SUMMARY OF SURVEY COMMENTS (Grouped alphabetically by general topic)

These statements represent a paraphrased executive summary of the open-text responses. These statements are not intended as recommendations of the committee. This summary attempts to convey broadly expressed sentiments as well as constructive or insightful comments that may have been stated by only one respondent. They represent the diversity of opinions voiced without giving any indication of their frequencies. The number in parentheses following each topic heading indicates the number of comments on that topic entered by distinct individual survey completions. Verbatim duplicate comments were counted as coming from one individual survey completion.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS (1)
- CofC has done a great job at maintaining standards.

ADJUNCTS (See also PAY) (2)
- There are concerns about overreliance on adjunct faculty.

ADMINISTRATION (See also EVALUATION OF SUPERVISORS) (28)
- Concern expressed regarding faculty evaluation of administration (Deans and above) being ignored
- Goals are not effectively filtering down from the administration to the departments and faculty; overall poor communication between administrators and faculty
- Improvements in transparency (regarding hiring, budgets, decisions) should be made
- Administrators need to improve the incorporation of faculty feedback on strategic issues, including budgeting.
- Administrative bloat has led to the misallocation of resources from faculty/students to the administration
- Local authority needs to be restored.
- Perceived need for new leadership on all levels

ADMISSION STANDARDS (See also STUDENT QUALITY) (3)
- Admission standards must be maintained and improved
- Teaching standards may be indirectly and negatively affected by weaker admission standards
- Lower admission standards may lead to poor performances from underprepared students

ALUMNI (1)
- Alumni development should begin when students enroll and be fostered throughout their time here.

ASSESSMENT (1)
- A lack of appreciation of the value of the current (top down) assessment process by faculty.
- The administration does not incorporate faculty input throughout the assessment process.
- The assessment process would benefit from more autonomy and resources in the development of learning goals.

BUREAUCRACY (7)
- Ineffective, bloated, arcane bureaucracy lead to inordinate amount of time required to process curricular changes, grant proposals, hiring approvals...
- Too much faculty time and resources are expended on bureaucratic matters
- Efforts should be made to streamline processes.

CITY (See also ENVIRONMENTAL, IDENTITY, CIVIC ENGAGEMENT) (4)
- The College should leverage Charleston’s historical, environmental, commercial (e.g. port), cultural attributes (not simply its beaches) to attract students, employers, etc.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT (2)
- There are opportunities for the College in the heart of the city to become more engaged in the community.
- Students’ academic experiences should incorporate civic engagement.
CLASS SIZE (4)
- Larger class enrollment, particularly for lower-division courses, is concerning.
- It is disingenuous for the College to advertise small class sizes when that does not accurately reflect reality.

COLLABORATION (5)
- More cross-campus collaboration could foster a better sense of campus community.
- It appears the campus operates in “silos” with limited collaborations across divisions/units of the College.
- Better collaboration between the administration, faculty and students may assist the College in moving towards common, strategic goals and serving students better.

COMMUNICATION (21)
- Existing communication systems (i.e., Yammer) do not facilitate communication among the College’s constituents.
- The use of traditional faculty list serves would improve the faculty’s ability to communicate with the administration.
- Better communications channels should be established between the campus community and the Board of Trustees.
- Some feel that they are unaware of what’s taking place throughout the campus community.
- Transparency could be improved with more effective means of communication.

COMMUTING (See also TRAFFIC) (1)
- The College should make efforts to accommodate students who commute to the downtown campus.

COST OF LIVING (1)
- The regional cost of living is placing strains on faculty, staff and students.

CULTURE (3)
- The College’s organizational structure should support a sense of common campus culture.
- Changes in the campus culture should occur at all levels of the College with all involved.

DEGREE PROGRAMS (See also GRADUATE PROGRAMS) (5)
- Some constituents feel that a greater variety of professional degree programs will help the College compete for high-quality students, and regional employment demands.
- Others worry about the cost (and uncertain gain) of professional and Ph.D. degrees.

DIVERSITY (11)
- More effort needs to be made to expand campus racial diversity
- The College suffers from the perception that it caters to white, wealthy students.
- The diversity of the greater Charleston community could be incorporated into the College’s community through local outreach programs.
- Diversity should be a core value of the College and both admissions and scholarship criteria should be adjusted to assist students of underprivileged backgrounds.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT (6)
- Employees should be held accountable for unethical behavior.
- Administrators should treat subordinates respectfully.

EMPLOYEE RETENTION (2)
- The College should invest in its employees with the goal of retaining quality staff and faculty.
ENIVORONMENTAL (See IDENTITY) (3)

- The unique regional geography provides the College with the opportunity to develop sustainability initiatives that address environmental issues facing our society.

EVALUATION OF SUPERVISORS (See also ADMINISTRATION) (1)

- Staff and faculty of all ranks should be able to provide upward evaluations of their supervisors.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (1)

- Student development could be enhanced by a wider variety of experiential learning programs.

