CHAT) with identifying a target population and programming goals for additional student housing

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Freshmen were identified as the target population for the new residence hall.
- ✓ Program goals and building configuration were aligned to support a living learning environment

- b. Form an architect/contractor selection committee and coordinate with the Office of the State Engineer to issue a Request for Design-Build Proposals

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Completed Fall 2006

- c. Acquire land for the project from Aiken County Commission on Higher Education and annex the property as required

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Completed Fall 2006

- d. Select a Design-Build construction team and issue a notice-to-proceed by January 19, 2007

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Completed on schedule

- e. Complete design of the new residence hall and construct from May 2007 – July 2008

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Building is 95% complete with final finishes and owner inspections in progress. Anticipate receiving occupancy permit in June. Dedication scheduled for July 8.

#### 2. Provide additional support services required to serve an increased residential population

- a. Ensure that food service programs properly support the increased number of residential students, by taking the following steps:

- i. By August 2007, expand the SAC dining facility to provide seating for at least 280 people with a minimum of 200 seats in the meal-plan area

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Expansion is in progress with anticipated completion August 2008

- ii. Enhance Housing Convenience Store operations to include hot food preparation and expanded hours, relocating the store if necessary

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ A decision was made to maintain the Convenience Store at its current location (with similar offerings) and add a hot food service venue at Pacer Crossings, since students at this new facility will not have in-suite kitchens. Build-out of the new venue will commence June 2008 after the new food service contract is awarded.

**iii. Expand food service delivery at the H&SS building or an alternate site as space becomes available**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ Current plans are to expand the food service station in the H&SS during Summer 2009

**b. Evaluate the need for modifying/enhancing the following programs and services to serve the new population:**

**i. Academic Support Services**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ To strengthen the first year experience, the Academic Success Center has developed the framework for several new learning communities which will be constituted based on student interest. One of these is the Double Knot Leadership Community which includes a common living experience in Pacer Crossings. The Pacer Crossings floor plan incorporates three small study rooms on each floor, a learning center with computers on the third floor, and a classroom and faculty office on the first floor.

**ii. University Police Services**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ To improve security in the residential areas of campus without adding additional police, a decision has been made to limit traffic and after-hours access to residential areas via control-card access gates. The first of these gates will be added at Robert Bell Parkway as part of the Pacer Crossings construction project. The second gate will be constructed once a funding source has been identified.

**iii. Communications and Information Technology**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ The Penland Server Room is being expanded and several new servers are being added to support campus housing. In addition to the new computer rooms at Pacer Crossings, a computer room is also being added at Pacer Downs. On a different front, CTC is recommending a new student printing plan to enhance printing services, control costs, and reduce wasteful reproduction.

**iv. Student Health and Wellness (including counseling)**

***Actions taken:***

- ✓ These areas expect increased use of their services based on higher residential occupancies, but will attempt to absorb this impact and reassess after the first year.

**v. Student Activities, especially weekend programming**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ A commitment has been made by the offices of Residence Life and Student Involvement to collaborate on planning efforts and streamline offerings to maximize student engagement.

vi. **Other areas identified by the CHAT**

**B. Stimulate informal learning, study, and social engagement outside the classroom**

**1. Develop exterior areas that create opportunities for student interaction and quiet study**

**a. Install new porch furniture at the Student Activities Center**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Eight rocking chairs were added to the front porch and three round tables with chairs were added to the porch beside the Student Life Office. Of these two improvements, the rocking chairs, which are more accessible, are by far the most popular. To enhance use of tables on the side porch a sidewalk and table umbrellas will be added.

**b. Add outdoor benches at the Library patio and the Science Building**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ One table with benches has been added by the Science Building. Further improvements are pending funding.

**c. Identify and prioritize additional areas for outdoor furnishings such as benches and picnic tables**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Pacer Crossings will include an outdoor patio with furnishings. A new sidewalk being added from the Etherredge Center to Pacer Crossings has been cited as a great place for future benches.

**d. Create new gathering areas by developing long-range plans for additional campus focal points like the quad fountain**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Several new focal areas are being considered as part of the Master Planning effort.

**e. Expand the wireless network in residential areas**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Upon commissioning, Pacer Crossings will have complete wireless coverage. Expansion of coverage is planned for Pacer Commons during summer 2008. If funds prevail, the capability will be added at Pacer Downs in 2009.

**2. Create and enhance interior common areas to promote social engagement and informal study**

**a. Enhance the Student Activities Center by improving spaces available for organizational meetings, intramural sports recreational activities, and student events. Complete renovations no later than November 2007**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ The intramural gym has been renovated and a mezzanine created upstairs for students meetings. Further improvements are in progress with completion anticipated in September 2008.

- b. **Convert the B & E Gym to a higher-quality assembly space with a dividing wall, and improved lighting, acoustics, and finishes**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Funding for this project has not yet been identified

- c. **Consider the addition of white boards in common study areas as appropriate**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ An Honors study room will be set-up in the former student media space this summer. This space will include a whiteboard. Additional open areas are under consideration

- d. **Upgrade the Science Building study/meeting room**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Funding for this project has not yet been identified

- 3. **Invigorate campus space through increased use of high-quality graphic displays and banners that reinforce campus life and values**

- a. **Prominently display student organizational banners in the renovated SAC building**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ An effort is currently underway to add this display during Fall 2008.

- b. **Promote use of higher-quality event signage for event announcements**

- c. **Update light pole banners to incorporate campus values**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ The campus marketing department plans to update campus banners during summer 2008 and is working on a new design.

