AGENCY NAME:	University of South Carolina Upstate		
AGENCY CODE:	H340	SECTION:	20C

Fiscal Year 2027-28
Agency Budget Plan

FORM A - BUDGET PLAN SUMMARY

	For FY 2027-28, my agency is (mark "X"):	
OPERATING REQUESTS *(FORM B1)*	X	Requesting General Fund Appropriations.
	X	Requesting Federal/Other Authorization.
		Not requesting any changes.
NON-RECURRING REQUESTS *(FORM B2)*		Requesting Non-Recurring Appropriations.
		Requesting Non-Recurring Federal/Other Authorization.
	X	Not requesting any changes.
CAPITAL REQUESTS *(FORM C)*	X	Requesting funding for Capital Projects.
		Not requesting any changes.
PROVISOS *(FORM D)*		Requesting a new proviso and/or substantive changes to existing provisos.
		Only requesting technical proviso changes (such as date references).
	X	Not requesting any proviso changes.

Please identify your agency's preferred contacts for this year's budget process.

	Name	*Phone*	*Email*
PRIMARY CONTACT:	Kelly Epting	803-777-8411	eptingk@mailbox.sc.edu
SECONDARY CONTACT:	Kevin Russell	803-777-0781	russelkr@mailbox.sc.edu

I have reviewed and approved the enclosed FY 2027-28 Agency Budget Plan, which is complete and accurate to the extent of my knowledge.

	Agency Director	*Board or Commission Chair*
SIGN/DATE:	Michael Amiridis 8/21/26	Thad H. Westbrook 8/21/26
TYPE/PRINT NAME:	Michael Amiridis	Thad H. Westbrook

This form must be signed by the agency head – not a delegate.

Agency Name:	USC - Upstate
Agency Code:	H340
Section:	20C

BUDGET REQUESTS			FUNDING					FTES				
Priority	Request Type	Request Title	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total
1	B1 - Recurring	Tuition Mitigation	4,500,000	0	0	0	4,500,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2	B1 - Recurring	Establish the School of Engineering and Computer Science at USC Upstate	3,500,000	0	0	0	3,500,000	13.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	13.00
3	C - Capital	Academic Health Sciences and Nursing Construction	13,500,000	0	0	0	13,500,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4	C - Capital	Convocation Center Construction	15,000,000	0	0	0	15,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5	C - Capital	Regional Hospitality and Tourism	6,000,000	0	0	0	6,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
6	B1 - Recurring	Authorization Increase	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	11.00	0.00	11.00
7	C - Capital	Deferred Maintenance Campus Wide	10,000,000	0	0	0	10,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTALS			52,500,000	0	0	0	52,500,000	13.00	0.00	11.00	0.00	24.00

Agency Name:	USC - Upstate		
Agency Code:	H340	Section:	20C

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY

1

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE

Tuition Mitigation

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT

General: $4,500,000

Federal: $0

Other: $0

Total: $4,500,000

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2027-2028? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS

0.00

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST

Mark "X" for all that apply:	
X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
X	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	IT Technology/Security related
	HR/Personnel Related
	AI Related
	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
X	Education, Training, and Human Development
	Healthy and Safe Families
	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS

USC Upstate seeks increased funding to bolster its foundation and advance its 2030 strategic priorities:

- Strengthening Academic Excellence
- Driving Enrollment Growth
- Enhancing Student Success and Completion
- Deepening Community Engagement and Impact
- Building a Future-Ready Institution

These goals are vital to align Upstate's educational mission with the region's workforce demands and establish leadership in these efforts.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS

USC Upstate Funding Allocation Plan

The allocated funds will be strategically invested to drive growth and development at USC Upstate, focusing on the following key areas:

1. Increase Faculty Salaries in High-Demand STEM Programs: To support the growth of STEM programs, including cybersecurity, nursing, business, and engineering, funds will be used to increase faculty salaries, ensuring continued excellence in education.

2. Add Staff to Integrate AI Across Campus: Funds will support hiring staff to implement AI in operational processes, coordinate AI initiatives on campus, and train faculty and staff on integrating AI into their work.

3. Enhance Student Support Services: Based on recommendations from the National Institute on Student Success, funds will support hiring more professional advisors and internship coordinators to strengthen student academic and career outcomes.

4. Bolster Campus Security: To prioritize student safety, funding will restore pre-COVID staffing levels by adding two police officers.

5. Implement Competitive Market-Based Compensation for Staff: For staff alignment with USC's market-based compensation structure, move employees from USC Upstate's 'phase 3' closer to USC's market structure market range of mid-point.

6. Implement Competitive Market-Based Compensation for Faculty: Adjusting faculty and staff salaries to align with the CUPA market data average for comparable comprehensive universities will increase our salaries to ensure equitable compensation and enhance our ability to attract and retain top talent.

All funds will be used judiciously, adhering to state procurement guidelines for the acquisition of goods and services.

This request consists of:
1. Full-Time Faculty Salary Adjustments
• Description: Increase full-time faculty salaries to the mid-point of the CUPA average for comprehensive universities
• Specifications: Targeting competitive salary adjustments and increased benefits cost
• Estimated Cost: $1,050,000

2. Inflationary Facility and Utility Costs
• Description: Cover increased to maintain and support additional square footage.
• Specifications: Includes library and Health Services additions.
• Quantity: 3 FTEs
• Estimated Cost: $395,000

3. Critical Faculty Hires
• Description: Hire faculty in STEM, health services, and business fields using existing vacancies.
• Quantity: 4.5 FTEs
• Specifications: Transitioning focus to high-demand areas.
• Estimated Cost: $810,000

4. Insurance Premiums

• Description: Estimated impacts on property and liability insurance premiums.
• Specifications: estimated increases in South Carolina Reserve Fund and other liability insurance
• Estimated Cost: $120,000

5. Law Enforcement Personnel and Salary Adjustments
• Description: Fund police salaries at competitive levels to boost morale and improve recruitment and retention to better align with USC Columbia and State of Carolina law enforcement salaries.
• Estimated Cost: $450,000

6. Staff Salary Study Implementation
• Description: Impact of the staff salaries study by USC to ensure competitive salaries and increased benefits cost
• Estimated Cost: $815,000

7. Student Support Positions
• Description: Fund new positions to support student internships and improve graduation rates.
• Quantity 5 FTEs
• Estimated Cost: $410,000

8. Begin process of integrating AI across Campus
• Description: hire staff and resources to implement AI in operational processes (train faculty staff and coordinate initiatives on campus)
• Quantity 2 FTEs
• Estimated Cost: $450,000

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

USC Upstate Funding Request

Purpose

To advance the education of in-state students, meet the workforce needs of the Upstate region, and drive transformative community impact, USC Upstate requests a $4.5 million funding increase. This investment will allow the university to maintain tuition rates, unchanged for seven years, reinforcing our commitment to affordable education, regional economic growth, and social mobility.

