

Accountability Report Transmittal Form

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**Annual Accountability Report
Fiscal Year 2012 – 2013**

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Section I: Executive Summary

I. 1. Purpose, Mission, and Values

The full mission statement for the University of South Carolina Union is located at:
<http://uscunion.sc.edu/about/mission.html>

Working mission statement: The University of South Carolina Union strives to provide the people of Union and surrounding counties an intellectual, social, cultural, and physical setting which challenges them to grow in many ways and to develop a desire for lifelong learning.

Working vision statement: USC Union has a regional reputation for inspiring and challenging students to further their education and for working with corporate, civic, and educational leaders to address the economic needs of Union County and our service area.

I. 2. Major achievements from past year:

- One full-time faculty hire was made in AY 2012-13
- The University Reads initiative was successful and continued
- The Upcountry Literary Festival enjoyed its Third Annual event
- Enrollment in the BOL/BLS programs has grown significantly
- USC Union was the only institution in South Carolina to be considered for the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence
- USC Union had its second Magellan Scholar
- USC Union is taking a major role in the Carolina Emerging Scholars program, including having two founders and several board members on our campus
- Continuing Education continues to grow, with programs in music, fitness, and a variety of short courses
- USC Union participates in VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance)
- USC Union faculty, staff, and students continue to be engaged in community service and outreach

I. 3. Key Strategic goals for the present and future years

Goal 1 Continue to improve the academic, intellectual, and cultural environment on campus

Goal 2 Continue to develop and expand courses and programs for community outreach and continuing education.

Goal 3 Continue to install technology upgrades across campus

I. 4. Opportunities and Barriers that may affect the organization’s success in fulfilling its mission and achieving its strategic goals

INTERNAL TO USC UNION	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Affordable tuition	Slow to develop new programs with senior institutions
Small, personal, safe environment; available staff and parking	Limited space and student services (food, student housing, student union)
Organizational structure aimed at growth (new positions created)	Additional qualified faculty needed for growth
Brand image of University of South Carolina	Inability to attract top level students
High success rate of graduates	
Access to 4-year degrees through Palmetto College	
EXTERNAL TO USC UNION	
Opportunities	Threats
Collaborative programs with other USC Campuses	Declining population
Concurrent programs	Poor economic development; continuing global economic recession
New industry	Other colleges (Spartanburg Community College, South Carolina technical colleges, Limestone College)
	Potential declines in lottery revenues and state funding

I. 5.

How the accountability report is used to improve organizational performance

Since the introduction of this report in 2006, the Blueprint for Quality Improvement (Strategic Plan) and the Accountability Report have together formed the primary conceptual framework for the operation of USC Union. Strategic planning and institutional improvement continue to be a major focus of the institutional leadership. The directors and other officers of the major areas of the University (academic affairs, faculty organization officers, finance/budget, human resources, financial aid, and enrollment management/student affairs) participate regularly in planning for institutional

improvement. This approach works to inculcate all the major subunits of the University with the strategic planning/accountability report framework.

The Strategic Planning Committee's primary focus on increasing enrollment has been extremely successful, and USCU has enjoyed growing or steady enrollments for four consecutive years. A current focus on student services and strategic hiring have added numerous student activities and additional faculty to the USCU campus.

The great challenge seems to be that so many of the reports and procedures that are required by various agencies of the state and offices of the University of South Carolina do not seem to work within the strategic planning/accountability framework. This is particularly evident with the current budgeting process.

Section II – Organizational Profile

II. 1. The main educational programs that have historically been offered by USC Union address the traditional institutional mission of the regional campuses of the University of South Carolina, to “provide the first two years of a Liberal arts university education...and to confer the Associate in Arts and the Associate in Science degrees.” Thus, at present, USC Union is limited to offering the Associate in Arts and the Associate in Science degrees.

However, many students desire a much more career oriented approach. Many students are not able to relocate--due to family, employment, and/or financial obligations--to complete their baccalaureate studies. To address the needs of these students, USC Union makes additional degree programs and coursework available by partnering with other units of USC Columbia.

- ❖ **Palmetto College** – [Palmetto College](#) offers two degree programs at USC's Regional Campuses--the Bachelor of Liberal Studies (BLS) and the BOL referred to above—as well as seven online Bachelor's degree completion programs (including online versions of the BLS and BOL). These are designed to enable students with a significant number of college credits to complete a bachelor's degree without having to travel great distances or quit or cut back employment. At maturity, Palmetto Programs will offer students “from diverse educational, socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds living in a mixture of town, small city and rural settings” the ability to take courses exclusively at the regional campus site in “smart classroom” environments and earn a baccalaureate degrees from USC Columbia.

II. 2-3. USC Union's key student segments and stakeholder groups

- ❖ **Students:** USC Union students can be divided into three major categories: traditional students; non-traditional students; and concurrent (dually-enrolled) students

- **Key Requirements/Expectations:** All students expect quality instruction by knowledgeable faculty members; they also expect a responsive and knowledgeable staff
- ❖ **Alumni & Friends:**
 - **Key Requirements/Expectations:** Involvement in University events; news and information about the University
- ❖ **Business & Industry:**
 - **Key Requirements/Expectations:** Engagement with the University and evidence that the University is engaged with the business community
- ❖ **Community:**
 - **Key Requirements/Expectations:** Engagement with the University and a sense that the University is responsive to community needs

II. 4. USC Union’s key suppliers and partners are students; community and feeder schools; city and county governments; alumni and friends; employers, business and industry; USC Columbia; South Carolina Lottery Commission; and the U.S. Department of Education.

II. 5. USC Union’s operating locations are the USC Union Main Campus, the Laurens County Higher Education Center (after October 2013, 507 North Harper Street in Laurens will be the location of USC Union’s classes in Laurens County), Union County High School, Laurens District 55 High School, Laurens District 56 High School, and Laurens Academy.

II. 6. Number of employees, segmented by faculty and staff, permanent and part-time

	Full-Time	Part-time
Faculty	10	28
Staff	22	13

II. 7. The regulatory environment in which USC Union operates: One of 4 regional campuses of the University of South Carolina; regulated by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE), which also provides state financial aid through lottery funds and other grants; Southern Association of Colleges (SACS) – under the umbrella of USC Columbia; OSHA (Occupational Safety & Health Administration); EPA (Environmental Protection Agency); South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation (SC-LLR); Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); DHEC (South Carolina Department of Health & Environmental Control); and U.S. Department of Education (Federal financial aid).

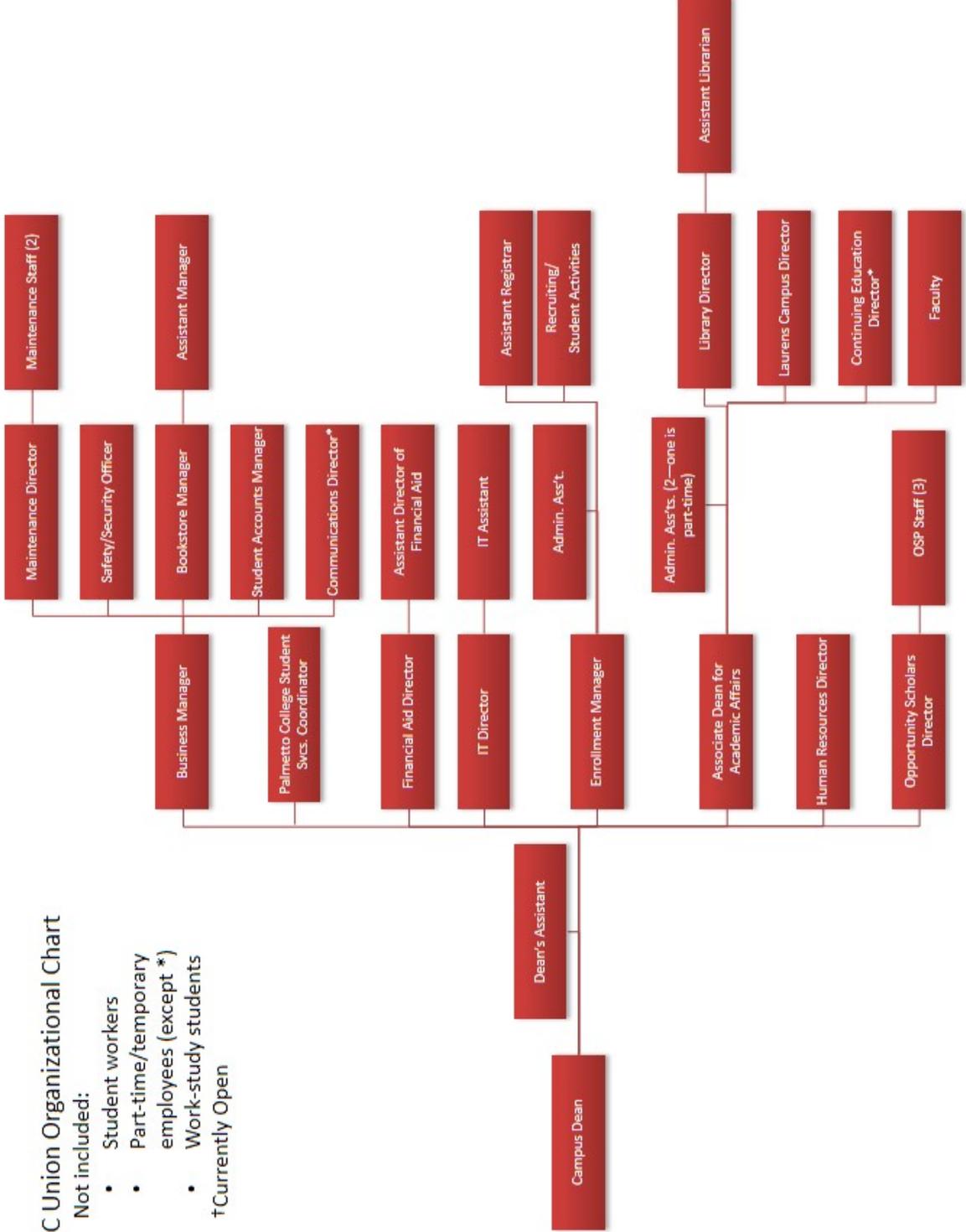
II. 8. The University of South Carolina Union has various performance improvement systems: satisfaction surveys from various student service areas (Orientation, Advisement, Financial Aid, and Student Life); course evaluation surveys; faculty evaluation system

(peer & annual evaluation); annual EPMS evaluation; and employee satisfaction feedback delivered through the Faculty and Staff Organization welfare committees.