FACULTY ACHIEVEMENT (3)

- Faculty achievements and contributions should be more widely publicized across the campus community.
- Incentives and rewards for faculty achievements should be provided by the administration.

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT (1)

- A faculty development center could be used to centralize an array of programs and workshops designed to support faculty regarding innovative teaching techniques, research, assessments, etc.

FACULTY EVALUATION (5)

- Accountability should be more uniformly applied to all types of faculty, including adjuncts.
- Teaching should receive greater weight in the tenure and promotion decision, as it is widely perceived that research is now the driving factor.
- Tenured faculty that perform minimal research should teach additional courses.

FACULTY EXPECTATIONS (5)

- The criteria for tenure and promotion should be more clearly delineated in the FAM.
- There appears to be a significant variation in tenure and promotion requirements across schools and departments.
- Faculty expectations should take into consideration relative strengths of the faculty member (i.e., teaching vs. research).
- Tenure and promotion criteria should be realistic for an institution with high teaching expectations and taking into consideration practices elsewhere (e.g. recognizing first books that come out of dissertations).

FACULTY HIRES (1)

- Insufficient support from the state of South Carolina has led to an overreliance in non-tenure track faculty.

FINANCES (4)

- The state of South Carolina’s economic success seems at odds with the financial struggles consistently faced by the College.
- The greater campus community should receive more training regarding budgeting and financing.
- Administrators should be more accountable for unfavorable budget variances.

GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS (2)

- General education requirements could be streamlined (and/or reduced) while maintaining our commitment to liberal arts education.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS (5)

- There are concerns the creation of additional graduate programs without adequate funding may damage faculty cohesion and retention and hurt the traditionally strong focus on undergraduate high-quality education.
- Until the institution has adequate financial resource to sustain strong graduate programs, the focus should be on undergraduate programs.
IDENTITY (33)
- There is strong support for maintaining the College’s liberal arts and science tradition, with the primary focus being on undergraduate teaching.
- There are concerns about the lack of uniformity in the College’s identity across various schools and departments.
- Our identity should more directly reflect a clear commitment to our mission (teaching vs. research)
- The lack of clear identity is reflected in lackluster student involvement and commitment to the institution.
- Some voices for the College changing in order to meet the demands of the marketplace that prioritizes career-oriented majors or specialized majors that prepare students for graduate school.
- Rather than aspiring to be like an entire institution, we should look for exemplary programs/experiences drawn from multiple institutions.
- Identity should incorporate applying liberal arts & sciences skills to solve problems of environmental and socio-economic sustainability situated in our unique location where there are issues of sea level rise, gentrification/affordability, and racism.

INNOVATION (3)
- The College’s traditional culture of innovation has faded and we need to recommit ourselves to aspiring to constantly improve.
- Focus on cheap and efficient delivery of education or on preserving traditions should not replace desire for innovation.

LEADERSHIP (10)
- There are concerns about the quality of the current campus leadership, from the deans to the upper-level administration.
- Deans need to be held to higher performance standards.
- Professional academicians should play a more prominent role in campus leadership.
- Leadership should create a collaborative working space.

LOCAL BUSINESSES (5)
- The liberal arts curriculum and skills should be a foundation upon which to create programs that address the demands of the local business community.
- Expansion of local business and industry provides opportunity for internships and engagement.

MARKETING (9)
- There are areas for improvement regarding the effectiveness of our marketing efforts.
- Many of the events and programs that occur at the College are not well publicized and, therefore, underutilized.
- The College could do a better job promoting the merits of obtaining a liberal arts education.
- Some feel that the College provides misleading information about class sizes and should be more transparent with its messaging to potential students and parents.

MISSION (4)
- The College’s mission should focus on academic excellence rather than a customer satisfaction, business model approach.

MORALE (21)
- Faculty and staff express low morale due to feeling underappreciated and underutilized by an administration that forces strategic decisions onto the campus community without considering the opinion of constituents.

NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS (4)
- More efforts are needed to attract and accommodate nontraditional students.
ONLINE EDUCATION (3)
- There is some support for expanding online course offerings, particularly to appeal to non-traditional and working students.
- Some favor face-to-face interaction over online learning.

PARTNERSHIPS (1)
- The College could improve its relationships with local institutions with the goal of improving our financial situation and to expand our program offerings.

PAY (25)
- There are concerns about the inequities in pay levels across departments and schools.
- There is dissatisfaction about salary compression for associate and full professors.
- Inadequate pay is a major contributor to faculty/staff turnover and low employee morale.
- The College’s pay scale is not comparable to similar institutions and inadequate for the region’s rapidly increasing cost of living.
- The discrepancy between administrator and faculty wages is unjustifiable.
- Pay-for-performance models should be considered for teaching and service activities.
- Without any financial rewards many years in a row, it is difficult to do more for the institution.
- There are concerns of pay inequality for women.
- Adjunct/staff wages are unacceptably low. Retaining quality faculty and staff is becoming more difficult without increase in wages.

