

Campuses

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Plyler said the only duplication the two campuses would have with other public institutions would be with technical colleges, which, he said, serve a different purpose for the state. He added that 17 external studies have concluded that merger or closure at either of these campuses would not serve the best interests of the state's educational system or economy.

Low enrollment has been a problem at the Union campus for more than a decade. It serves about 400 students, compared to neighboring Union High School, which enrolls more than 1,000. The Salkehatchie campus serves about 1,200 students and has seen a 5 percent enrollment increase in the last five years.

Folks said having 79 campuses

in the state's system is inefficient for the state's needs and has been slowing the state's higher education success for decades.

Sanford said in his State of the State address that the inherent problems with the state's higher education system lie within the Commission on Higher Education and that a restructuring is imperative for future success.

The CHE hears budgetary requests from each institution and appropriates state funds based on the merit of each proposal.

With a \$350 million budget shortfall expected this year, all state institutions will be dealing with fewer funds than they requested.

In his budget proposal, Sanford calls the CHE oversight system a means for "unnecessary politi-

cization." Colleges and universities can use public funds to hire lobbyists to help gain the commission's favor in allocating funds. Powerful state legislators can propose and garner support for bills that enhance institutions in their districts.

"It is painfully obvious that the commission simply doesn't have

the ability to effectively govern our state's higher education system," Folks said.

USC President Andrew Sorensen has already voiced his support for a bill proposed in January in the state legislature that would free USC from the CHE's oversight.

Administrators argue the amount saved from the campuses'

"I don't see any sound reasoning for this decision, and we are vehemently opposed to it."

CHRIS PLYLER
VICE PROVOST AND EXECUTIVE DEAN FOR REGIONAL CAMPUSES

Tuition

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"Obviously we understand everyone's desire to hold tuition increases down," he said.

Kelly said the university's tuition is well below the average of its 30 peer institutions, universities with similar student body profiles and academic programs. He said the university would take great caution in increasing tuition this year.

"We have demonstrated that we have done this with a great deal of conservatism in the past," Kelly said. USC is expected to announce its tuition for the 2004-2005 school year in June.

USC President Andrew Sorensen opposed a similar proposal last March for tuition increases to be capped at 4 percent. The Legislature never approved the proposal.

Sorensen could not be reached for comment because he was on a trip to Panama with alumni guests

for more than a week.

Sanford's spokesman, Will Folks, said the university's reaction isn't the governor's greatest concern. "I think the feedback the governor is most concerned with is the feedback from parents who are trying to pay for increasingly exorbitant tuition costs in South Carolina," he said.

Tuition for in-state undergraduates at USC rose 15 percent last year to \$5,778 for an academic year and has risen 48 percent since 1999. Clemson University's tuition has more than doubled in the last five years.

USC administrators have justified higher tuition rates over the last two years by pointing to increases in the availability and dollar amount awarded in state-funded scholarships like the LIFE scholarship. Last fall 25,245 South Carolinians were using LIFE scholarship funds to help pay for tuition compared with 13,114 five years before earlier.

Sorensen said in January that he might propose using a portion of a future tuition increase toward

faculty salary raises. He has said that state funds are imperative for his goal of building a strong research focus at USC and that the university can't afford to cap tuition raises while dealing with an estimated 11 percent cut in-state appropriations this year.

Folks said Sanford's budget keeps the goal of strengthening research at USC, as well as at Clemson and at the Medical University of South Carolina, without promoting significant tuition increases.

"I think the governor's goal is to empower our research university," he said. "If you're able to get at unnecessary duplication in any part of the system, you're able to effectively target funds to a certain mission. In this case the mission is a strong research focus."

Kelly said duplication can be eliminated without limiting state funds spent on its higher education system. He said the university's decreasing reliance on state funds is leaving administrators with no other choice and that every tuition increase makes them more aware

closure would not make significant progress in compensating for the huge losses in state funds that colleges and universities have been coping with for more than four years.

Plyler called USC's regional campuses the primary form of higher education outreach in the state and that the closures would leave huge educational vacancies in parts of the state dealing with high unemployment from the loss of manufacturing and agricultural industries.

USC has five four-year campuses and three two-year campuses. Sanford has proposed converting USC Sumter from a two-year to a four-year campus over the next few years.

The Union and Salkehatchie campuses both serve a five-county region and were established in 1965.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecocknews@gwm.sc.edu

of the possibility of an increasing number of students deciding not to enroll at USC because of its cost.

"We realize that nobody has to come here," Kelly said. "We realize that every time we increase tuition we run the risk of becoming non-competitive in the pricing of our education." He added that higher education has become a much more crucial commodity to the students and the state's economy over the past few decades.

South Carolina has led the nation in tuition increases at its two-year institutions for the past two years. Last year, four-year state institutions dealt with an average tuition increase of 15 percent, the eighth highest state average in the nation and 5 percent more than the national average.