II. 9. Organizational Structure: See next page

USC Union Organizational Chart

- Not included:
 - Student workers
 - Part-time/temporary employees (except *)
 - Work-study students
- †Currently Open



II. 12 Accountability Report Expenditures, Other Expenditures, Major Program Areas

II. 12.

Accountability Report

Appropriations/Expenditures

Union Accountability Report Appropriations/Expenditures Chart

Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations						
	FY 11-12 Actual Expenditures		FY 12-13 Actual Expenditures		FY 13-14 Appropriations Act	
Major Budget	Total Funds	General	Total Funds	General	Total Funds	General
Categories		Funds		Funds		Funds
Personal Service	\$1,963,856	\$470,000	\$2,114,326	\$486,338	\$2,186,072	\$487,317
Other Operating	\$3,473,515	\$-	\$3,232,667	\$-	\$3,856,956	\$-
Special Items	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-
Permanent Improvements	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-
Fringe Benefits	\$546,765	\$100,069			\$644,721	\$114,393
Non-recurring	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$59,360	\$59,360
Total	\$5,984,136		\$570,069			
			Other Expenditures			

Note: FY13-14 Appropriations Act Non-Recurring is Parity Funding.

II.13 Major Program Areas

Program Number and Title	Major Program Area and Purpose (Brief)	FY 11-12 Budget Expenditures		Financial Results*
I. Education and General	Instruction: Arts & Sciences-Undergraduate degree programs appropriate to the authorized degree level of the institution and in compliance with its mission. Programs emphasize the basic core courses common to a wide variety of programs.	State: 570,069 Federal: 0 Other: 1,008,488 Total: 1,578,557 % of Total Budget:	State: 570,069 Federal: 0 Other: 1,008,488 Total: 1,578,557 26.38% % of Total Budget:	7.2-1 7.2-2
I. Education and General	Public Service-Activities established to provide non-instructional services beneficial to individuals and groups external to the institution.	State: 0 Federal: 0 Other: 17,244 Total: 17,244 % of Total Budget:	State: 0 Federal: 0 Other: 17,244 Total: 17,244 0.29% % of Total Budget:	7.2-1
I. Education and	Academic Support-Administrative functions that directly support	State: 0 Federal: 0	State: 0 Federal: 0	7.2-1 7.2-2

General	instruction, research, career advising, and public service to include libraries, computing services, and academic administration.	Other: 364,931 Total: 364,931 % of Total Budget:	Other: 364,931 Total: 364,931 6.10% % of Total Budget:	
I. Education and General	Student Services-Student focused activities to Include admissions, health, athletics, registration, academic advising, student organizations, and other student services.	State: 0 Federal: 248,149 Other: 366,232 Total: 614,381 % of Total Budget:	State: 0 Federal: 248,144 Other: 366,232 Total: 614,381 10.27% % of Total Budget:	7.2-1 7.2-2
I. Education and General	Operations & Maintenance-Facilities support services to include campus security, capital planning, facilities administration, buildings and grounds maintenance, utilities, and major repairs and renovations.	State: 0 Federal: 0 Other: 458,027 Total: 458,027 % of Total Budget:	State: 0 Federal: 0 Other: 458,027 Total: 458,027 7.55% % of Total Budget:	7.2-1 7.2-4
I. Education and	Scholarships-Scholarships and fellowships in the form of outright grants to	State: 0 Federal: 1,355,696	State: 0 Federal: 1,355,696	7.2-1 7.2-3

General	students selected by the institution and financed in the form of current funds, both restricted and unrestricted.	Other: 871,975 Total: 2,227,671 % of Total Budget:	Other: 817,975 Total: 2,227,671 37.23% % of Total Budget:	7.2-6
II. Auxiliary	Auxiliary: Bookstore-Self-supporting activity that exist to furnish textbooks, goods and services to students, faculty, or staff.	State: 0 Federal: 0 Other: 245,112 Total: 245,112 % of Total Budget:	State: 0 Federal: 0 Other: 245,112 Total: 245,112 4.10% % of Total Budget:	7.2-1 7.2-2 7.2-5
I. Education and General	Institutional Support-Administrative functions to include executive management, personnel services, fiscal operations, administrative computing, and public relations.	State: 0 Federal: 0 Other: 478,213 Total: 478,213 % of Total Budget:	State: 0 Federal: 0 Other: 478,213 Total: 478,213 7.99% % of Total Budget:	7.2-1 7.2-2
I. Education and General	Research-Activities specifically organized to produce research outcomes, commissioned either by	State: 0	State: 570,069	

external entities or through a separate budget process of an organizational unit within the institution.	Federal:	0	Federal:	1,603,845
	Other:	0	Other:	3,810,222
	Total:	0	Total:	5,984,136

Section III: Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

Category 1 – Senior Leadership, Governance, and Social Responsibility

C1.1 Under the guidance of the administration at USC Columbia, the strategic planning and Accountability Report approach has been the conceptual framework at USC Union since 2007. Senior leaders set direction in accordance with the university’s mission statement and are constrained by budgetary and institutional policy realities.

Increasingly, the strategic planning process is becoming the core of planning, implementation, and feedback. Since 2007 the USC Union Strategic Plan, deemed the Blueprint for Quality Enhancement, was developed by a joint effort of the senior leaders who serve on the Strategic Planning Committee.

The senior leadership strives to exemplify personally the values of the institution and to support the efforts of members of the faculty and staff to do so also. Those who exemplify these qualities are honored through various established campus awards for both faculty and staff. A tradition at USC Union has been to select and publicly honor faculty and students who exemplify excellence. Each year, the student body selects in a competitive process a faculty member for Distinguished Teacher of the Year. Each year, the Faculty Organization selects the “All-Around Bantam” award, which goes to the student who best exemplifies the values of the institution. Faculty also select students for awards for excellence in each academic discipline. There is also an annual award for a staff member who exemplifies the values of service and commitment to the University and its students. Faculty, staff, and student awards are presented at a formal awards night ceremony that is well attended each year.

C1.2 To accomplish the organization’s objectives, improve performance, and achieve the goals set forth in the institutional vision, the leadership of USC Union has traditionally used a variety of formal and informal processes, the most prominent of which are the EPMS system for staff members, the annual review system for faculty, CHE performance indicators, and the strategic planning process. The strategic planning process ties the mission and vision to the institution’s goals, initiatives, action plans, and indicators of successful completion.

C1.3 Ethical behavior, as well as compliance with legal, regulatory, and fiscal accountabilities, is expected at all levels. Modes of monitoring include auditors, both internal and external; reports of external activities that might be construed as conflicts of interest; and regular reports to accrediting agencies and others. For example, all full-time faculty are required to report annually whether they have had or plan to have any outside professional activities—paid or unpaid—that could be construed as conflicts of interest.

C1.4 The leadership creates an environment for professional development through flex-time policies that enable employees to enhance their educations without requiring significant reductions in work hours. Free tuition for courses and other professional

development and travel funds provide a mechanism for covering the costs associated with the improvement of the faculty and staff. Development activities are often recommended on EPMS forms and are central to the faculty evaluation system. The dean sets aside funds for faculty travel for scholarship in accordance with the goals of the strategic plan.

C1.5 The USC Union dean promotes and personally participates in succession planning and the development of future organizational leaders by participating on the Strategic Planning Committee and by identifying employees to participate in the Leadership Union and Leadership Laurens programs. Enrollment management meetings wherein schedule review and cancellation decisions are made include staff from the affected offices. Whenever opportunities present themselves, staff are cross trained or new positions are created with an eye toward succession.

C1.6 USC Union's leadership communicates with, empowers, and motivates all faculty and staff members by fostering broad discretion in how employees carry out their responsibilities. The dean attends all meetings of the Faculty Organization, the Regional Campus Faculty Senate, and the Staff Organization. Senior leaders take an active role in faculty and staff reward and recognition processes by being involved in the final selection process for many of the key awards. In addition, the annual performance evaluation systems provide a regular means to discuss performance with all faculty and staff members.

C1.7 In addition to ongoing dialogue through a variety of media, the deans of the regional campuses self-report goals, objectives, strengths, and weaknesses to the Vice Provost. At the conclusion of every academic year, the responses to the evaluation instrument are reviewed, and suggestions for improvement are noted and acted upon. Progress and/or corrective action is observed and documented by the Vice Provost via this interactive process.

C1.8 USC Union receives continuous feedback from its key stakeholders through formal data collection and discussions with administration, faculty, staff, business, and community leaders. Key performance measures include enrollment reports, student evaluations of faculty, and survey data.

C1.9 Information from such measures as student evaluations and other polling is shared with the appropriate divisions to work on solving problems and improving processes on a continuous basis.

C1.10 USC Union's senior leaders are quite active in community affairs, both at the formal and informal levels. The Associate Dean is an active member of the Union County Development Board. The Dean is a member of the Union and Laurens Rotary Clubs and also sits on a number of *ad hoc* committees intended to promote the well-being of the community.

In terms of the informal levels of influence, USC Union constitutes a center of discussion because it hosts many public meetings. USC Union has some of the best meeting facilities in the area. Some noteworthy examples are:

- ❖ meetings and training sessions for Union city, county and school district officials are held on campus
- ❖ the Union County Arts Council holds juried art shows and music concerts on campus
- ❖ public officials hold “town hall” meetings and political forums on campus

Category 2 – Strategic Planning

C.2.1 The USC Union blueprint is developed by a Leadership Team that represents the major divisions of USC Union and includes input by all staff and faculty members. The blueprint from the previous year is analyzed to determine which initiatives and action plans have been completed, which need to be carried forward and which need to be eliminated. The mission of USC Union is kept at the forefront of all goals, initiatives and action plans; none are created that do not strongly support the mission. As goals are created, budgetary needs are discussed and implemented; no initiatives are attempted that require excessive expenditures. Only goals, initiatives, and action plans that can be realistically attained are implemented. As a result, USC Union attains most of its yearly action plans.

C.2.2 USC Union’s blueprint has had three primary goals for the last several budget cycles: increasing enrollments, improving student learning and improving the image of the University. Increasing enrollment is necessary in order to survive and thrive as an institution. Improving the image of USC Union will help in increasing enrollments. Improving student learning is vital to upholding the mission of USC Union and improving the image of the University.