Background

USC Upstate is a key contributor to South Carolina's educational and economic development, preparing graduates for high-demand careers, retaining talent in the region, and strengthening the Upstate workforce. As the Upstate's largest public regional comprehensive university, USC Upstate serves nearly 5,000 students and generates an estimated $624 million in annual economic impact across South Carolina.

The University's impact is reflected in the success of its graduates and its alignment with critical workforce needs. Eighty percent of USC Upstate graduates remain in South Carolina, including 68% who live and work in the Upstate, contributing more than $300 million annually to the regional economy. USC Upstate's academic programs are designed to provide career-relevant preparation in fields that support the state's employers, communities, and public institutions.

USC Upstate plays a particularly important role in developing professionals for essential public-service fields. Ninety-nine percent of the 2025 nursing graduating class is employed in South Carolina, while the Mary Black College of Nursing achieved a 92.5% first-time pass rate on the 2025 NCLEX-RN examination, exceeding both state and national averages. The University's Teaching Fellows program has reached its full capacity of 15 Fellows, further strengthening the pipeline of qualified teachers for South Carolina schools.

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

The University also contributes to regional workforce planning through its Center for Business Analytics and Community Research, which provides employers, community leaders, and policymakers with data and analysis on labor-market trends, workforce demand, talent availability, wages, and emerging skill needs. This work helps ensure that USC Upstate's academic program development remains responsive to evolving regional and statewide workforce priorities.

USC Upstate's partnership with Spartanburg Academic Movement (SAM) and Movement 2030 demonstrates the University's commitment to building a stronger local education-to-workforce pipeline. Movement 2030 brings together colleges, school districts, businesses, nonprofits, and community organizations around measurable goals for improving school readiness, postsecondary attainment, and economic mobility in Spartanburg County. The initiative seeks to increase kindergarten readiness from 49% to 65% and increase postsecondary enrollment among Spartanburg County high school graduates to 70% by 2030.

Through this collaboration, USC Upstate is participating in Big Mo, a college-access and student-success initiative that supports seniors in Spartanburg County's nine public high schools as they transition from high school to college or other postsecondary pathways. Big Mo provides personalized college and career guidance, assistance with FAFSA and financial-aid completion, deadline reminders, and connections to support resources. Eligible students who enroll at USC Upstate may receive up to $4,000 annually in tuition support. By reducing barriers to enrollment and supporting students through the transition to postsecondary education, Big Mo helps expand the pool of local students prepared to earn credentials and enter the Upstate workforce.

Together, USC Upstate's workforce-focused academic programs, strong graduate retention, critical professional pipelines, and partnerships through Movement 2030 and Big Mo demonstrate the University's value as a statewide investment. Continued investment in faculty, staff, and program capacity will enable USC Upstate to meet growing regional demand, expand access to career-relevant education, and prepare more South Carolinians to contribute to the state's economy and communities.
USC Upstate is a vital contributor to South Carolina's educational and economic landscape, with a focus on student success, diversity, and innovation:

Funding Allocation Plan
The requested $4.5 million will be strategically allocated to support key areas of growth and development, aligning with USC Upstate's 2030 strategic priorities:
1. Increase Faculty Salaries in High-Demand STEM Programs: Funds will support salary increases for faculty in cybersecurity, nursing, business, and engineering, ensuring excellence in these critical fields.
2. Add Staff to Integrate AI Across Campus: Funding will enable hiring staff to implement AI in operational processes, coordinate AI initiatives, and train faculty and staff on AI integration, positioning USC Upstate as a leader in tech-driven education.
3. Enhance Student Support Services: Based on recommendations from the National Institute on Student Success, funds will support hiring professional advisors and internship coordinators to strengthen student academic and career outcomes, particularly for first-generation and underrepresented students.
4. Bolster Campus Security: To prioritize student safety, funding will restore pre-COVID staffing levels by adding two police officers.
5. Implement Competitive Market-Based Compensation for Faculty and Staff: To improve alignment with the USC System's Market Based Compensation Structure, funds will adjust staff salaries, moving them closer to the market range mid-points. This will support retention and recruitment. Faculty salaries will be aligned with the CUPA average for comparable comprehensive universities and market ranges, ensuring equitable compensation and enhancing talent recruitment and retention.
6. Expand Workforce Development and Sustainability Initiatives: Funds will strengthen partnerships with regional employers to create tailored training programs and internships in high-demand fields, while also supporting sustainability projects like energy-efficient infrastructure and the Watershed Ecology Center.

Conclusion
This $4.5 million investment will empower USC Upstate to sustain its commitment to affordable education, drive economic and workforce development, and lead transformative initiatives like Movement 2030. By leveraging its strengths in academic excellence, innovation and community engagement, USC Upstate will continue to serve as a catalyst for growth in the Upstate region and beyond.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	USC - Upstate		
Agency Code:	H340	Section:	20C

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	**2**

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	**Establish the School of Engineering and Computer Science at USC Upstate**

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	**General: $3,500,000** **Federal: $0** **Other: $0** **Total: $3,500,000**

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2027-2028? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	**13.00**

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST

Mark "X" for all that apply:	
	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
X	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
X	IT Technology/Security related
X	HR/Personnel Related
	AI Related
	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
X	Education, Training, and Human Development
	Healthy and Safe Families
	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS

Greater 2030 Strategic Plan – Spartan Distinct Cornerstone Program

Enhancing Areas of Academic Distinctiveness

1.1. Add new market-aligned undergraduate and graduate degree programs and other industry-related credentials.

1.1.a. Establish at least three regional and industry-aligned undergraduate engineering programs.

