



South Carolina Commission on Higher Education

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Mr. Jeffrey M. Schilz
Interim President and Executive Director

May 15, 2017

President Luther F. Carter, Ph.D.
Francis Marion University
PO Box 100547
Florence, SC 29501

Dear President Carter:

This letter is to confirm that at its meeting on February 2, 2017, the Commission approved a proposed change to Francis Marion University's mission statement. The University may offer "professional degrees at the baccalaureate, master's and specialist levels and a professional doctorate," contingent upon approval by the General Assembly, in accordance with §59-103-45(6).

A copy of the approved mission statement is enclosed. Published mission statements must include the date of Board approval (November 17, 2016) and CHE approval (February 2, 2017). Please do not hesitate to contact Dr. John Lane, Director of Academic Affairs, should you have any questions about the Commission's action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey M. Schilz".

Jeffrey M. Schilz
Interim President and Executive Director

cc: Dr. Peter King, Provost

Francis Marion University Mission Statement

Francis Marion University is a four-year public institution established by the state of South Carolina. It is located in the northeastern part of the state near the city of Florence and has nearly 4,000 students. Its purpose is threefold: to provide students with an excellent education, stimulate inquiry and research, and serve the Pee Dee region and the state of South Carolina.

Francis Marion University adheres to the primary purpose of its establishment as a college in 1970: to make available excellent educational programs for the people of the region and the state. The University offers bachelor's degrees in a wide range of liberal arts disciplines, as well as in the health sciences, education, and business. The University also offers professional degrees at the baccalaureate, master's, and specialist levels and a professional doctorate. While maintaining high standards, we serve students with a broad range of preparation and ability. We seek a wide variety of students, primarily from the Pee Dee region, but also from the entire state, other states, and foreign countries. We believe that a student body diverse in age, racial and ethnic background, and country of origin enriches the education of all students. To achieve its educational goals, the University has outstanding faculty members distinguished by high achievement and diverse academic backgrounds. We provide traditional and, when appropriate, non-traditional instruction, access to an excellent library as well as electronic resources, and staff members committed to student learning and success. A low student-faculty ratio and faculty concern for the individual student help us to achieve our goals. The University recognizes the importance of the out-of-the-classroom experience and offers opportunities for students to engage in activities that promote personal growth. In addition, the University provides students with special learning opportunities, such as an honors program, internships, study abroad destinations, and cooperative degree programs.

Since our highest priority is excellence in teaching and learning, we believe that intellectual inquiry and analysis by students and faculty members are essential. We encourage all scholarly pursuits, including student research for courses and faculty research for presentation and publication and for use in the classroom. The University provides faculty members with support for professional development through resources for innovative teaching, scholarship, and service. Our goal of an academic experience built on inquiry and research as well as the transmission of information allows students to develop their ability to think and communicate, to gain knowledge and skills, to pursue a career or further study, to appreciate the creativeness of the human mind, to be aware of the human and natural environment of the world, and to have the capacity to pursue a life of learning and understanding.

The University also serves the needs of Florence and the surrounding area in ways beyond formal education. Numerous artistic and cultural activities, athletic programs, health initiatives, and outreach efforts benefit not only our students, but also the community. To foster the economic development of the region, we offer consulting services to business, industry, and government. Academic and practical assistance to area schools is basic to our endeavors. Faculty and staff members participate in and contribute to a wide range of community activities.

Francis Marion emphasizes liberal arts education while offering new academic programs and innovative technology. It is small enough to provide attention to each student, but large enough to offer a variety of academic and cultural resources. It thus combines the advantages of a liberal arts college with the resources and programs of a public university.