C.2.3 Strategic Planning Committee members who develop the blueprint are tasked with its implementation. A final report is given at the end of the budget cycle and a summary is given in the Annual Accountability Report (Chart 7.6-1). The final report indicates which initiatives and action plans were completed and the status of the ones incomplete. Improvements for the next planning year are suggested by the Leadership Team members.

C.2.4 By keeping budgetary constraints at the forefront, initiatives and action plans are developed that can be attained within a year and with as minimal cost as possible. Initiatives and action plans are required to be within the scope of the mission of the University. No action plans are developed without first attaching an approximate reasonable cost to them.

C.2.5 Strategic Planning Committee members work with the members of their division of USC Union to implement the initiatives and action plans under their responsibility.

C.2.6 Strategic Planning Committee members communicate often with each other and the Dean on progress in implementing the initiatives and action plans. A final report is given at the end of the budget cycle and a summary is given in the Annual Accountability Report

(Chart 7.6-1). The final report indicates which initiatives and action plans were completed and the status of the ones incomplete.

C.2.7 http://uscunion.sc.edu/about/inst_repts.html

Program Number & Title	Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goals/ Objectives	Related FY 11-12 Key Agency Action Plan/Initiative(s) and Timeline for Accomplishing the Plan(s)	Key Cross References for Performance Measures*
Goal I	Continue to improve the academic, intellectual, and cultural environment on campus	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Two new faculty hires, including one supported by Palmetto College 2. Focus on expanding programs at the Laurens Higher Education Center (USC Union @ Laurens), particularly on Palmetto recruitment 3. Faculty needs are continually evaluated, and a long-term hiring plan is in place 4. We will continue to promote the Literary Festival and Carolina Emerging Scholars, and encourage Magellan Scholar applications 5. Add a new Associate’s Degree in Criminal Justice (pending approval by SC CHE) 6. Add Club Softball to Athletics programs <p>Timeline:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One hire completed; another ongoing Fall 2013 2. Started Fall 2010; ongoing 3. Ongoing 4. Ongoing 5. USC Columbia administration decided not to pursue this degree 6. Tabled 	<p>7.1-1 7.1-2 7.1-3 7.2-1 7.2-2 7.3-1 7.3-2 7.3-3 7.4-1 7.4-2</p>

Goal II	Continue to develop and expand courses and programs for community outreach and continuing education.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expand evening short-course offerings based on community demand 2. Plans for an expanded bookstore, which will be more accessible to the public, and student center will be completed and construction nearly complete by the start of the 2013-14 Academic Year <p>Timeline:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ongoing 2. Ongoing; transitional math and English began in Spring 2012; cohort scheduling attempted in Fall 2012 and will be revisited; construction delays prevented bookstore/student center from opening in August 2013—new target is December 2013 (bookstore) and 2014 (student center) 	<p>7.2-1 7.2-2 7.2-3 7.2-4 7.2-5 7.5-1 7.5-2</p>
Goal III	Continue to install technology upgrades across campus.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement VOIP phone system 2. Expand virtual server/storage infrastructure to support server virtualization 3. Website redesign 4. Install electronic door locks <p>Timeline:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ongoing 2. Completed 3. Ongoing; pending USC Columbia timetable 4. Ongoing 	<p>7.2-1 7.2-2 7.2-3 7.2-4 7.2-5 7.4-1 7.4-2</p>

Category 3 – Student, Stakeholder, and Market Focus

C3.1 USC Union offers the first two years of courses for most university curricula and awards the general Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees. In terms of student needs, the Mission of USC Union and other regional campuses has defined the student and market segments as being primarily focused on non-residential college transfer populations. As such, the mission constrains student and market segments. Therefore, the primary market for students attending USC Union is a SC resident commuting from Union County or one of the other counties in its service area. The USC Union service area is defined as the counties of Union, Laurens, Chester, York, Cherokee, Newberry and Fairfield. Most students attending the Union campus reside in Union County. The USC Union admissions office identifies and recruits at all high schools in the service area through campus visits, financial aid workshops, admissions workshops, and regular mailings. USC Union also promotes the campus to attract non-traditional students by newspaper and radio advertising. Minority students in Union County are identified and recruited through the Access and Equity grant program. Recruiting students from all market segments is the responsibility of the Admissions Recruiter. USC Union also

provides a concurrent enrollment program for high school students in Union and Laurens counties.

The primary reason students attend USC Union is convenience, with cost being an important secondary factor. Students are able to maintain employment and family responsibilities while taking USC Union classes. Commuting to other state colleges in Columbia, Spartanburg, or elsewhere strain employment and family responsibilities. Even without considerations of transportation, food, and other expenses related to commuting, USC Union is cost effective on tuition (Graph 7.2-8). USC Union promotes the student ability to move through the USC System or successfully transfer outside the USC System to pursue bachelors and graduate degrees (Graph 7.1-2). Most students who plan to complete a four-year degree select the convenience of the “change of campus” option to pursue their degree at a USC system campus. The expansion of the bachelor’s degree programs is making USC Union a more viable option for students who wish to obtain a four-year degree but are unable to do so due to socioeconomic constraints.

Each year the Admissions Office sets target application goals for new student enrollment. The primary source for new enrollees is the area secondary schools. The expansion of concurrent student courses in the area high schools has proven to be an additional method of course delivery which also directly impacts enrollment. The most common way that students learn about the programs and services of USC Union is through friends and family members. They also gain information through guidance counselors, by being a Union resident, special recruitment, being a concurrent student, admissions outreach and alumni.

USC Union assesses student needs and expectations throughout the academic year. Category 4.3 lists the various methods currently used to assess the value of the learning experience and evaluate the level of student satisfaction. At orientation, students are required to take placement tests and to provide feedback on their experience at USC Union. Students with special academic and/or physical needs are given assistance under the auspices of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). One of the most important factors in student retention is academic advising. All full-time faculty members serve as academic advisors, as do a number of trained staff members. A system of academic advising has been developed with advisors being assigned according their expertise in certain program areas and connection to specific student groups. Comments concerning satisfaction and suggestions for improvement are explicitly requested from each student as part of the student course evaluation process each semester and are used to improve the academic advising process.

C3.2 Evaluation forms given in each course during the fall and spring semesters gauge student satisfaction with the services of USC Union. Exit interviews are given to each student who transfers or withdraws from the University. Survey results are compiled and shared with the appropriate divisions with changes being made as warranted. Formal and informal survey results from students, feedback from business leaders and appropriate data concerning labor and employment trends are used the Academic Affairs and Admissions offices to determine programmatic change and course needs, with student demand being the strongest factor in change. The Dean and other members of the faculty and

administration meet regularly with political, business, education, and community leaders to discuss the services provided by the University. The Director of Enrollment Services and the Director of Financial Aid personally visit all guidance counselors at each high school in the service area each fall semester; host an on-campus luncheon for guidance counselors each year; conduct information workshops with faculty, students, and families in key high schools each year; and host a “junior scholars” night to honor high achieving, future prospects and scholarship recipients. The enrollment management system tracks course enrollments to achieve greater efficiency.

C3.3 The information that USC Union collects and assesses to keep services and programs relevant are compiled by the Dean, the Associate Dean, and the Director of Enrollment Services/Student Affairs. As noted above (Category 2), the strategic plan is developed by a team whose membership changes according to the needs of the University. In 2013 the team consisted of the Interim Dean, the Academic Coordinator, the Director of Admissions, the Information Technology Director, and the Business Manager. Results and comments from student evaluations (including concurrent courses that serve future students), exit interviews, alumni surveys and meetings with community leaders are shared with the appropriate divisions on a regular basis through the listserv, memoranda and meeting minutes. When demand for new programs and courses warrants, a needs analysis is conducted surveying students, members of the community, and business leaders in the appropriate fields. Appropriate resources are allocated to make the changes deemed necessary.

C3.4 USC Union determines student and stakeholder satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction via various avenues. Student satisfaction is determined by feedback from course evaluations, exit interviews and contact processes through the various campus offices. The Dean and members of the Union-Laurens Commission on Higher Education and USC Union Partnership Board maintain relationships with constituents of the university including donors, friends, corporations, foundations, alumni, political leaders, and groups interested in the mission of USC Union. The goal of all contact processes is to build and strengthen relationships of these key constituent groups. Feedback from the shareholder groups is shared with the appropriate divisions in order to improve service delivery.

C3.5 USC Union builds positive relationships to attract and retain students, enhance student performance, and to meet and exceed their expectations for learning by maintaining close working relationships with local school districts; providing individual services that students and parents expect from a small college, particularly through the Opportunity Scholars Program and the Student Affairs division; celebrating individual student success with formal programs; providing fellowship activities for students, including student organizations and a Student Government Association; developing and maintaining relations with regional media outlets (newspaper, radio, television, web-based media) to publicize student success stories; and publicly honor “dean’s list” students with notices to their hometown newspapers.

Positive external (non-student) stakeholder relationships, particularly those serving business, industry and education, are built by every member of the administration, faculty,

staff and student body. USC Union is an active member in a number of business and civic boards in Union and Laurens counties, including the Chamber of Commerce. The needs of industry and education are discussed with appropriate divisions at USC Union on a continuous basis through feedback processes (surveys, meetings), and services are provided as they are deemed necessary.

C3.6 Student complaints concerning academic and student affairs issues are registered with the Academic Affairs Office and are managed by the Academic Dean. Students wishing to file a grievance are able to do so through the Grievance Policy in the [USC Union Academic Bulletin](#). Complaints of a non-academic nature, as well as those of non-student stakeholders, are handled by the appropriate office and administrator through clearly defined processes outlined in the Bulletin.

Category 4 – Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management

C4.1 USC Union is responsible for the assessment of student learning as outlined by the [Carolina Core Curriculum](#) established by the USC Faculty Senate and approved by SACS. In preparation for the creation and implementation of Palmetto College, USC Union participates in a common assessment designed and implemented by the office of Extended University, a division of Palmetto College, in Columbia. The Columbia office of Institutional Effectiveness determines which courses are assessed annually. Data from this process is collected at the end of each semester and is reported in June as a part of the General Education Assessment Plan submitted to USC Columbia and shared with the appropriate stakeholder groups. USC Union regularly assesses various internal processes as needed. Improvement of student learning continues to be a major focus of the strategic plan, and an increasing amount of resources are expended toward that goal.