Funds from this request will help establish the USC Upstate School of Engineering and Computer Science, which will serve as the academic home of at least three engineering programs, as well as extant computer science, data science, and cybersecurity programs and activities. The introduction of engineering programs is in

response to data from market studies and conversations with industry leaders that indicate a strong and urgent need for more engineers in the region and across the state. In fact, in a letter dated July 15, 2026, Dr. Jeff Perez, President and Executive Director of the SC Commission on Higher Education, requested that universities consider expanding their engineering programs and/or capacity to meet a critical need for engineers within the state. Because of USC Upstate's location within a very high density of manufacturing companies, and because most of our students come from the upstate region of SC (and remain here after graduation), we are uniquely positioned to move the needle on that workforce need, and receiving this funding will enhance our ability to do so faster.

Use of funds would be evaluated by the number of graduates from the program, job placement rates, positive interactions and relationships with manufacturers (e.g., capstone projects, internships, scholarships, etc.), and faculty productivity (e.g., scholarship, patents, etc.).

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS

Funds dedicated to salaries would go directly to faculty. Funds dedicated for equipment maintenance and software licensing would go to contractors and vendors who won bids through a competitive process (when necessary). Funds dedicated to scholarships would go to students enrolled in the specified programs who meet GPA and progress-toward-degree requirements.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

This request will support several initiatives related to engineering and computer science at USC Upstate. These efforts are in response to data from market studies and conversations with industry leaders, who indicate an urgent need for more engineers to support the manufacturing growth within the region and to address the critical need for cybersecurity experts. Because of our location within a very high density of manufacturing companies, and because most of our students come from the upstate region of SC and remain here after graduation, we believe USC Upstate is uniquely positioned to have a lasting positive impact on the manufacturing sector here and across the state.

Requested funds will be used to establish the School of Engineering and Computer Science (within the College of Science & Technology), fund faculty lines for engineering and computer science programs, equip classrooms and laboratories for cutting-edge teaching and research, staff a Cybersecurity Clinic, and provide student scholarships. Funds will be used for engineering faculty salaries and to hire the inaugural Director of Engineering, who will oversee implementation and operation of the first three engineering programs at USC Upstate. Additionally, funding will support growth of our cybersecurity program with three new faculty hires.

We request:

Salary

- Director of Engineering

- $120,000 salary + $48,000 fringe

- Nine new full-time engineering faculty

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

• $110,000 average salary + $44,000 fringe x 9 faculty

• Three new full-time cybersecurity faculty

• $100,000 salary + $40,000 fringe x 3 faculty

Annual Amount = $1,974,000

Hardware and software licensing

• Annual hardware investments, required as technologies change: $100,000

• Annual institutional software licenses

• To support engineering (e.g., AutoCAD, Siemens industrial simulation software suite, MiniTab, etc.): $150,000

• To support cybersecurity/data science teaching laboratories: $125,000

• To support the USC Upstate Cyber Range: $145,000

Annual Amount = $520,000

Student scholarships

Includes tuition, room/board, and fees for twenty students

Annual amount = $400,000

Summer Math Booster Program

Resident summer program to prepare incoming engineering students to start in Calculus I in their first semester, reducing time to degree completion

• $25,000 salary + $10,000 fringe

• $50,000 summer school scholarship and housing assistance

Annual amount = $85,000

Capstone project support
Provides materials and equipment necessary for senior engineering students to complete capstone projects with community and industry partners.
Annual amount = $350,000

ABET/CAE accreditation fees
Annual amount = $18,300

USC Upstate Cybersecurity Clinic
This Clinic will allow students to work as "cybersecurity analysts" to help local non-profits and small businesses harden their operations against malicious cybersecurity attacks.
• Salary for Clinic Director
• $80,000 + $32,000 fringe
• Salaries for student analysts
• 8 students x 160 hours x $15/hr = $19,200 + $1,500 fringe
• Stipends for support staff
• $5,000 x 4 faculty/staff members
Annual amount = $152,700

TOTAL REQUESTED: $3,500,000 annually

Without these funds, we will be slower to address the current and growing need for more engineers and cybersecurity professionals in the upstate region of SC. Existing vacancies are needed to support other programs at USC Upstate, and additional funding is needed to provide competitive salaries. Faculty salaries in engineering and computer science are typically higher than other STEM disciplines because of the competition with industry.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	USC - Upstate		
Agency Code:	H340	Section:	20C

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	**6**

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	**Authorization Increase**

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	**General: $0** **Federal: $0** **Other: $0** **Total: $0**

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2027-2028? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	**11.00**

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST

Mark "X" for all that apply:	
	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
X	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	IT Technology/Security related
X	HR/Personnel Related
	AI Related
	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
X	Education, Training, and Human Development
	Healthy and Safe Families
	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS

USC Upstate's request for 11 additional FTE positions is grounded in the University's role as a regional public institution serving the educational, workforce, and economic-development needs of the Upstate.

The region continues to require a stronger pipeline of qualified graduates in high-demand fields, and USC Upstate must have the academic and operational capacity to respond effectively to those needs.

Over the next three years, the University plans to introduce nine new academic programs developed in response to regional workforce priorities, employer feedback, and demonstrated student interest. These programs will expand access to relevant degree options for current and prospective students while helping area employers develop and retain the talent necessary to support the region's continued growth. In addition to supporting new program development, the requested positions will address capacity needs existing in programs experiencing significant enrollment growth, including Sports Management and the Bachelor of Applied Science in Business Administration (BASBA).

The University has historically reallocated vacant positions and existing resources to address its highest-priority academic and operational needs. While this approach has enabled USC Upstate to respond to emerging demands where possible, the available pool of positions has been substantially depleted and is no longer sufficient to meet critical program needs. Additional FTE capacity is therefore necessary to support both strategic program expansion and continued growth in high-demand existing programs.

