

Minutes
Lowcountry Graduate Center Supervisory Council Meeting
Wednesday, September 18, 2019
Board Room, Colcock Hall, MUSC Campus
10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Supervisory Council Members Present:

Lisa Saladin – Provost, Medical University of South Carolina
Sally Selden – Provost, The Citadel

Supervisory Council Members Absent:

Fran Welch – Interim Provost, College of Charleston

LGC Staff and Others Present:

Godfrey Gibbison – Dean, School of Professional Studies, College of Charleston
Shamira McCray - Reporter, *Charleston Regional Business Journal*, SC Biz
Nancy Muller – Director, Lowcountry Graduate Center; Associate Dean of the School of Professional Studies, College of Charleston

Call to Order:

The scheduled meeting of the Lowcountry Graduate Center (“LGC”) Supervisory Council was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Saladin, as newly elected Chair, in the Board Room on the 1st floor of Colcock Hall on the campus of the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. She welcomed Staff Reporter McCray.

Minutes:

Upon the motion by Selden and unanimous consent, minutes of the previous meeting on April 17, 2019 were approved, as submitted. The approved document will be posted on the LGC web site, in accordance with the FOIA of South Carolina.

LGC Orientation Video:

Due to the expiration of the cloud-saved orientation video intended for viewing, Muller instead verbally shared contents of the 8-minute video internally produced for all new graduate students and their faculty to view at the beginning of each new academic year. (She subsequently shared a link via email to the video so that all could view it online.) It covers such topics as facility hours of operation, safety and security, the policy regarding closure due to severe weather, access to private tutoring, and librarian and IT support services at the LGC.

Enrollments:

Muller noted the exit of Anderson University following its decision last year to pull its Masters of Criminal Justice satellite offering in the Lowcountry back to the main campus. She noted the steady enrollment strength of The Citadel’s MS in Project Management program versus the steep decline in usage of the facility by the College of Charleston, noting a recent softening in enrollment in the University of South Carolina’s MSW program. She explained that Clemson University used the LGC to build up enrollments in targeted graduate engineering programs while the Zucker Family Education Center in North Charleston was under construction. While

the table shows no current enrollment in classes at the LGC for the Healthcare MBA, the program is thriving and growing at South Carolina State University's main campus where it has quickly become second only to the general management MBA at the school. However, promotion and publicity in Charleston have been weak, resulting in very low enrollments of Charleston area residents.

Facility Utilization:

Muller referred to the graphic illustrating the LGC's 26% FY 2018-2019 facility utilization of the North Campus, up 4% points from prior year due to SCMEP. She pointed out the most salient change in utilization; namely: the increase in third party rentals from 21% to 39%, offset by the steep decline in facility usage by the College of Charleston for its undergraduate academic classes, dropping from 44% to 20%. Selden asked if the LGC shares in any of the rental revenue. Muller responded that 100% of the revenue goes directly to the College of Charleston, although approximately one-third of the occupancy expenses, \$400,000 of the \$1.2 million total, is paid to the College annually directly from LGC appropriations from the state. Selden said that it seems reasonable that a pro rata share of that 3rd party rental revenue should accrue to the LGC. This needs to be pursued in future conversation with Welch, stated Saladin, concurring with Selden.

Saladin asked what percentage of the available facility is actually utilized, to which Muller responded no more than 15%. (Muller subsequently analyzed actual data and reported by subsequent email that the actual percentage, based on hours of operation extending from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday – Saturday is 11%.) Saladin said that MUSC is embarking on a major renovation of several buildings, taking out of service major number of classrooms – 5 large and 28 small classrooms, necessitating access to interim classroom space especially morning hours. This could be a good fit with the underutilized classrooms especially during morning hours. Saladin will follow-up with Muller on MUSC's dates and requirements.

Graduating Trend Data:

Referring to the table supplied for the meeting, Muller pointed out that The Citadel's Project Management program and the University of South Carolina's MSW program have long been the anchors of the LGC, generating the majority (71%) of the masters degrees and graduate certificates among students at the LGC. Over the last decade, she noted, a total of 1,500 graduates have entered new or elevated careers as a result of their advanced education at the LGC portal.

Program Offerings and Fall 2019 Course Offerings:

Muller pointed out the newly launched 1) Lowcountry Principal Service Center, and 2) Specialist in Educational Leadership (Ed.S.) by The Citadel. The Executive MPA program will commence its classes in January 2020. The Principal Service Center and the EMPA programs are each supported by \$25,000 in Opportunity Funds monies provided by the LGC.