C4.2 The Academic Dean coordinates the collection, assessment and dissemination of institutional research data for the institution. The Academic Dean works closely with the Office of Institutional Assessment and Compliance on the Columbia campus. The Academic Dean is charged with developing assessment guidelines for the Strategic Plan, reporting data to the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE), the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and to CHE's CHEMIS database. The Academic Dean is also responsible for all data collection and assessment processes internally at USC Union. All USC Union Strategic Plans, General Education Assessment Plans and CHE reports are available on the USC Union [website](#).

A fundamental value shared by the administrative officers and the University is that a high degree of integration among planning, assessment and institutional research is essential for the University to maintain excellence in teaching, research and public service. All administrative units are required by the Dean to provide regular reports on their achievements and their relationship to the Strategic Plan. These reports are analyzed by the Dean and other officers and streamlined for reporting to other units as well as appropriate stakeholder groups. Each unit is given feedback by the officers as to how their achievements relate to the mission and Strategic Plan and how improvements can be made, particularly in relation to resource allocation.

C4.3 USC Union's key measures are kept current through data collection and assessment, surveys, along with data and financial auditing which are vital in the process of long range planning.

- ❖ **Student Achievement & Retention:** graduation rates (Graphs 7.1-5, 7.1-6), minority retention (Graph 7.1-7). Each of these measures is collected annually.
- ❖ **Educational Compliance:** CHE reports. Each of these measures is collected annually (currently suspended by the Legislature).
- ❖ **Customer Satisfaction:** USC Union student evaluations and withdrawal survey questions on student services (Fall and Spring and yearly, respectively.)
- ❖ **Human Resources, Administration and Finance:** faculty compensation (Graph 7.2-7), faculty quality (Graph 7.3-2), tuition (Graph 7.2-8), revenues & expenses (Graph 7.2-1), instructional & administrative costs (Graph 7.2-2), gifts (Graph 7.2-3), auxiliary profits (Graph 7.2-5), external grants funding (Graph 7.2-6). Each of these measures is collected annually.
- ❖ **Facilities & Technology:** needs assessments, operation and maintenance of physical plant costs (Graph 7.2-4). Each of these measures is collected annually.

C4.4 The dean and other campus leaders analyze the trends, projections, and cause-effect relationships and share the information with appropriate members of the administration, faculty and staff, as well as appropriate stakeholder groups. This information is used to set priorities in the use of fiscal, personnel and material resources as well as to make changes to policy, procedures and operations as needed. The analysis utilizes many types of data collected for CHE, SACS, and IPEDS reporting as well as from a variety of reports gleaned from internal operations data and from community feedback. Measures calculated for CHE are compared to benchmarks to determine compliance.

C4.5 Institutional data and information are disseminated via e-mail to the major internal stakeholder groups (students, employees, USC Columbia, CHE, Area Commission) and via the local news media (print, radio and television) to the general public. All USC Union institutional summary reports are online on a designated page ([Institutional Reports](#)) of the USC Union website.

C4.6 [The Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Compliance](#) on the Columbia campus provides a secure network where all data and surveys are housed. Data is updated, reviewed and disseminated each term, reported and reviewed by multiple constituents throughout the University of South Carolina System, The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE), The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), and The Federal Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems (IPEDS). Internal assessment data is housed in the Office of Academic Affairs and managed by the Academic Dean.

C4.7 The institutional planners continuously notify the administration, faculty, and staff on organizational review findings relating to the goals and action plans of the Strategic Plan. The members of the academic, finance, and administrative divisions each develop plans to improve performance in their area. All of the divisions work in conjunction with each other to insure that human, intellectual and material resources are allocated to foster an

environment where continuous improvement can be achieved. Priorities for such improvement are linked back to the Strategic Plan and its goals and action plans as determined by the administration and institutional planners.

C4.8 Organizational and employee knowledge is represented in the form of policies and procedures, guidelines, rules and other formal documents. USC Union has monthly meetings of its Faculty Organization during the academic year and meetings of the Staff Organization each semester where information is shared and new policies and procedures are discussed and developed, in particular the strategic plan. Standing committees of each organization meet when needed, as do *ad hoc* committees that are created by the Dean as warranted. Managers act as facilitators passing along the accumulated knowledge of the organization and directing staff to accomplish their tasks by following the policies and procedures of the University. USC Union resists the tendency toward inertia by encouraging all employees to participate in education and training and incorporating the new information and strategies into the workplace through cross-training and in-service workshops. There are periodic meetings of USC Union employees with their colleagues at the other USC campuses as well as their counterparts at other institutions across the state and region. These relationships allow USC Union to continuously identify best practices in every process of the organization. This information is used to modify policies and procedures and aid in the continuous improvement of all aspects of the University.

Category 5 – Workforce Focus

C5.1 USC Union organizes and manages work to enable faculty to teach in small classroom settings that focus on student learning, and have adequate time during the academic year and the summer to pursue research opportunities. USC Union provides opportunities for faculty development in teaching improvement in-house through the Academic Affairs office in conjunction with various divisions at the Columbia campus (including free-tuition courses), provides opportunities for conference, provides an orientation and office space for adjunct faculty, and provides secretarial and computer support for both full-time and adjunct faculty. USC Union organizes and manages work to enable staff to not only be trained at their contracted job but also be trained to help in other offices when there is a need. USC Union provides opportunities for staff members to pursue higher degrees by offering free-tuition courses, provides and encourages opportunities for professional development, and provides computer support for all staff. USC Union organizes and manages work that promotes cooperation, initiative, empowerment, innovation, and organizational culture through interoffice committees and task forces bringing resources from throughout campus to bear on issues.

C5.2 USC Union achieves effective communication and knowledge/skills/best practices sharing across the campus via a common e-mail system allowing rapid sharing of information, discussion of academic issues and sharing of committee minutes through a email, development opportunities advertised to all employees, the chairs of the Faculty and Staff Organizations attending the meetings of both bodies, inviting adjunct faculty to be members of the Faculty Organization, and the monthly meetings during the academic year

of the Faculty Organization and twice yearly meetings of the Staff Organization. In addition, the dean meets weekly with the directors of the departments that directly report to her and meets with the Faculty Advisory Committee prior to each Faculty Organization meeting.

C5.3 USC Union’s faculty and staff performance management system includes merit plans, Employee Performance Management System (EPMS), and the process of coordinating to institutional plans. The faculty evaluation system is tied directly to goals and raises are nearly entirely merit driven. The EPMS system includes objectives that can be tied to goals.

C5.4 When vacancies in the administration and staff occur, qualified faculty and staff are strongly urged to apply for these positions in an attempt to ease transitions. USC Union does not have discrete academic “departments,” hence there are no department heads and no need for a succession plan. The Associate Dean serves as the supervisor for all full-time and adjunct faculty members. Faculty career progression is built into the tenure and promotion system. Staff positions typically lack a career ladder structure that necessitates a succession plan.

C5.5 USC Union has a development and learning system for leaders that is integrated into daily work procedures.

- a) Development of personal leadership attributes are addressed in both the EPMS and faculty evaluation processes on a yearly basis and educational opportunities in this area are provided by USC Columbia as well as by local entities (e.g., Leadership Union).
- b) Using a team approach to strategic planning allows all leaders to have a strong understanding of the complex organization that is USC Union; all members of the leadership team have a deep knowledge of the structure and function of each division of not only USC Union but also the USC system.
- c) Ethical practices are demanded by a strong commitment from the Dean to transparency and accountability in all matters.
- d) Members of the leadership team are expected to work together to implement the strategic plan on a continuous basis throughout the year and are kept mindful of the core competencies and strategic challenges that motivate the plan.

C5.6 Workforce capability and capacity needs are assessed on a continuous basis through feedback from employees to the members of the leadership team as well as through an analysis of skills, competencies, and staffing levels by each division. Changes are implemented on an as-needed basis.

C5.7 New employees are recruited as vacancies become available or as budgets will allow based on division needs, particularly the need for additional faculty. Position vacancies are typically advertised on the USC Human Resources website, which can be accessed from the USC Union website homepage. Usually, vacancies are advertised in local newspapers and often in regional (e.g., The State newspaper) and—in the case of faculty lines—national (e.g., Chronicle of Higher Education) publications. Candidates are selected for

interviews by a process that is guided by the Human Resources office to insure all state and federal guidelines are strictly followed, a process that often involves faculty and administration from USC Columbia and the Regional Campuses system as a part of the interview panel. New hires are provided with a robust support system that encourages all employees to work together as a family and to help each other to continuously improve all aspects of the USC Union.

C5.8 New faculty members are given an orientation in Columbia by the Provost's office before they begin teaching, in addition to in-house orientations by the HR officer and the Dean. Faculty members are provided yearly workshops on tenure and promotion by the Regional Campuses Faculty Senate to address the increasing importance of scholarly research. Periodic development opportunities in teaching and technology are provided by the Regional Campuses office and other units of USC Columbia, particularly the Center for Teaching Excellence. USC Union conducts in-house workshops on academic advising and teaching effectiveness before the start of each semester. All employees have opportunities for development throughout the year provided by the Columbia campus and are eligible to take one class each semester tuition-free. New staff members are given an orientation by the HR officer and occasionally an orientation by an office on the Columbia campus with whom they will be closely working. The HR officer provides regular updates to all employees on key issues regarding employee wellness, human relations, legal issues and benefits by e-mail as well as print media. The Dean's Office provides regular information on changes in USC policy and procedures as they apply to all employees or specific academic disciplines. Education, training and development opportunities are provided on an as-needed basis determined by the faculty, staff and administration and the new knowledge and skills they provide are integral in job performance and increasing the quality of all processes at USC Union.

C5.9 USC Union motivates faculty to develop and utilize their full potential through the faculty annual review by the Dean and Associate Dean; the [Peer Review](#) conducted by faculty under the auspices of the Faculty Organization; the [Distinguished Teaching Award](#) with monetary compensation (one faculty member selected each spring by a committee of faculty, staff and students based on nominations from the school at-large); and nomination for the Governor's Professor of the Year award. The Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) and staff annual review offers employees an opportunity to merit raises based on exemplary work. The Student Government Association (SGA) also presents a Staff Appreciation Award with monetary compensation each spring (one staff member selected each spring by the SGA membership).