Successful implementation of these programs will require additional faculty and staff to provide instruction, curriculum development and ongoing program administration. Faculty searches must be conducted in the fiscal preceding each program's launch and the FTE slot must be identified at the time the faculty search is approved.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS

Funding for 2.25 FTEs (Engineering faculty) is being requested under Form B1 – Priority 2, and the other FTEs will be funded from increased tuition revenue generated from the other new programs. (Other Funds).

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

Funding for the Engineering programs has been requested separately under Form B1 Priority 2, while the other positions will be supported through revenues generated by five of the new academic programs as they are implemented. In total, the requested 11 FTEs will provide the foundational instructional and operational capacity necessary to launch and sustain these programs, maintain program quality, and support students from enrollment through graduation.

This need is further intensified by the discontinuation of 12 FTE positions previously loaned to USC Upstate by the USC System. While those positions provided important staffing flexibility in prior years, the University must now meet growing regional demands using only its state-allocated FTE base. The requested 11 FTEs will help restore essential capacity and ensure USC Upstate can continue serving the Upstate region through high-quality academic programs, responsive student support, and a well-prepared workforce.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	USC - Upstate		
Agency Code:	H340	Section:	20C

FORM C – CAPITAL REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	3

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Academic Health Sciences and Nursing Construction

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	$13,500,000

How much is requested for this project in FY 2027-2028? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

CPIP PRIORITY	Currently priority 5 in fiscal year 2028/29 on the CPIP.

Identify the project's CPIP plan year and priority number, along with the first year in which the project was included in the agency's CPIP. If not included in the agency's CPIP, please provide an explanation. If the project involves a request for appropriated state funding, briefly describe the agency's contingency plan in the event that state funding is not made available in the amount requested.

OTHER APPROVALS	No additional approvals have been obtained externally. Project will have to go through normal State of SC approval process including Phase 1 and 2, JBRC, SFAA, etc.

What approvals have already been obtained? Are there additional approvals that must be secured in order for the project to succeed? (Institutional board, JBRC, SFAA, etc.)

LONG-TERM PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY	State appropriated funds received to date: $13million (FY25-$5mil, FY27-$8mil) FY28 request: $13.5mil FY29 request: $5.5mil Total state appropriations funding: $32mil Additional private support needed: $12mil Additionally, there will be an increase to the Facilities Management operating funds for operations, maintenance and utilities. The anticipated useful life for the mechanical equipment is a normal 15-20 year life cycle.

What other funds have already been invested in this project (source/type, amount, timeframe)? Will other capital and/or operating funds for this project be requested in the future? If so, how much, and in which fiscal years? Has a source for those funds been identified/secured? What is the agency's expectation with regard to additional annual costs or savings associated with this capital improvement? What source of funds will be impacted by those costs or savings? What is the expected useful life of the capital improvement?

	Construct an addition of 30,000 GSF to the current nursing building at USC Upstate.

SUMMARY

Since its founding in 1967, the Mary Black College of Nursing (MBCON) has grown fourfold, addressing the critical and growing need for skilled nurses. MBCON graduates not only meet the demand for nurses but also deliver exceptional patient care across local communities and throughout South Carolina.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects an unprecedented 193,100 annual registered nurse (RN) openings from 2022 to 2032, with a shortfall of over half a million nurses compared to the projected supply. South Carolina faces a particularly acute challenge, with an anticipated RN vacancy rate of 11%, the 10th highest in the nation.

The population within a 30-mile radius of the Upstate campus is expected to grow by 15% in the coming years, adding approximately 115,000 residents. Additionally, the proportion of individuals aged 65 and older in this area is projected to increase from 17.6% in 2023 to 20% by 2028, further driving the demand for healthcare services.

The proposed expansion of the MBCON building will create a state-of-the-art facility to prepare nurses for this growing need, featuring:

- Modernized, innovative spaces equipped with cutting-edge technology to simulate diverse acute care environments, including medical-surgical nursing, pediatrics, labor and delivery, and intensive care training.

- Ambulatory care settings and a new simulation center with recording and observation capabilities, high-functioning equipment, and dedicated spaces for equipment storage, supplies, and debriefing.

- A realistic hospital environment with a nurse's station, medication room, and supply room to foster a professional mindset, easing students' transition from academic training to professional practice.

- New skills and simulation labs, support services, and classrooms designed to enhance student learning, preparing graduates to address both local and national nursing shortages effectively.

This expansion will empower MBCON to continue producing highly skilled nurses, meeting the region's healthcare needs with quality and compassion.

Provide a summary of the project and explain why it is necessary. Please refer to the budget guidelines for appropriate questions and thoroughly answer all related items.

Agency Name:	USC - Upstate		
Agency Code:	H340	Section:	20C

FORM C – CAPITAL REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	4

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Convocation Center Construction

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	$15,000,000

How much is requested for this project in FY 2027-2028? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

CPIP PRIORITY	Currently priority 9 in fiscal year 2030/31 on the CPIP.

Identify the project's CPIP plan year and priority number, along with the first year in which the project was included in the agency's CPIP. If not included in the agency's CPIP, please provide an explanation. If the project involves a request for appropriated state funding, briefly describe the agency's contingency plan in the event that state funding is not made available in the amount requested.

OTHER APPROVALS	No additional approvals have been obtained externally. Project will have to go through normal State of SC approval process including Phase 1 and 2, JBRC, SFAA, etc.

What approvals have already been obtained? Are there additional approvals that must be secured in order for the project to succeed? (Institutional board, JBRC, SFAA, etc.)

LONG-TERM PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY	No additional funds have been obtained externally. No other capital and/or operating funds for this project will be requested in the future. This facility will be managed by a private facilities management firm utilizing revenues generated from naming rights, catering, rental, service income, concessions, box office fees, sponsorships, luxury suites, etc. to fund operations and future capital costs.

What other funds have already been invested in this project (source/type, amount, timeframe)? Will other capital and/or operating funds for this project be requested in the future? If so, how much, and in which fiscal years? Has a source for those funds been identified/secured? What is the agency's expectation with regard to additional annual costs or savings associated with this capital improvement? What source of funds will be impacted by those costs or savings? What is the expected useful life of the capital improvement?