PRESIDENT (20)
- The next president should not be a political appointee but a product of a transparent search process.
- The president should have an academic background and experience, the ability to articulate a vision, maintain high moral character and effectively communicate with the campus and community constituents.
- Faculty and staff input should be considered throughout the presidential search process.
- Some feel that an external hire would be preferable.
- All else equal, diverse candidates should be given special consideration during the search process; a woman or an African American president could help overcome the College’s historic reputation of elitism and discrimination.

RECRUITMENT OF STUDENTS (1)
- There should be efforts to improve the recruitment of local high school students and overcome perceptions that the College does not seek local students.
- Investment in campus facilities and athletic programs may lead to more interest in the College.

REPUTATION OF THE COLLEGE (1)
- Many local students do not regard the College as prestigious and do not apply.

RESOURCES (7)
- Resources to support faculty research, teaching and service are perceived to be inadequate.
- Resources are not fairly allocated to various campus constituents.
- Many of the physical structures and the infrastructure on campus are in need of maintenance and repair; older buildings need to be more wheelchair accessible.
- More resources should be made available to support incoming students.
- More fundraising efforts should be adopted to support faculty and students.
- There is a perception that scarce institutional resources are diverted to individuals with peripheral or former affiliations with the College.
**SATellite Campuses (2)**
- There is little support for the North Campus.

**Size of the College (4)**
- If shrinking enrollment continues, a reduction in faculty size through attrition should be considered.
- Excellence, not size, should be the institutional goal.
- The College currently appears to be at a comfortable size.
- The College should try to grow and acquire more space in downtown Charleston.

**Staff Respect and Voice (7)**
- There is a strong sentiment that staff members have no way to express their opinion, voice their concerns and interact with others outside their office.
- The Staff Advisory Committee has not been effective in instituting change and incorporating staff in the overall decision-making. The opinions and feedback provided by staff go largely ignored by their superiors, faculty and administrators.
- The process under which staff are evaluated and promoted should be reconsidered in order to encourage upward mobility.
- Internal applicants should get stronger consideration than external candidates.

**Student Engagement / Experience (5)**
- There is a perception that students are not very engaged in the campus community and that many programs are underutilized by students.
- We should encourage more student activism, particularly as it relates to the community.
- Out-of-state students should receive in-state tuition rates for COFC study abroad programs.
- The institution needs to take care better of its current students.
- Initiatives should be designed to build well-rounded education rather than vocational-based programs.
- The Liberal arts model needs to be malleable as the demands of the job market evolve.

**Student Quality (See also Admissions Standards) (9)**
- The variation in the quality of the students creates challenges for professors who would prefer not to water-down course material to accommodate poorly prepared students.
- There are perceived challenges between maintaining high academic standards and maintaining high retention rates.
- The customer-service model encourages a weakening of academic standards.
- There is the perception that the quality of students has declined in recent years.
- Maintaining high quality students is key to the long-term future of the institution.
- We need to maintain high educational standards, but assist better students who struggle

**Student Retention (1)**
- Retention rates are an ongoing concern for the College.
- The College should provide more support services for students who are at risk of leaving the College.

**Survey (11)**
- Some respondent felt that some of the survey questions were loaded or linked issues that should have been separated.
- While many respondents felt the survey expressed their main concerns and were grateful for the opportunity, others would have liked to see questions related to work loads, diversity and concerns of adjuncts.

**Temporary Employees (1)**
- The institution needs to deal with the problem of having long-time employees under “temporary” designation.
TRAFFIC (1)
• The College can do more to positively impact traffic issues in Charleston (offer telecommuting for employees under clear guidelines; alter the timing of course offerings to spread out traffic and ease demands on parking)

TRAINING (1)
• There is room for improvement for new employee orientation programs as well as ongoing administrator training.

TUITION (3)
• There are concerns that the current tuition-driven budget model is harming the institution in terms of recruitment and deficits.
• Education at the College should be more affordable

UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE (10)
• Parents and students like and appreciate the individualized, committed education the institution offers
• There are students who want to be challenged and are eager to take advantage of the opportunities we offer
• The focus on high-quality undergraduate training is a selling point that distinguishes the institution from others.

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH (3)
• The personal attention given to students by faculty during collaborative research projects is a selling point for the College among both students/parents and faculty.

VISION (3)
• Inadequate leadership has hampered the College’s ability to fulfill its vision as an elite liberal arts institution.
• The College should follow-through on recommendations from past strategic studies such as those on climate, diversity, and accessibility.

WORKLOAD (7)
• There is the general feeling that the responsibilities of faculty and staff are always increasing while compensation remains inadequately stable; respondents complained about declining quality of life and inadequate work-life balance.
• The lack of raises for consecutive years has harmed morale.
• There is excessive bureaucracy that contributes to low morale.
• Demands for participation in service activities seems excessive and reduces the time available to invest in teaching and research.
• Course releases and sabbaticals should be more widely available for faculty who wish to develop new courses and programs or simply focus on their research.