C5.10 USC Union faculty and staff provide feedback to the administration through the Faculty and Staff Organizations on a monthly or semester basis at their respective meetings and in the yearly Job Satisfaction Survey. Changes to the system are made based on the recommendations of these organizations. Open planning structure allows all employees to make suggestions regarding improvements. Budget authority is delegated downward in the structure. The Faculty Organization is representative of cross-functional disciplines, where numerous [faculty committees](#) are empowered to enhance the learning-centered process.

Special task forces are created by the Faculty and Staff Organizations when deemed necessary by the Dean.

C5.11 The data from the surveys are analyzed by the Academic Dean and shared with the Dean and the Faculty and Staff Organizations. Any issues that seem to be a source of dissatisfaction are addressed by the Dean in consultation with the appropriate administrators. Informal feedback given at meetings is handled in a similar manner.

C5.12 USC Union has established a clean and safe environment that allows the staff to maintain the facilities to the best of our abilities so that they may be used by faculty, staff, students, and visitors for their intended purpose, outlined in a [Hazardous Weather and Emergency Leave Policy](#). Telephones are located in each classroom, each office and the library on the Union campus and in each office at the Laurens County Higher Education Center. Should an emergency or accident occur, a person dials 7710 on campus to notify the switchboard operator. If the situation warrants, Emergency Medical Service (EMS) may be called at 9-911. OSHA standards are observed in the dry and wet labs in the Main building. Air horns have been placed around campus at near classrooms and entrances to be used to alert others in case of an emergency that does not involve fire.

Category 6 – Process Management

C 6.1 USC Union’s core competencies are determined by the Mission Statement, which frames and guides the development of programs, offerings, and student services. Further, additional policies and procedures delimit the process. Faculty expertise is a key element in determining core competencies as well. The core competencies of USC Union involve the delivery, through traditional and non-traditional (i.e., distributed delivery) means, college-level general education classes and, through participation in Palmetto Programs, certain upper-level classes for baccalaureate degrees.

C6.2 All USC Union work processes are focused on the delivery of its academic programs and the support of those programs and the stakeholders who take part in them. The work processes are divided into three major divisions: Academic Affairs (curricula, courses and academic support services, including OSP), Student Affairs (including enrollment management) and Business Affairs (including financial aid).

C6.3 USC Union incorporates input from students, faculty, staff, stakeholders, suppliers, and partners to determine key learning-centered process requirements through the USC Union Faculty Organization and Regional Campuses Faculty Senate committees, which formulate policy relating to the structure and function of the key learning-centered processes (e.g. student rights and responsibilities; faculty welfare); joint faculty-staff committees for University functions involving students, stakeholders, suppliers and partners (e.g. Student Government Association; graduation; Junior Scholars; Awards Night; Founder’s Day, Christmas party). Also, executive officers of the Student Government Association serve on the Student Affairs Committee and a freshman and

sophomore senator serve on the Academic Affairs Committee of the Faculty Organization; and the Dean meets regularly with members of the community, business leaders and legislators at civic functions and special meetings. The Dean disseminates this information, as well as information collected from other sources as outlined in Category 4, through meetings, email, and periodic faculty and staff retreats. Appropriate committees of the Faculty and Staff Organizations act on this information to increase the quality of the learning-centered processes.

C6.4 USC Union incorporates organizational knowledge, new technology, cost controls, and other efficiency and effectiveness factors, such as cycle time, into process design and delivery via: investigating potential new associate degree programs to be offered exclusively at USC Union and in partnership with other USC campuses as well as technical colleges; developing new programs, particularly baccalaureate programs, in conjunction with other campuses of USC through the smart classroom system and the internet as developed for Palmetto Programs; improving faculty welfare by reviewing faculty teaching load, scholarship, and service requirements, as well as providing programs to improve teaching quality; using student evaluation and peer review of instruction to target areas in which instructional quality needs to be addressed; and streamlining budgeting by using innovative computer systems and working toward a paperless work environment by developing more computer-based processes.

C6.5 USC Union systematically evaluates and improves the learning-centered process in an ongoing program of data collection, review and planning. Using the performance measures outlined in Category 4, the Dean and Associate Dean, in conjunction with the Faculty Organization, develop plans for the improvement of the quality of the learning-centered process on a departmental basis. There are ten [General Education](#) Core Components and associated Learning Outcomes mandated by USC. USC Union is accountable, along with the other campuses and Extended University, for assessing the general education outcomes and planning for their continuous assessment in an annual [Assessment Plan](#) that is required by USC Columbia.

C6.6 USC Union's key support processes are delivered by the Dean's Office and the financial affairs, admissions, and business offices, as well as by the Opportunity Scholars Program. Feedback from students is provided on the Dean's Office functions of administration, financial affairs office and bookstore in the student evaluations and the withdrawal survey, and this information is used along with verbal and suggestions for improving quality in these services. The needs for and expenditures in the operations and maintenance (Graph 7.2-4) are constantly evaluated, particularly in light of the historical significance of the buildings of USC Union to the community and the great expense it takes to maintain the physical plant. The admissions and financial aid offices are given advertising budgets and enrollment trends (Graph 7.4-1/7.4-2/7.4-3) and retention trends are used to target their expenditures. The [Opportunity Scholars Program](#) offers academic services to first-generation college students through a federally funded TRIO grant.

C6.7 USC Union ensures that adequate budgetary and financial resources are available to support our operations by analyzing the sources of projected revenue against models of

anticipated costs. As a Regional Campus, USC Union obtains revenue primarily from the following sources: tuition and fees; state appropriations; appropriations from the city and county governments of the service region; auxiliary services – the USC Union Bookstore (includes food vending); and gifts. Each year the Business Manager meets with the individual campus units to discuss budget needs for the upcoming year and meets with the units again about mid-year to review revenues and expenditures.

Like all USC campuses, USC Union faces the obstacle of operating in a state that under-supports higher education. Therefore, USC Union has had to increase tuition and fees to simply maintain adequate levels of services to students (Graph 7.2-2). Tuition increases will continue to be relied upon unless the State of South Carolina chooses to reverse the downward funding trend for higher education.

Union County provides the vast majority of local government funding. USC Union’s funding in the county budget was moved from the miscellaneous (and therefore precarious) category to the millage category. Laurens County provides some government funding to offset a portion of the cost of maintaining the USC Union program at the Laurens County Higher Education Center.

In terms of auxiliary sources, revenue streams in the Bookstore are currently adequate to maintain the self-supporting nature of the “business.” The Bookstore has expanded its sales of microwavable food to students and its offerings of USC merchandise to the community, and a Café has been opened in the library.

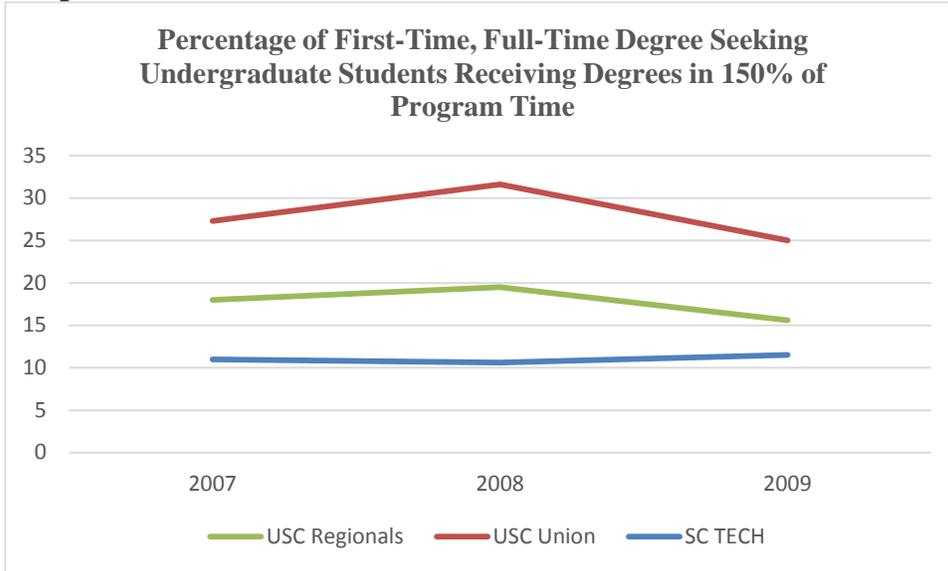
During the budget development process, the Business Manager identified areas of the Strategic Plan where budget funding would be needed. The appropriate funds were allocated for the initiatives and action plans that required monies for implementation. Bond requests for building projects were included in the annual CPIP (Comprehensive Permanent Improvement Plan) report to the S.C. Commission on Higher Education. A 5-year deferred maintenance plan is updated annually to identify maintenance needs on campus. The Business Manager continuously uses enrollment data, satisfaction surveys and revenue data to make budget projections and to improve services.

Category 7 – Organizational Performance Results

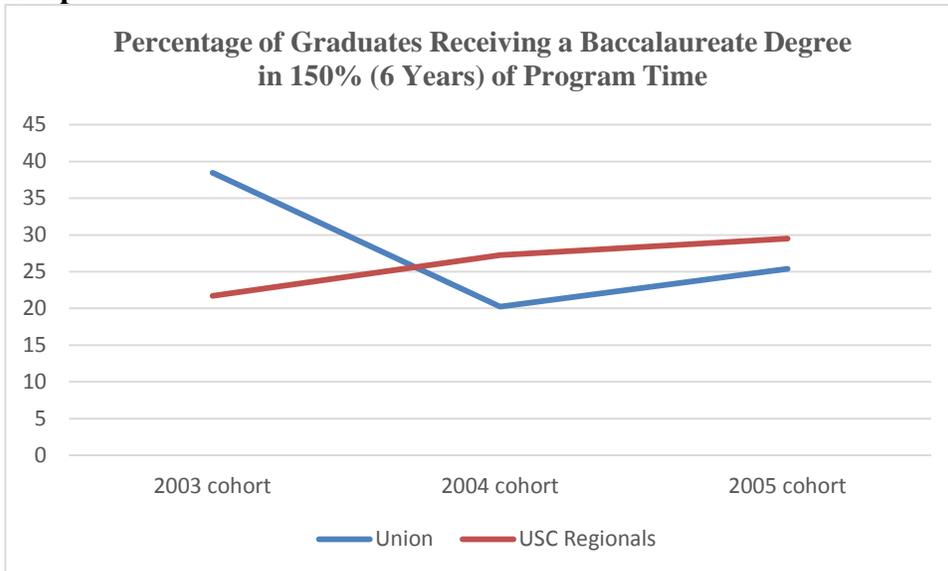
C7.1

Currently, the process of student learning outcomes assessment is undergoing significant revision on both the Columbia Campus and within the Regional Campuses as a whole. Results as yet are inchoate and more development and refinement are needed.