Financial Reports:

Alluding to the single document constituting "Financial Reports" as provided in the meeting packet, Muller first oriented those present to the table. FY 2018-2019 ended with a surplus balance of \$22,936 because \$50,000 of the total \$75,000 approved as Opportunity Funds had not

been paid out by the close of the fiscal year. The monies have to be executed as expense reimbursement for the College of Charleston, as per instructions from the Controller's Division and Legal Affairs. These are yet to be submitted for the Executive MPA program and the new graduate certificate in Workplace Wellness. Muller said that this \$50,000 is therefore included in the \$78,675 budgeted for FY 2019-2020 on the line item "new program launches." As a result, there is really only \$28,675 new Opportunity Funds available in the current fiscal year if a breakeven budget continues to be a guiding principle as in past years. Selden asked why the FY 2018 - 2019 surplus wasn't therefore larger. Muller replied it was because the \$50,000 anticipated from the College of Charleston Office of the Provost, in recognition of Muller spending more time teaching and in administrative duties as Associate Dean of the School of Professional Studies, was never transferred last year. It was apparently not a matter that the former provost, Brian McGee, handled prior to leaving the College. Muller added that there had been numerous reminders, and Gibbison commented that Welch has been made aware of his commitment. Muller added that at the present time, 85% of her compensation is paid by LGC appropriations and only 15% is covered by the School of Professional Studies. The split, taking into account the \$50,000 commitment towards her salary, should be more like 60/40. (In an email following the meeting, Muller explained that the FY 2019-2020 continues to assume the \$50,000 will be provided. This is reflected by an adjustment in personnel salaries of \$31,365, representing the net difference between the \$50,000 commitment and the amount already being covered by the School of Professional Studies.) Saladin said that she would follow-up with Welch, as a new Budget cannot be approved until it is resolved. Selden asked if monies would be paid retrospectively, and Saladin said this too will be discussed with Welch. She added that the new Budget for FY 2019-2020 can be approved via email after this conversation takes place.

Elsewhere, Selden asked why there is virtually no marketing expense. Muller explained that in conjunction with the new Consortium Agreement signed by all three university presidents in January 2017, the LGC marketing staff position was eliminated, essentially reducing marketing to digital means via the web site and social media. The goal in doing so was to free up appropriations to be repurposed as Opportunity Funds for member institutions to receive.

Review of Process for Submitting Requests for Opportunity Funds:

Muller briefly outlined the November 1st and February 1st deadlines to member institutions for submitting proposals for funds in support of new graduate programs. The November deadline, in advance of the January Supervisory Council meeting, allows time for the submission to be reviewed for completeness and for third party letters of support from the local community to be solicited and received. Similarly, the February deadline allows for the same, with an April Council meeting in mind. There are restrictions on what the monies can be used for and how often subsequent requests can be submitted. A report on how monies were actually utilized and the program outcome is also required. Muller commented that multiple proposals have been approved to date, both for The Citadel and for the College of Charleston, but that MUSC has not submitted any requests.

Job Data and Graduate Student Prospects:

Although not on the agenda per se, Muller reported that YTD through September online traffic to the Lowcountry Graduate Center's web site is up 18% over prior year, as measured by organic

searches. This trend is expected to continue. A printout of the Q3 2019 LGC Website Analytics Report was included in the meeting packet.

Muller then turned to Burning Glass data on Charleston Metro job postings specifying graduate level education (January – August 2019), recently obtained through the College of Charleston's Marketing Department. The data represent more than simply data pulled from big job boards, such as Indeed, and are based on where the job is located rather than the geographical base of the source. In the case of multiple postings of the same job, the job is counted only once, she explained. Saladin said that she has two individuals on her staff who compile such data on a national scale for MUSC-trained health professionals. Muller said that she pulls job postings for the LGC's three primary target sectors, around which she maintains advisory boards with representatives from area employers. In the sector of healthcare management and community wellness, the total number of postings at 850 was close to the 867 postings in 2018. However, there were significant changes in particular categories. Postings with an RN credential, for example, were down from 141 to 87. Postings for nurse practitioners were down to 58 from 73 prior year period. According to the Burning Glass data, local demand for healthcare administrators was half, down to 35 from 68 prior year period. Based on job titles, Muller speculated that approximately 10% of postings in education requiring a master's degree or higher could represent prospective students for The Citadel's Ed.S. degree program. Engineering positions requiring a graduate degree increased to 412 over 373 prior year, one-fourth of which are for software developers/engineers, indicative of the continued, robust expansion of the IT sector in general.

Selden inquired if the LGC has data on the number of area residents with undergraduate engineering degrees who may be candidates for a graduate engineering degree while continuing to work. Muller said the best source of that data is from the American Community Survey (ACS), as it contains educational attainment as well as employment status. Her recollection was sourcing for Clemson and USC several years ago such data specifically about those with undergraduate engineering degrees. She said she would compile a new report for the Supervisory Council with the Burning Glass data and incorporate the latest relevant information from the ACS.

Adjournment:

The next meeting of the Supervisory Council is scheduled Wednesday, January 15, 2020, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. at Colcock Hall on the MUSC campus downtown. Effort is underway to schedule the April 2020 meeting soon. With no further business, Saladin adjourned the meeting.