The state's average tuition for in-state undergraduates is 110 percent of the national average. Georgia's is 82 percent of the national average, while North Carolina's is 86 percent.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecocknews@gwm.sc.edu

Burnette

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Joining the Navy when he was 20, Burnette wanted the opportunity to serve his country. His work led him to become a mechanic aboard the USS Jimmy Carter and the USS San Juan. While on the USS Jimmy Carter, Burnette had the honor of meeting former President Carter. In May, he will have spent seven years in the Navy on active duty.

In 1999, Burnette met his fiancé at the College of Charleston. He became engaged to Erica Somerwitz, a graduate student in applied art history at USC, in 2001.

Burnette is a nontraditional student in that he has transitioned from working on submarines to serving in the student senate at USC. On campus he assists with both the Student Services Committee and the Powers and Responsibilities Committee. He is also beginning an internship at the State House with Gov. Mark Sanford.

It was participating in SG senate that caused Burnette's interest in running for treasurer. He said he likes to be involved in the SG process and wants to make sure that students are aware of the use of funds at USC. He thinks that students ought to know how the university distributes money.

Burnette said the treasurer position is more service-oriented than political. Because of this, Burnette, with his military experience, said he's not only qualified to provide service to the country but to the student body as well.

"I would like to create new programs, much like the leadership program. Next year the money runs out for it, and I want to secure funds so it can continue. I think it's one of the best things SG has done so far."

Burnette wants more than to continue programs already established by SG.

"We need to find things that benefit all students, not just certain groups," he said.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecocknews@gwm.sc.edu

2004 SC Book Festival

The 2004 South Carolina Book Festival—the 8th annual celebration of the written word—is just around the corner!

This is your invitation to join thousands of readers at the SC State Fairgrounds in Columbia to hear from over 70 authors, browse more than 100 vendors and enjoy two days of books, writers, shopping and fun!

For details please check out our website at www.sbookfestival.org or call 803-771-2477.

FREE ADMISSION
Saturday, February 28th 9am - 6pm
Sunday, February 29th 12pm - 6pm

SC State Fairgrounds COLUMBIA www.sbookfestival.org

SPONSORED BY
The Humanities Council SC
The State Library of South Carolina WISIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES

www.dailygamecock.com

The Sisters of Alpha Delta Pi

Would Like To Cordially Invite
The Following Young Men To Their
Black Diamond Formal On
February 13, 2004 . . .

Chase Allison
Lucas Anthony
Porter Balderson
Whit Barker
Lance Barnes
Bobby Bell
Brooks Biediger
Cameron Blakely
Nick Bonaparte
Thomas Bowen
Ryan Bowman
Nate Boykin
Jennie Brant
Lee Broome
Justin Brown
Nick Budisalgovic
Anthony Chanas
Tim Christman
Dusty Cook
Daniel Craig
Ben Carrick
Zach Dees
Andrew De Hall
Ryan Deter
Walter Dunlap
James Edwards
Foti Fanos
Max Ferguson
Kevin Farrell
Christian Fischer
Aaron Flager
Chris Flynn
Bria Flynn
Greg Foster
Foster Freeman
Chris Gaitner
Josh Galet
David Grantham
Neil Grantham

David Gray
Trey Harzill
Tim Hejner
Bria Hill
Landon Hill
Jonathan Hingshelwood
Mac Humphries
Clark Hunter
Ben Irons
Daniel Irons
Bria Jackson
Ryan Johnson
Stuart Johnson
Joseph Jones
William Keels
Andrew Keery
J.R. Knight
Andrew Kelt
Chris Lanier
Koby Langley
Sam LeBlond
Andrew Leason
Ben Louquet
Bria Marville
John Maclean
Brent McDonald
Eric McKenna
Phillips McWilliams
Jana Melchers
Davis Miranda
Kellan Monroe
Jonathan Morris
Chris Murphy
Chris Myers
Curtis Nichols
Wes Parker
Tripp Pargell
Brett Pfler
Ryan Pool
Landon Powell

Aaron Pretulak
Mike Proctor
Macallan Propp
Edward Rawl
Josh Riente
Garrett Richard
Brandon Riachart
David Rion
Hanson Rogers
Reoges Reese
John Reber
Patrick Scott
Taylor Schuster
Corey Seawell
Austin Smith
Evan Smith
Greg Smith
P.J. Smith
Charlie Spiros
Matt Story
Jason Stronaa
Charles Stuart
Hart Summerford
Steve Taylor
Jake Thompson
Brad Tillyou
Neal Traslava
Chris Tucker
Matt Tucker
Eric VanDyck
J Weinberg
Dave Welch
Josh Wheeler
Hunter Williams
Sam Williams
Kevin Wrapp
Andrew Wright
Brad Young
Brett Younker

The University of South Carolina Collegiate Readership Program

Sponsored by the USC Student Government!

NOTICE

Your papers will be in new displays requiring access with your ID-card. Your card WILL NOT be charged for the newspapers. The new displays will ensure the newspapers are available only for students.

Pick up a copy of USA TODAY or New York Times at these convenient campus locations:

- ✓ Russell House
- ✓ Business College Lobby
- ✓ Coliseum

Exclusively for USC Students!