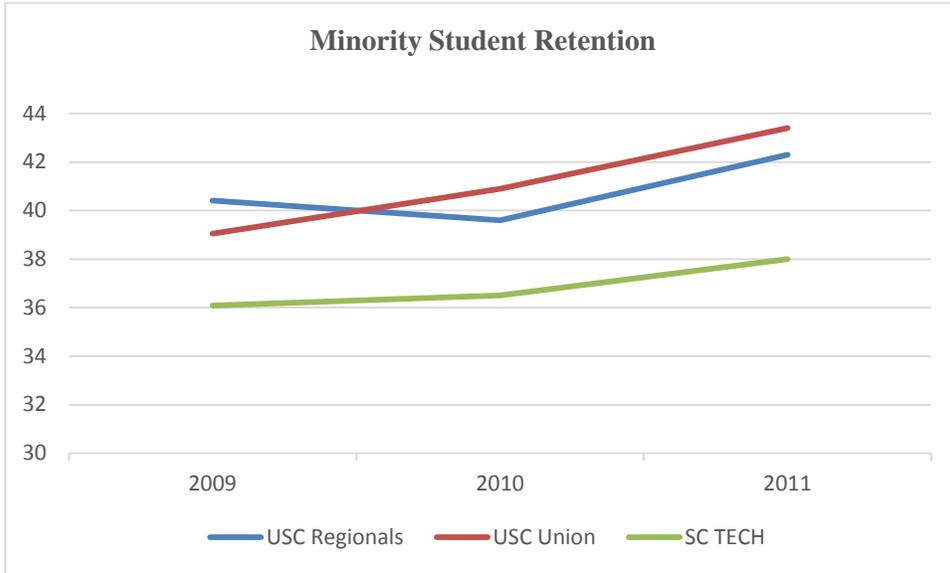
Graph 7.1 – 1



Graph 7.1 – 2

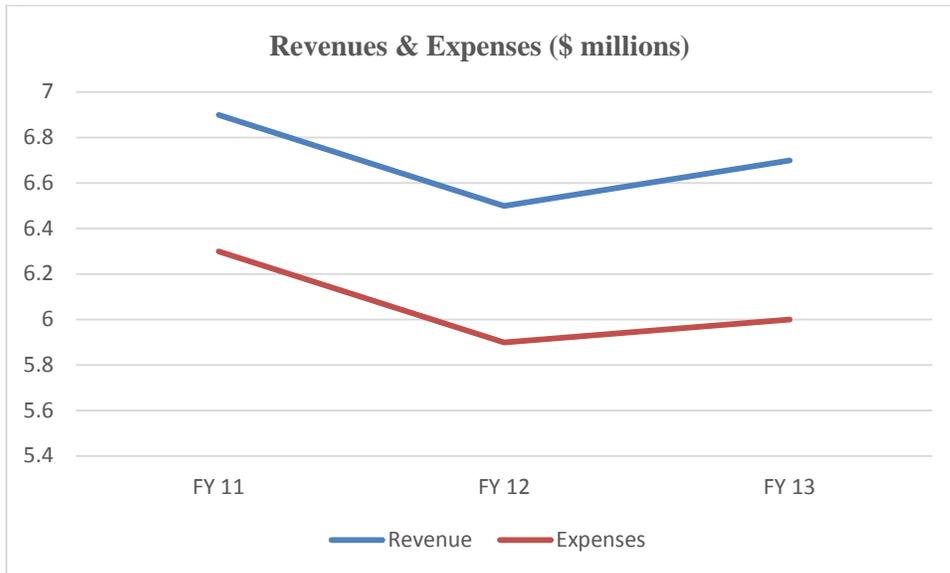


Graph 7.1 – 3

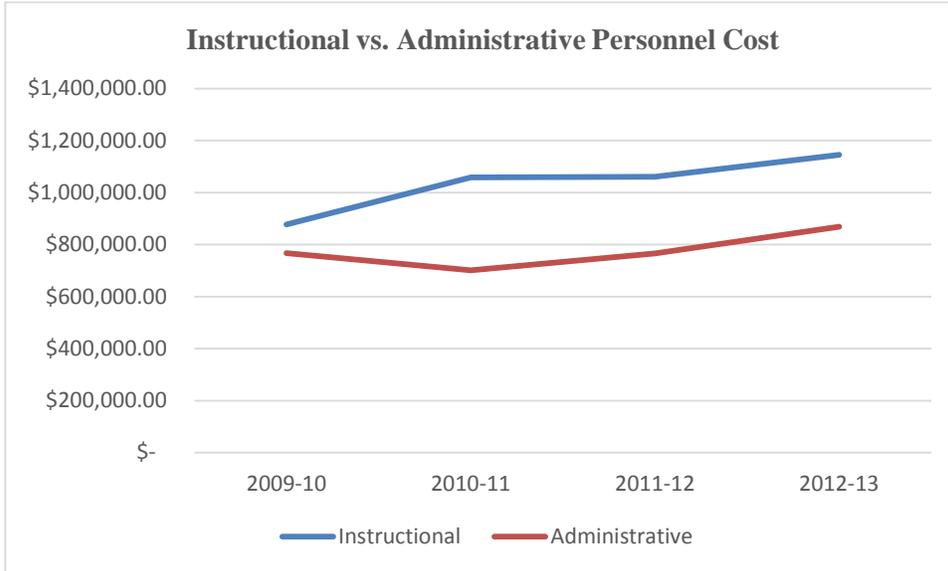


C7.2

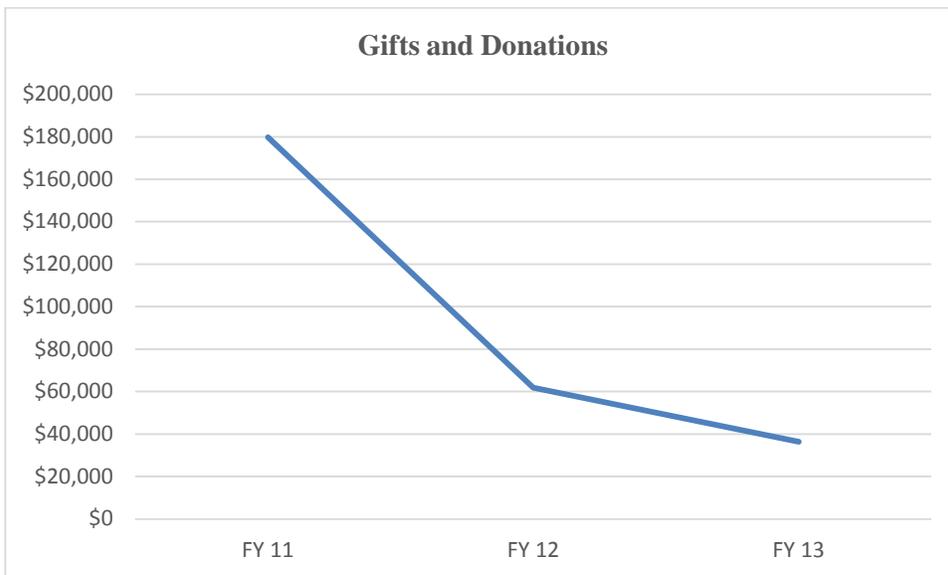
Graph 7.2 – 1



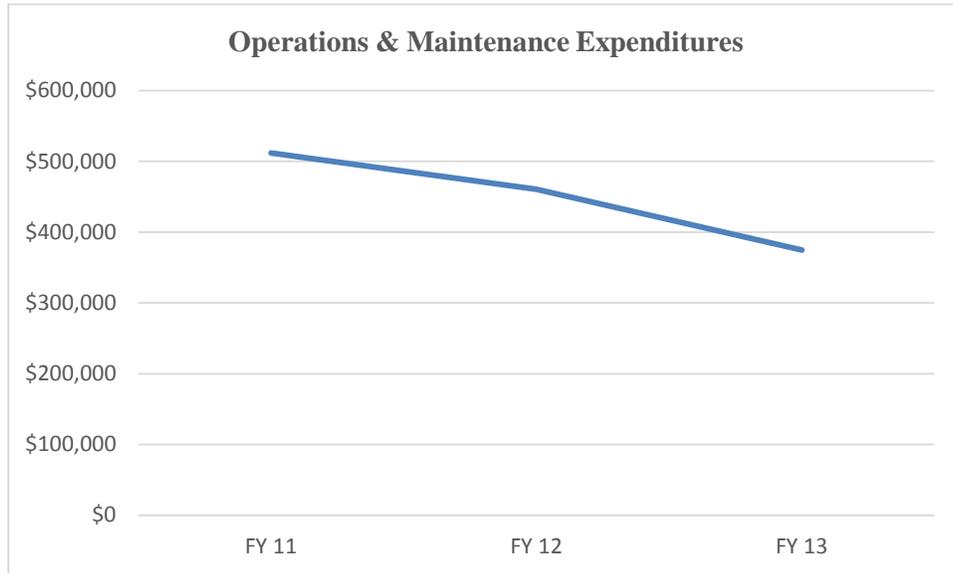
Graph 7.2 – 2



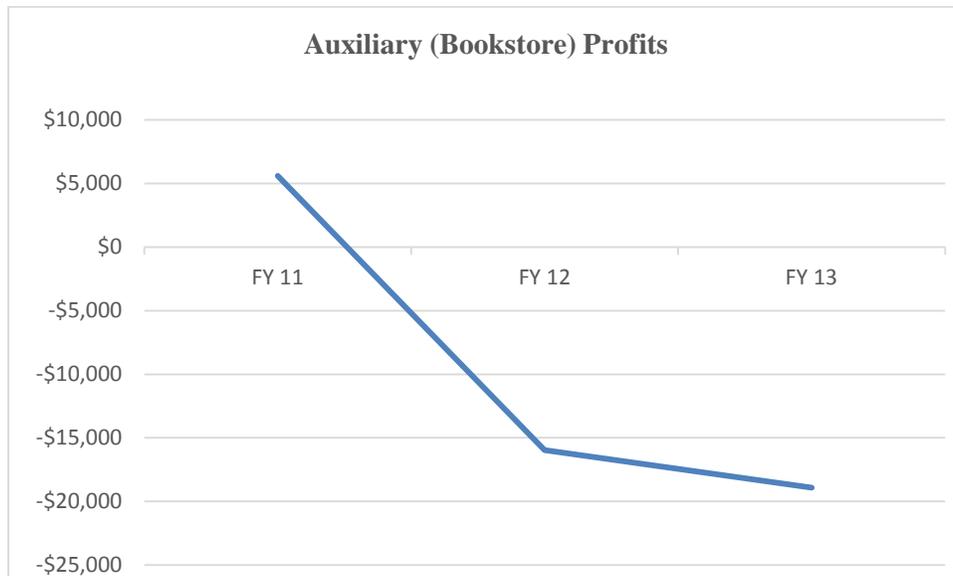
Graph 7.2 – 3