	Construct new 75,000 GSF Convocation/Arena with 3,500 seat capacity for USC Upstate Division 1 Basketball as well USC Upstate Convocation and Community Events. The University of South Carolina Upstate (USC Upstate) seeks to construct a new 75,000 gross square foot (GSF) Convocation Center to address critical academic, athletic, and community needs. This state-of-the-art facility, with a seating capacity of 3,500 fixed seats and provisions for additional floor seating, will serve as a transformative hub for the university and the broader Upstate region. Addressing Academic Needs

SUMMARY

USC Upstate currently lacks a venue large enough to accommodate major university-wide events, such as graduations and freshman convocations. The proposed Convocation Center will provide flexible, large-scale assembly spaces to host these critical academic functions, fostering a sense of community and supporting the university's growing student body. The facility will enable USC Upstate to bring together all students, faculty, and staff for significant events, enhancing the academic experience and reinforcing institutional pride.

Supporting NCAA Division I Athletics

As a member of NCAA Division I, USC Upstate requires a modern athletic facility to support its basketball programs and other sports. The current arena is the smallest in the region among Division I institutions, limiting the university's ability to compete effectively and attract top talent. The new Convocation Center, with its 3,500-seat capacity and expandable floor seating, will provide a competitive venue for Spartan athletics, elevating the program's profile, enhancing fan experiences, and supporting the growth of Division I sports at USC Upstate.

Serving the Upstate Community

Beyond academics and athletics, the Convocation Center will serve as a vital resource for the Upstate region. The facility will accommodate large-scale community events, including entertainment, local business gatherings, and regional meetings in partnership with organizations like the Spartanburg Regional Health System. By providing a modern, multi-purpose venue, the center will address the region's shortage of large event spaces, fostering economic growth and community engagement.

Meeting Growing Regional Demand

The Upstate region is experiencing significant population growth, with projections estimating a 15% increase within a 30-mile radius of the USC Upstate campus in the coming years. This growth, combined with an aging population (expected to rise from 17.6% to 20% for those 65 and older by 2028), underscores the need for a versatile facility to serve both the university and the community. The Convocation Center will position USC Upstate as a regional leader, providing a dynamic space for education, athletics, and community collaboration.
This new Convocation Center will not only address USC Upstate's immediate needs for academic and athletic spaces but also catalyze growth, strengthen community ties, and elevate the university's role as a cornerstone of the Upstate region.

Provide a summary of the project and explain why it is necessary. Please refer to the budget guidelines for appropriate questions and thoroughly answer all related items.

Agency Name:	USC - Upstate		
Agency Code:	H340	Section:	20C

FORM C – CAPITAL REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	5

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Regional Hospitality and Tourism

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	$6,000,000

How much is requested for this project in FY 2027-2028? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

CPIP PRIORITY	4

Identify the project's CPIP plan year and priority number, along with the first year in which the project was included in the agency's CPIP. If not included in the agency's CPIP, please provide an explanation. If the project involves a request for appropriated state funding, briefly describe the agency's contingency plan in the event that state funding is not made available in the amount requested.

OTHER APPROVALS	Will obtain additional approvals as needed.

What approvals have already been obtained? Are there additional approvals that must be secured in order for the project to succeed? (Institutional board, JBRC, SFAA, etc.)

LONG-TERM PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY	$12 M was obtained in the last two fiscal years and we are requesting $6 M this year for the balance of the project. Long term the revenues from the conference center and ensure long-term enhancements.

What other funds have already been invested in this project (source/type, amount, timeframe)? Will other capital and/or operating funds for this project be requested in the future? If so, how much, and in which fiscal years? Has a source for those funds been identified/secured? What is the agency's expectation with regard to additional annual costs or savings associated with this capital improvement? What source of funds will be impacted by those costs or savings? What is the expected useful life of the capital improvement?

	Management Center at USC Upstate Project Detail: Our innovative program will provide a platform for experiential hospitality education, directly connecting workforce development with real-time hotel operations and equipping students to earn a Bachelor's degree in Hospitality & Tourism Management. Representing one of the only fully integrated teaching hotels in the Southeast, the program will align all expenditures with measurable outcomes, including student participation, industry engagement, and facility utilization.

SUMMARY

Students will engage in coordinated classroom learning and applied operational experiences across core hotel functions, including front office, food and beverage, facilities, sales, and finance. Through rotational assignments, practicum participation, and capstone projects, students will apply academic concepts to live business challenges, developing competencies in guest experience management, operational performance, financial analysis, and leadership.

The program will include access to classroom and lab environments within the hotel, faculty office space, and supervised work-based learning opportunities. This integration of academic and operational environments supports workforce readiness, strengthens industry alignment, and establishes a scalable model for experiential hospitality education.

Capital Improvements & Facility Transformation

- Conversion of existing event and meeting space into adaptive learning environments, including classrooms, labs, and collaboration areas

- Structural and design enhancements to support multi-use instructional and operational flexibility

- Modernization of conference and event facilities to enable academic programming, industry engagement, and revenue-generating activities

Learning Environment & Program Infrastructure

- Development of hospitality simulation labs, including front office, food and beverage, and operations training environments

- Integration of technology platforms and systems supporting analytics, revenue management, and instruction
- Creation of faculty offices and student collaboration areas within the hotel

Program Delivery & Experiential Learning

- Support for structured practicum and rotational learning programs aligned with Hospitality & Tourism Management coursework
- Development of instructional programming, curriculum integration tools, and applied learning frameworks

Workforce Development & Industry Engagement

- Establishment of paid, supervised student work opportunities connected to academic requirements
- Support for mentorship, leadership development, and professional exposure initiatives
- Facilitation of applied learning projects, innovation initiatives, and operational improvement programs

Integrated Summary of Enhancements

This investment supports the comprehensive transformation of the Spartanburg Marriott into a modern Hospitality & Tourism Management Center of Excellence. The renovation will deliver adaptable learning environments, advanced lab capabilities, and a modernized conference center fully integrated into hotel operations.