- d. **Develop a Hall of Fame at the new Convocation Center to honor the achievements of student athletes**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ An inaugural induction class of 13 members was named in September 2007 and the new Hall of Fame was dedicated in November of the same year.

- e. **Enhance interior wall space in academic buildings by promoting campus life and values through the use of custom images and graphics on wallpaper.**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Plans have not yet been developed.

- f. **Identify and develop an area to display the country flags of international students at USCA**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ The School of Business Administration (SOBA) now proudly displays the flags of its international students in the SOBA faculty office corridor. Other locations are under review.

**g. Identify and install a visual display to honor the achievements of USCA Alumni**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Plans have not yet been developed.

**C. Enhance the academic environment by improving the quality and versatility of space for formal learning**

**1. Create spaces that encourage independent, assisted, and collaborative learning activities, including a dynamic learning center to be located in a new academic building**

**a. Strengthen the case for a new academic building by appropriately updating space inventory and facility use information contained in the SCCHE database**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Changes in classroom configuration and updates in the space inventory have resulted in a more accurate picture of classroom space constraints, ranking USCA among the top four teaching institutions with respect to academic space needs. USCA remains the highest ranked institution with regard to hours of classroom utilization.

**b. Secure legislative support for state funding of capital projects, particularly a new academic building**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Economic realities have hampered this objective.

**c. Receive project financing via State Capital Improvement Bonds (CIB) and supplementary funds raised through the Capital Campaign**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ See C.1.b.

**d. Develop physical plans for a student-focused academic success center**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ The Director of Academic Success has provided preliminary specifications for an academic success center and has identified several campuses with model floor plans.

**e. Complete construction of a new academic building no later than Spring 2010**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ With required CIB funding being available no sooner than Spring 2009, the earliest possible completion date would be two years later.

**f. Relocate Math, English, and Academic Success units to the new building by Fall 2010**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ See C.1.e.

**2. Expand and reassign academic space to satisfy programmatic growth**

- a. Reallocate renovated space in the Penland and H&SS building to alleviate classroom and office space constraints**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ This item will follow construction of a new academic building. However, interim steps were taken during summer 2007 to improve adjunct faculty space and create one new classroom in H &SS, while also creating a consolidated office suite for Academic success in the Penland Building.

- b. Increase scheduling of classes at non-peak times to maximize use of existing space and demonstrate good stewardship of state resources.**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ No intentional action to date.

**D. Improve administrative services by increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of data management systems and business processes**

**1. Effectively implement One-Carolina**

- a. Hire a One-Carolina Coordinator**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Completed. The One-Carolina Coordinator was hired and began work in February, 2008.

- b. Review and document business and work flow processes in all staff offices**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ The USC system is currently conducting a “fit-gap” analysis with support of the anticipated OneCarolina vendor (Sungard Banner). This “fit-gap” process is reviewing business and work flow processes to determine which ones can be met “out of the box” by the Sungard solution and which functional requirements will require modifications to the baseline product. The “fit-gap” analysis is anticipated to be completed in June-July, 2008.

- c. Develop tailored plans to improve work processes**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Improvements to work flow processes are being considered throughout the “fit-gap” analysis. Actual plans to implement improved processes will not be developed until after the “fit-gap” analysis is completed and the implementation planning and execution begins (anticipated Fall 2008).

- d. Ensure successful roll-out through effective employee training and support**

*Actions taken:*

- ✓ Functional user familiarization with the Sungard products has been part of the ongoing “fit-gap” analysis. Planning and execution for employee training (both user and support personnel) will be accomplished during the implementation phase of OneCarolina. This implementation phase is scheduled to last approximately three years.

**VI. Enhance the Institution's Financial Base (*new proposed Goal, Objectives and Strategies*)**

- A. Secure the financial resources required to accomplish all the university's goals and objectives**
- 1. Institute a rolling multi-year financial planning process**
  - 2. Develop alternative revenue sources to state appropriations**  
*Measure- \$ of revenues except state and tuition funds*
  - 3. Develop collaborative programs and initiatives with other colleges that will enhance revenue production and effective use of resources**
  - 4. Develop collaborative programs and initiatives with private business and industry that will enhance revenue production and effective use of resources**
- B. Develop tuition and financial aid policies that support increased access and affordability**
- 1. Increase merit and need-based scholarship funding (fee waiver/Bookstore/Partnership) by at least the same percentage annually as the percentage increase in tuition.**  
*Measure- institutional scholarship % change over previous year*
  - 2. Set academic tuition and fees for in-state residents that are comparable with those of peer institutions in South Carolina.**  
*Measure—USCA tuition as % of average teaching institution tuition*
  - 3. Increase scholarship funding so that institutional grant awards are equal to the median of peer in-state institutions (both % of students receiving awards and average award)**  
*Measure-Average institutional grant percent and award amount for incoming students*
- C. Determine feasibility and desirability of tuition and financial aid policies that allow for differentiation among academic programs**
- 1. Future tuition increases are based on program costs, program demand and market forces.**
- D. Establish and fund a Renovation Reserve Account for the regular maintenance of facility and infrastructure needs, as well as non-technology furnishings and equipment**
- 1. Determine annual level needed and begin the funding process as part of tuition planning for 08-09 year**
- E. Maintain effective use of campus financial resources**  
*Measure- Expenditures per FTE student*
- 1. Review current departmental-level budgets every three years**  
*Measure- Expenditures per FTE student by department*
  - 2. Review degree-level budgets every three years**  
*Measure-Expenditures per major (or graduate)*