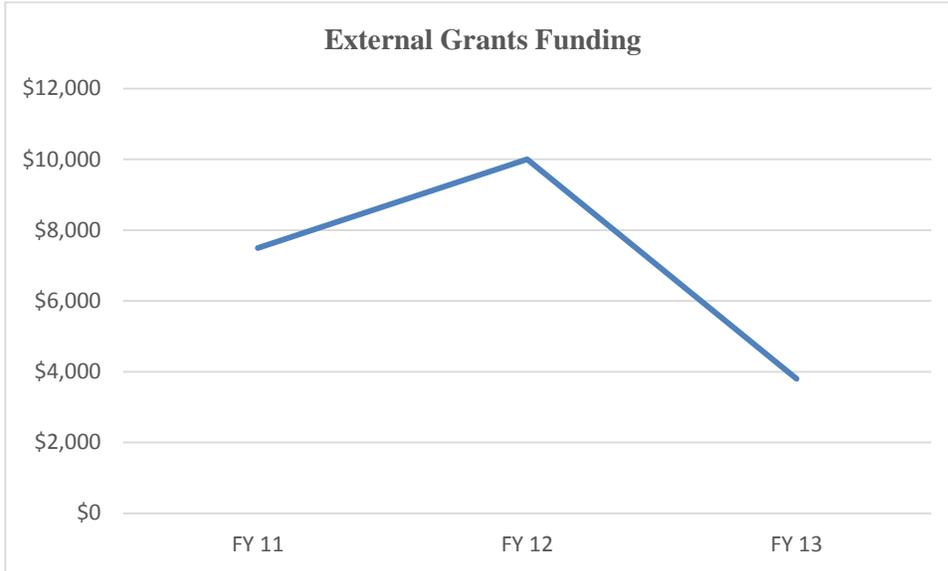
Graph 7.2 – 4



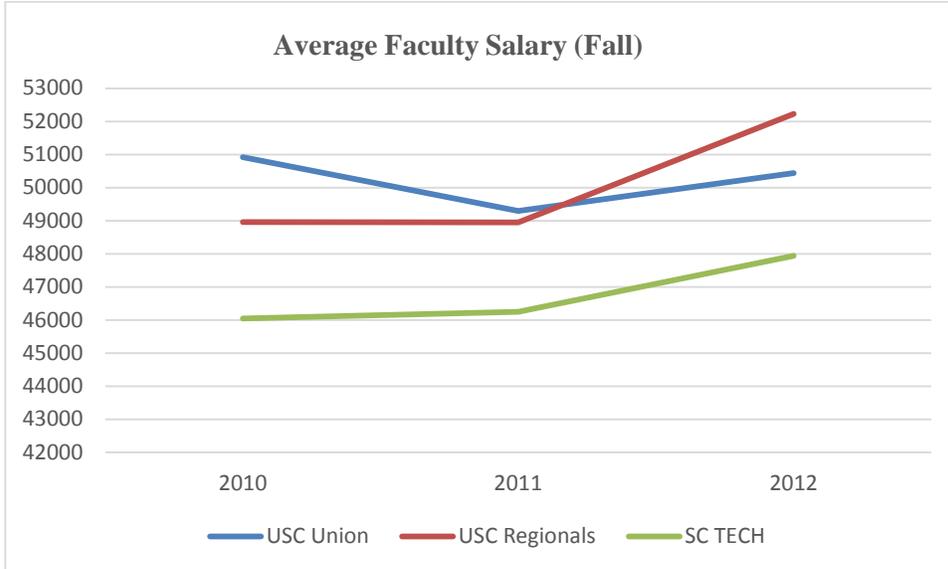
Graph 7.2 – 5



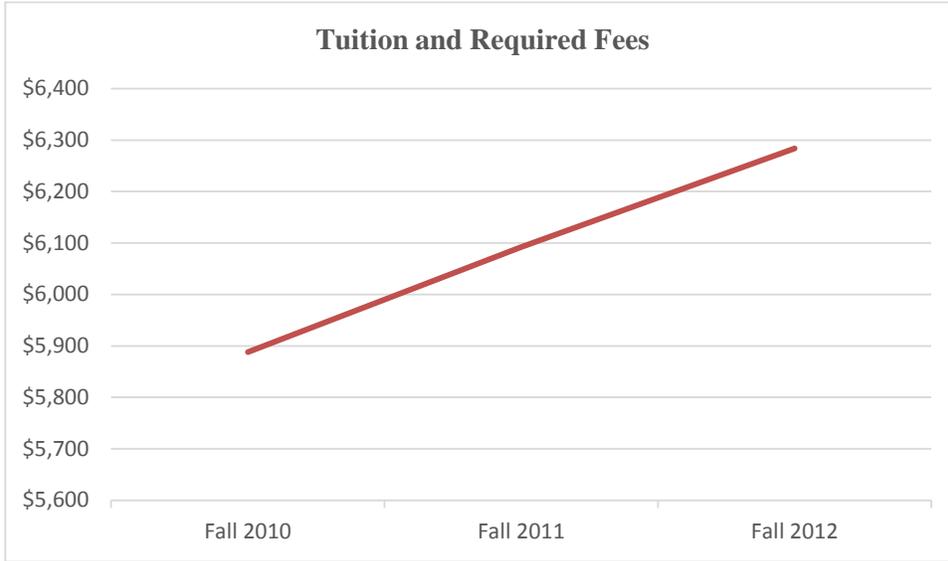
Graph 7.2 – 6



Graph 7.2 – 7

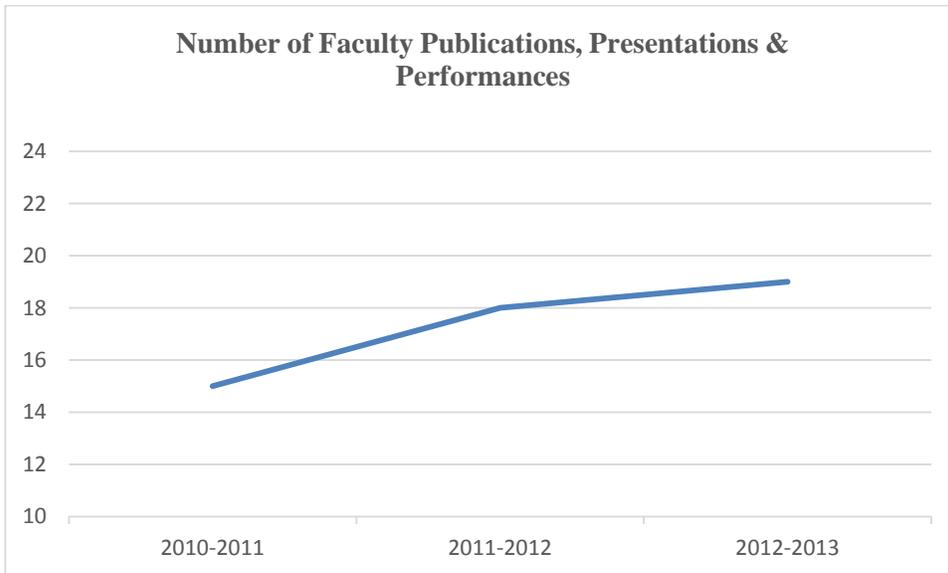


Graph 7.2 – 8



C7.3

Graph 7.3 – 1



Graph 7.3 – 2

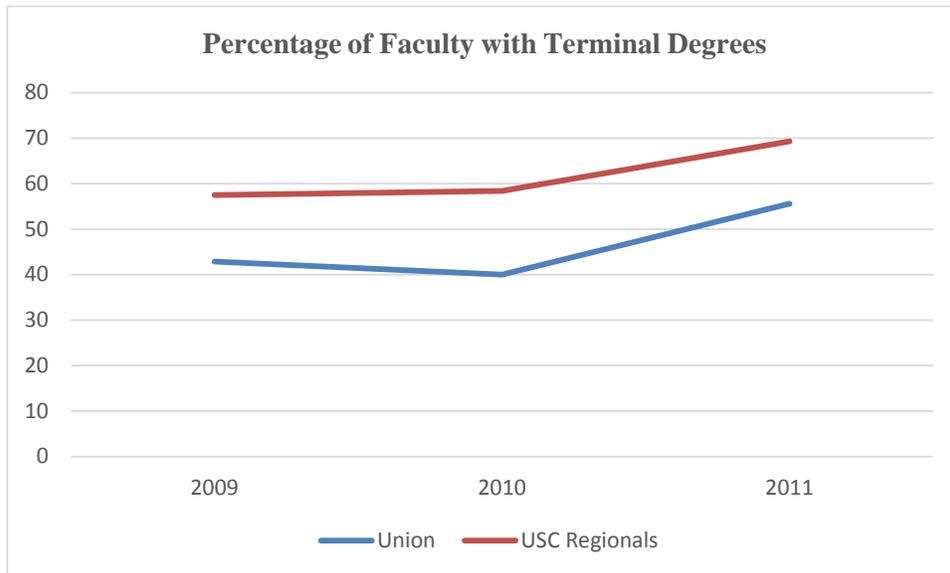
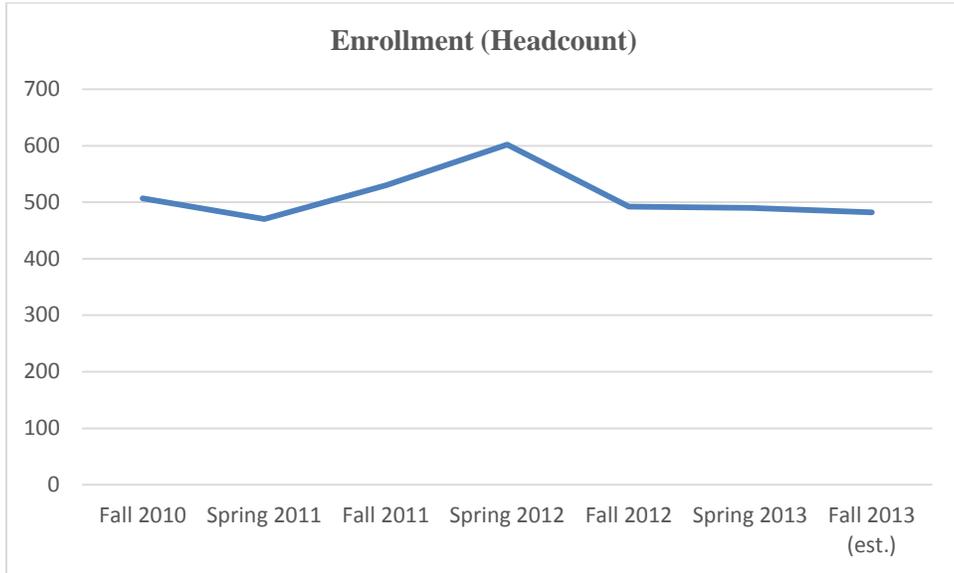