The enhanced facility will prioritize safety, accessibility, and innovation, while enabling hands-on, real-world training directly tied to hotel performance. By combining academic infrastructure with operational functionality, the project will create a dynamic environment that supports student learning, faculty engagement, applied research, and ongoing hospitality operations.

Provide a summary of the project and explain why it is necessary. Please refer to the budget guidelines for appropriate questions and thoroughly answer all related items.

Agency Name:	USC - Upstate		
Agency Code:	H340	Section:	20C

FORM C – CAPITAL REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	7

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Deferred Maintenance Campus Wide

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	$10,000,000

How much is requested for this project in FY 2027-2028? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

CPIP PRIORITY	Currently priority 3 in fiscal year 2026/27 on the CPIP.

Identify the project's CPIP plan year and priority number, along with the first year in which the project was included in the agency's CPIP. If not included in the agency's CPIP, please provide an explanation. If the project involves a request for appropriated state funding, briefly describe the agency's contingency plan in the event that state funding is not made available in the amount requested.

OTHER APPROVALS	No additional approvals have been obtained externally. Project will have to go through normal State of SC approval process including Phase 1 and 2, JBRC, SFAA, etc. as needed.

What approvals have already been obtained? Are there additional approvals that must be secured in order for the project to succeed? (Institutional board, JBRC, SFAA, etc.)

LONG-TERM PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY	No other additional funds have been obtained externally. The anticipated useful life for the mechanical equipment is a normal 15-20-year life cycle. Replacement and modernization of mechanical and electrical equipment generally leads to increased efficiencies, energy cost savings, and a decrease in technician labor hours.

What other funds have already been invested in this project (source/type, amount, timeframe)? Will other capital and/or operating funds for this project be requested in the future? If so, how much, and in which fiscal years? Has a source for those funds been identified/secured? What is the agency's expectation with regard to additional annual costs or savings associated with this capital improvement? What source of funds will be impacted by those costs or savings? What is the expected useful life of the capital improvement?

	The University of South Carolina Upstate (USC Upstate) is committed to providing a safe, functional, and conducive environment for learning, research, and community engagement. As a steward of state assets, the university recognizes that maintaining and upgrading campus infrastructure is critical to supporting its educational mission and ensuring the safety and well-being of students, faculty, staff, and visitors. However, years of limited funding have resulted in a significant backlog of deferred maintenance, posing risks to both the operational efficiency and safety of campus facilities. This narrative outlines the urgent need for deferred maintenance funds to address critical repairs, replace outdated systems, and enhance the campus infrastructure to sustain USC Upstate's mission. Importance of Maintenance for Learning Environments and State Assets

SUMMARY

Maintenance is not merely a cost but an investment in the longevity of state assets and the quality of the educational experience. Well-maintained facilities are essential for fostering an environment where students can thrive academically, faculty can conduct impactful teaching and research, and staff can operate efficiently. Neglecting maintenance leads to deteriorating infrastructure, which can disrupt academic activities, compromise safety, and increase long-term costs due to emergency repairs or premature replacements. At USC Upstate, deferred maintenance funds are critical to preserving state-owned assets, ensuring compliance with safety regulations, and maintaining an environment that supports the university's mission of delivering high-quality education.

Scope of Deferred Maintenance Needs

USC Upstate faces a range of deferred maintenance challenges that require immediate attention to prevent further deterioration and costly consequences. The funds would be strategically allocated to address critical life and safety issues, as well as repairs and upgrades that directly support the educational mission. Key areas of focus include:

1. Replacement of Aging Mechanical and Electrical Systems

Many of USC Upstate's buildings rely on outdated mechanical systems, including boilers, HVAC units, and electrical systems that are nearing or have exceeded their operational lifespans. These systems are critical to maintaining comfortable and safe indoor environments for learning and working. Replacing aging boilers and HVAC systems will improve energy efficiency, reduce operational costs, and ensure reliable climate control across campus buildings. Similarly, upgrading electrical systems will mitigate risks of power failures, enhance safety, and support modern technological demands in classrooms and labs.

2. Repair and Replacement of Interior Finishes and Building Envelopes
The condition of interior finishes, such as flooring, walls, and ceilings, directly impacts the aesthetic and functional quality of learning spaces. Worn or damaged finishes can create uninviting environments and pose safety hazards. Additionally, building envelopes—roofs, windows, and exterior walls—are critical to protecting structures from weather-related damage and maintaining energy efficiency. Deferred maintenance funds would enable USC Upstate to repair or replace deteriorating roofs, seal leaking windows, and address exterior wall issues, preventing water intrusion and further structural damage.

3. Upgrades to Miscellaneous Equipment
A variety of campus equipment, including laboratory instruments, safety systems, and other critical machinery, requires repair or replacement to meet current standards. Outdated equipment can hinder academic programs, compromise safety, and lead to inefficiencies. Funding would be used to prioritize upgrades to equipment that supports both the educational mission and operational needs, ensuring that USC Upstate remains a competitive institution for students and faculty.

4. Site Improvements to Sidewalks, Roadways, and Parking Lots
The campus's external infrastructure, including sidewalks, roadways, and parking lots, is heavily utilized and subject to wear and tear. Cracked or uneven sidewalks pose tripping hazards, while deteriorating roadways and parking lots create safety risks for pedestrians and vehicles. Deferred maintenance funds would support the repair and resurfacing of these areas, improving accessibility, safety, and the overall campus experience for students, staff, and visitors.

Prioritization of Critical Life and Safety Issues
USC Upstate is committed to directing deferred maintenance funds toward projects that address critical life and safety issues first. This includes ensuring compliance with fire safety codes, improving accessibility for individuals with disabilities, and mitigating hazards such as electrical faults or structural weaknesses. By prioritizing these areas, the university will safeguard the well-being of its community while maintaining compliance with state and federal regulations.

Alignment with Educational Mission
Every maintenance project funded through this initiative will be evaluated based on its impact on USC Upstate's educational mission. For example, modernized classrooms and laboratories equipped with reliable systems and updated finishes will enhance the learning experience, enabling faculty to deliver innovative instruction and students to engage in hands-on learning. Safe and accessible campus grounds will foster a welcoming environment, supporting student recruitment and retention. By addressing deferred maintenance, USC Upstate will strengthen its ability to fulfill its mission of providing transformative education and preparing graduates for success.

Long-Term Benefits of Deferred Maintenance Funding
Investing in deferred maintenance at USC Upstate will yield significant long-term benefits, including:
• Cost Savings: Addressing maintenance issues proactively prevents more costly emergency repairs and premature replacements.
• Improved Safety: Upgrading systems and infrastructure reduces risks to the campus community, ensuring a safe environment for all.
• Enhanced Educational Quality: Modern, functional facilities support innovative teaching and learning, attracting high-caliber students and faculty.
• Sustainability: Replacing outdated systems with energy-efficient alternatives reduces utility costs and supports environmental goals.
• Asset Preservation: Timely maintenance extends the lifespan of state-owned facilities, protecting taxpayer investments.
Conclusion

The need for deferred maintenance funds at USC Upstate is both urgent and critical to the university's mission. By addressing aging mechanical and electrical systems, repairing interior finishes and building envelopes, upgrading critical equipment, and improving site infrastructure, USC Upstate can ensure safe, functional, and inspiring spaces for its community. These investments will not only preserve state assets but also enhance the educational experience, positioning USC Upstate as a leading institution for years to come. Funding for deferred maintenance is an essential step toward sustaining the university's commitment to excellence in education and community engagement.

Provide a summary of the project and explain why it is necessary. Please refer to the budget guidelines for appropriate questions and thoroughly answer all related items.

Agency Name:	USC - Upstate		
Agency Code:	H340	Section:	20C

FORM E – AGENCY COST SAVINGS AND GENERAL FUND REDUCTION CONTINGENCY PLAN

TITLE	Agency Cost Savings and General Fund Reduction Contingency Plan
AMOUNT	$1,231,454 *What is the General Fund 3% reduction amount? This amount should correspond to the reduction spreadsheet prepared by EBO.*
ASSOCIATED FTE REDUCTIONS	3.5 FTE *How many FTEs would be reduced in association with this General Fund reduction?*
PROGRAM / ACTIVITY IMPACT	Education and General Unrestricted (I.A) and associated Employee Benefits (II). The Campus' primary mission of providing instructional services to students would be impacted. However, the campus would make every effort to minimize the impact on Instructional services. Both academic and service units are funded from the Campus' general fund, which is comprised almost exclusively from State General Fund and student tuition and fee revenue. *What programs or activities are supported by the General Funds identified?*
SUMMARY	While a 3% cut across appropriation proposal seems equitable in theory, the funds are not distributed equitably on the front end. Upstate has less funding (appropriations) per student than other comprehensives and therefore any cuts will cause a disproportional strain operationally compared to other comprehensive institutions in the state. Upstate's plan would reduce maintenance, professional development, books and periodicals purchases, adjunct faculty salaries and delay hiring a replacement of two full time faculty and eliminate administrative assistant positions. While the proposed decrease in funding areas is less disruptive operationally in the short-term but long-term cuts will diminish our ability to serve the Upstate region and erode our effectiveness in achieving our mission. $300,000 – Reduce Support for Campus Maintenance/Renewal Projects – USC Upstate has made efforts in recent years to do more to address its aging facilities and infrastructure. This would reduce the available funding for maintenance/renewal projects and fleet replacements and put greater burden on related systems in subsequent years. $333,344 – Reduce adjunct faculty across academic departments. This will increase the class sizes and faculty/student ratios. $216,958 – Hold on replacement of 2 vacant faculty position. Upstate continues to carefully manage its tenure track positions, as it seeks to offer career relevant course offerings and degree programs, in an effort to remain competitive, while providing in-demand and highly skilled workforce in the Upstate region. Any reduction in funding for faculty slots will negatively impact class size and faculty/student ratios. $131,152 – Eliminate 2 Administrative Assistant positions. While Upstate has optimized its administrative support to Divisions, the need to cut 3% from its state appropriation

would require a further reduction in administrative support by requiring the sharing of resources and the adding part-time assistance as needed.

$150,000 – Reduce travel budget by 50%. Currently the Upstate travel budget has not been restored to pre-COVID levels. Any further reduction will negatively impact staff and faculty participation in professional conferences and limit their professional growth and development.

$100,000 – Reduce books and periodicals budget. The books and periodical budgets is also operating below pre-COVID levels, and any additional reduction will impact the resources available for student use.

Please provide a detailed summary of service delivery impact caused by a reduction in General Fund Appropriations and provide the method of calculation for anticipated reductions. Agencies should prioritize reduction in expenditures that have the least significant impact on service delivery.

AGENCY COST SAVINGS PLANS

Reductions of any kind have significant impact on USC Upstate's ability to provide a high-quality education appropriate to a baccalaureate institution.

Upstate's plan would reduce the funding for maintenance projects, staff travel and development, and books and periodicals. Additionally, it would require cuts in adjunct faculty, delay hiring a replacement of two full-time faculty and the elimination of administrative assistants.

A reduction of this magnitude will impact the institution at all levels while it may be sustainable over the short-term but long-term cuts will diminish our ability to serve the Upstate region and erode our effectiveness in achieving our mission.

What measures does the agency plan to implement to reduce its costs and operating expenses by more than $50,000? Provide a summary of the measures taken and the estimated amount of savings. How does the agency plan to repurpose the savings?

Agency Name:	USC - Upstate		
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FORM F – REDUCING COST AND BURDEN TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS

TITLE	USC Upstate Impact to the upstate of South Carolina

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

EXPECTED SAVINGS TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS	USC Upstate reduces costs and burdens for businesses and citizens through affordable education, workforce development, community engagement, and economic contributions. By expanding scholarships, partnerships, and innovation programs, and advocating for regulatory relief, the university can further amplify its impact. The University has implemented programs designed to assist students in obtaining a degree in a timely manner and to minimize the overall cost of obtaining a quality education.