Chart 7.3 – 3

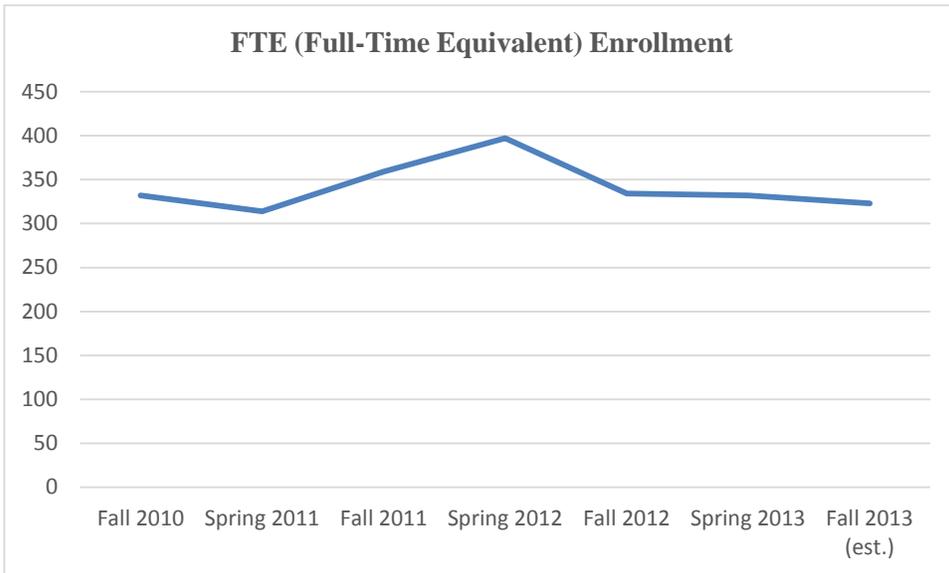
Campus Accident/Security Data

Accidents/Emergencies	Number of Incidents
Student Injuries	0
Employee Injuries	0
Campus Emergencies	0

C7.4
Graph 7.4 – 1

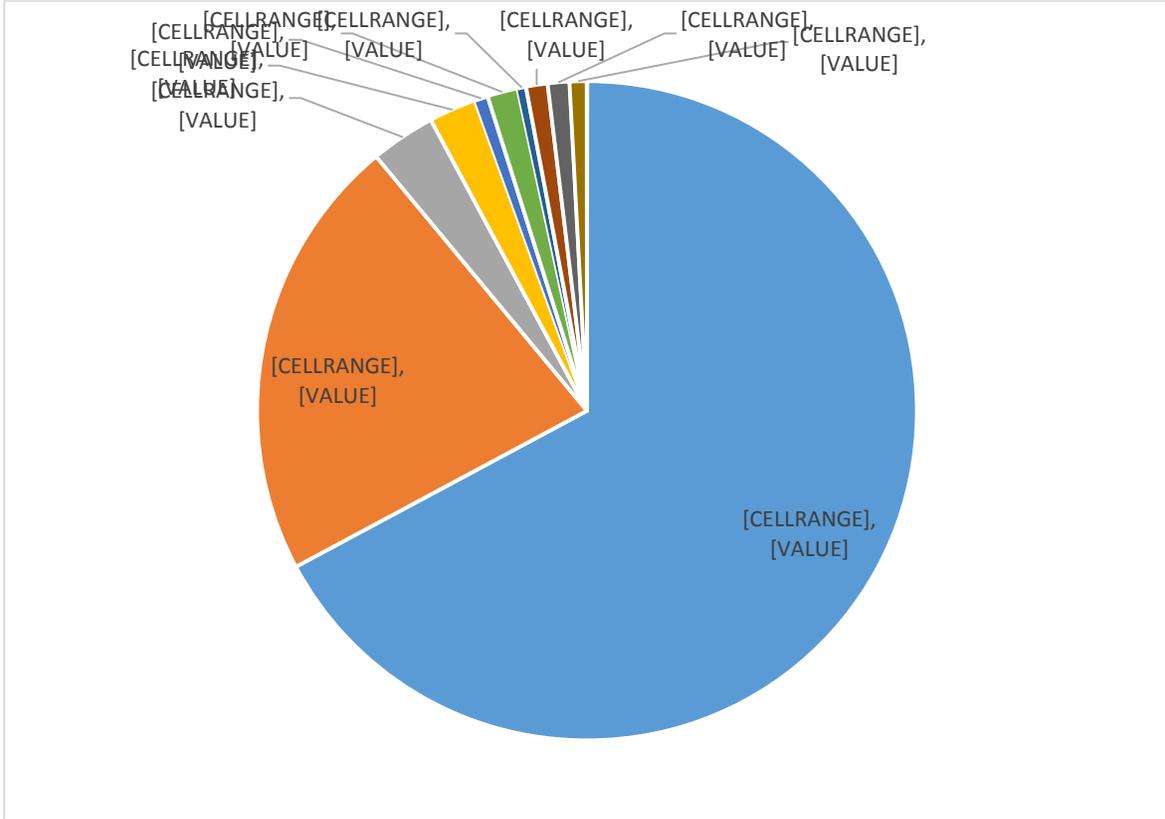


Graph 7.4 – 2



Graph 7.4 – 3

USC Union Student Counties of Origin



C7.5

Chart 7.5 – 1

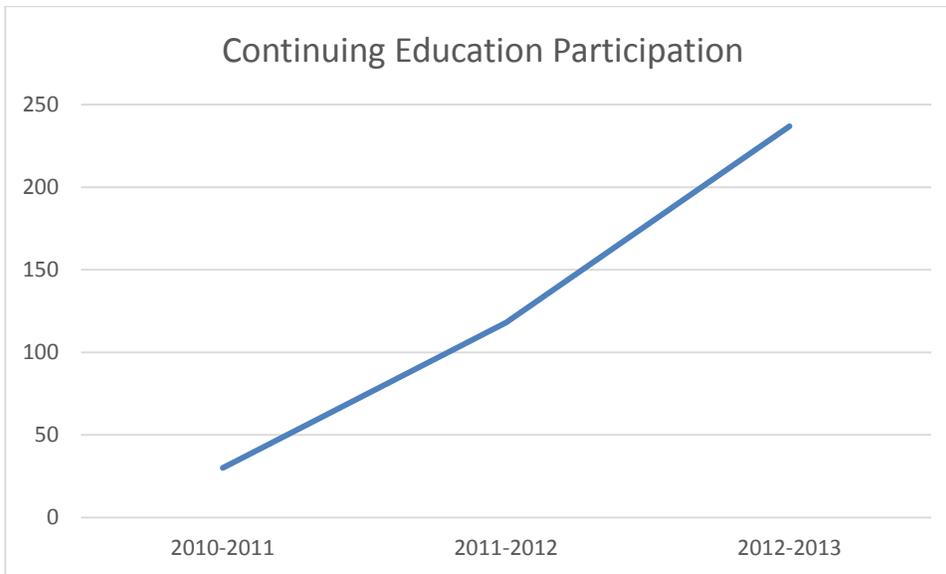
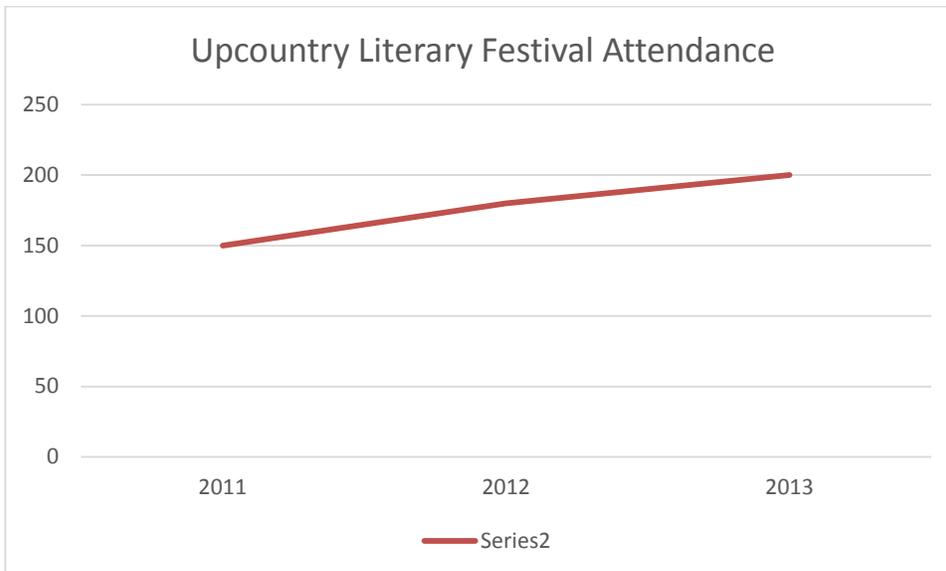


Chart 7.5 – 2



C7.6

Chart 7.6 – 1

Percentage of Strategic Plan Action Plans Completed

	Percentage Completed
Goal I	60
Goal II	75
Goal III	60