What is the expected savings to South Carolina's businesses and citizens that is generated by this proposal? The savings could be related to time or money.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	**Mark "X" for all that apply:**
	Repeal or revision of regulations.
	Reduction of agency fees or fines to businesses or citizens.
	Greater efficiency in agency services or reduction in compliance burden.
X	Other

METHOD OF CALCULATION	The University of South Carolina Upstate has a significant economic impact on South Carolina, contributing $624 million annually to the state's economy, according to a 2026 study by the Darla Moore School of Business. This impact supports 4,479 jobs and generates $226 million in labor income. These figures reflect USC Upstate's role in driving economic growth, particularly in the Upstate region, through education, workforce development, and community engagement.

Describe the method of calculation for determining the expected cost or time savings to businesses or citizens.

REDUCTION OF FEES OR FINES	The University of South Carolina Upstate offers several fee reductions or waiver opportunities, primarily focused on tuition, application fees, and specific student categories, as outlined below based on available information: • Application Fee Waivers: o USC Upstate waives application fees for degree-seeking transfer students who have graduated with an Associate Degree from a South Carolina technical or community college. o Application fees are also waived for full-time, permanent USC Upstate faculty and staff (including retirees), their spouses, and dependents, as well as ROTC staff eligible for USC Faculty/Staff Tuition Assistance. o Graduate school application fees are waived for USC Upstate alumni. o International student application fees may be waived to support strategic recruitment efforts, as determined annually through the enrollment management process. • Tuition Reductions: o Dual Enrollment Courses: USC Upstate may waive or charge less than the $66 per credit hour rate for dual enrollment courses, with a 4% fee waiver capacity for resident students. o Senior Citizens: South Carolina resident senior citizens may enroll in classes tuition-free, subject to eligibility and space availability o Graduate Assistants/Fellowships: Students with assistantships or fellowships may receive tuition reductions, lowering non-resident tuition to the resident rate.

o Wartime Veterans' Children: Children of wartime veterans who meet residency requirements and are 26 or younger may be admitted to USC Upstate tuition-free

Which fees or fines does the agency intend to reduce? What was the fine or fee revenue for the previous fiscal year? What was the associated program expenditure for the previous fiscal year? What is the enabling authority for the issuance of the fee or fine?

REDUCTION OF REGULATION

At this time, USC Upstate does not have specific plans to amend or delete regulations under its direct authority. However, as part of our ongoing commitment to operational efficiency and compliance with state and federal mandates, we continuously review our internal policies and procedures to ensure alignment with our educational mission and regulatory requirements. Any proposed changes to regulations would be developed in accordance with the South Carolina Administrative Procedures Act (S.C. Code § 1-23-10 et seq.) and would involve coordination with the USC Board of Trustees and, where applicable, the CHE.

Which regulations does the agency intend to amend or delete? What is the enabling authority for the regulation?

SUMMARY

The University of South Carolina Upstate (USC Upstate) reduces the burden on South Carolina citizens through initiatives that enhance educational access, affordability, and career readiness while addressing local workforce and community needs. Here's how these efforts, including retention and graduation initiatives, alleviate financial, social, and economic pressures:

• Affordable Education and Financial Support: USC Upstate offers tuition significantly lower than the national average for baccalaureate colleges ($11,208 in-state vs. $29,280 national average) and provides grants and scholarships to 73% of undergraduates, with an average net price of $13,794 after aid. Specific initiatives like completion grants for at-risk seniors, summer tuition scholarships to maintain state merit aid, and a FAFSA counselor to streamline aid applications reduce financial barriers. Free tuition for South Carolina seniors (age 60+) on a space-available basis further promotes lifelong learning without cost. Also, Upstate does not require students with homes within the 30 mile radius to live on campus thus allowing students to save on housing and meal plans.

• Streamlined Degree Completion: By accepting AA/AS degrees as fulfilling general education requirements and creating pathways for AAS degrees with only 30 hours of gen ed, USC Upstate reduces time and cost to graduation for transfer students. The Upstate Direct Connect program guarantees admission for students from partner two-year colleges with a 2.0 GPA, offering enhanced advising and priority registration for a smooth transition. Partnerships with Acadeum ensure course availability, preventing delays when needed courses aren't offered locally.

• Retention and Support Programs: USC Upstate's retention initiatives, such as professional advisors, centralized advising, and major-specific roadmaps, ensure students stay on track. Personalized graduation plans updated each semester, along with Early Alert systems and required interventions with academic coaches for academically at-risk students, minimize dropout risks. Special support for first-generation students, transfer students and adult learners (SAM advisor) fosters inclusivity, while the ACHIEVE program supports unemployed or underemployed youth (ages 16–24) in completing education and finding jobs, enhancing economic mobility.

• Workforce Development and Economic Impact: With an annual economic impact of $624 million, USC Upstate addresses South Carolina's workforce needs in critical areas like nursing, education, and business. Requiring experiential learning (internships, research, or study abroad) and embedding industry certifications in majors equips students with soft skills, improving employability and reducing reliance on public resources.

• Community and Social Support: The United Way counselor connects at-risk students to local food and housing resources, addressing basic needs to keep students enrolled. Initiatives like the Center for Child Advocacy Studies, the CHAMPS Beatty Center Medical-Legal Partnership, Mellon Interns, the Upstate Crime Analysis Center, and the Office of Service-Learning and Community Engagement as well as other partnerships with community organizations enhance social services, reducing strain on public systems. Peer-to-peer academic support via CircleIn and faculty training through ACUE improve academic success, ensuring students graduate ready to contribute to society.

• Flexible Education Options: USC Upstate's Greenville campus supports Continuing Education for non-degree seeking learners and partnerships with Risepoint and Palmetto College provide flexible online degree options for working adults. These options make higher education accessible to diverse populations, reducing economic burdens by

enabling quicker entry into the workforce.

• By combining affordable education, targeted retention strategies, and workforce-aligned programs, USC Upstate empowers South Carolina citizens to achieve economic stability and contribute to the state's prosperity, directly addressing financial, educational, and social burdens.

Provide an explanation of the proposal and its positive results on businesses or citizens. How will the request affect agency operations?