First question to start the conversation:

1) What do you think the role of graduate education at the College should be?

-We must be responsive to local needs for graduate education, to the degree it fits with our mission. I don’t think that means we need to start an engineering school. We need to figure out local needs. We’re the biggie in the community. Think about our response to the community. We’d have niche places... Marine bio program is really good because of where we are in the state. We’d also attract students from all over for a graduate program in African American studies. That would be a clear place for a niche program. There are places appropriate for the college to think about national needs like African American studies.

-What are the community needs/local needs?

-I don’t know the answer to that. My understanding is that is how the MBA program is justified. It was developed out of a community need.

-It is unusual for a city this size not to have an MBA.

-Our mission statement hasn’t been updated. It needs to be reconsidered. It emphasizes we’re about undergraduates and business. It says that we offer graduates with pressing local need. An accelerated MBA is a local need. We also need to meet a state need. Communication master’s program for example. The other communications programs in the state are very odd. Specialized nationally. Communication attracts folks statewide.

Question No. 2:

2) What do you see as the relationship between graduate and undergraduate education at the College?

-There is some room in some programs for graduate to keep in concert with undergraduate. I’m pro-graduate programs. Illustration is music: Music program is all undergraduate. The students think they are better than they are because they’re undergrads. You get a bunch of kids who table; when you bring in graduate students to work with them they then know they’re not at the top. Help to graduates working with undergrad. They have to be together
- Echoed that sentiment. A good mentor relationship with undergrad and graduate is important. You have to catch up the doings of the system.

- Graduate strengthens undergraduate. Recruit a different kind of faculty member. Securing research-based graduate programs are exciting to especially entry-level faculty. Research-based faculty wouldn't have come here if there was no way to grow the communication graduate program. Here the working conditions are changed by an opportunity to work with good undergraduate and graduate students.

<Moderator> We all realized that our visions are different and expectations the needs and resources are different. It may not be a one-size fit all solution. How do we get where we are going? What’s our vision to accomplish it?

- Do we envision ourselves having PhDs either with MUSC merger or without

- Leave PhD programming with MUSC?

- A big automatic change if we start offering PhDs. Personally, I don’t have a problem expanding that in that direction but we’d need a lot of resources to bolster undergraduate. Investment in personnel.

- Main concern? The need for faculty for graduate programs

- Yes - our faculty must grow. This is where we (College of Charleston faculty) distinguish ourselves when talking to parents of prospective students: Your kids are not going to be taught by graduate assistants. That’s our strength as an undergraduate institution.

- But if we have enough faculty? Some faculty teach graduate and undergraduate. What are the other risks to the undergraduate programs?

- The benefits outweigh the risks to an undergraduate education graduate research and faculty research. Teaching load at an institution with PhD programs is probably lighter.

- Its then a question of resources and can we afford this?

- Faculty would need more time for research. There would be a huge benefit/difference from a 4-4 to a 4-3. While that shift of having fewer students, professors would do a better job teaching.

- Could have a 2-tier system. Undergrad faculty is treated one way and the graduate faculty is treated another way?
I think of changing loads for PhDs teaching. Not suggesting it’s a danger to undergraduate. The typical teacher won’t be affected.

Not every program would have PhDs

I’m teaching in a graduate program right now and there’s no change in my teaching

Supervision of PhD theses is a huge load. That needs to be considered

Sounds like the model would be elective. A faculty member would position him-or-herself to do this. It’s not a blanket impact. What I’m wondering is how do people perceive research? Is it summers or year-round? In general for scholarship, what are the expectations? I’m curious about that across the university.

It varies a lot by discipline

2 or 3 departments supporting doctoral programs. Imagine producing 20 research doctorates a year. Many different models. It is a uniform expectation at Texas Tech. Undergraduate program was very professional. Research expectations were very similar from department to department. Teaching master’s students is incredibly exhausting; you get them trained and then they’re done/graduate.

What’s the role of the Lowcountry Graduate Center in relation to the College’s programming?

I learned a lot of things this year from the grad faculty curriculum committee. Learned that the Lowcountry Graduate Center is co-operated by a few institutions.

Confirmed that the College does not finance it; the state does. Anything that comes to the LGC is not meant to compete.

One of the USC programs coming in in the fall is engineering

We don’t offer engineering programs

Concern is with graduate Cybersecurity certificate

LGC is created as a result to study College of Charleston, Citadel, MUSC. The result was let’s have a center that fosters collaboration, and also have a structure for imports through the state. A few graduate programs were there in North campus. Social work came here from USC. There have been attempts to bring education PhD. There has been activity over there for over a decade. It isn’t an excellent example of collaboration. The programs have always belonged to the school who offers them.

PhD in education could be at LGC
-We’re trying to keep Clemson and USC out of this area

-The College of Charleston is a comprehensive university that loves the liberal arts; we’re not a liberal arts college keeping out Clemson and USC...

-We are worried about having other institutions in this area. How much will be left for us?

-My biggest concern is that we may end up with graduate programs because the political will is there. This movement toward a more comprehensive university is important for the College. We’re in a region that desperately needs well-trained people. We’re expanding and improving quality for the community. My sense is that we have the history of the graduate program where we incrementally add to what we already have including having existing staff and faculty teach and serve. We don’t have a significant budget for marketing. Also, how are program directors assessed? How do we identify our quality programs? How is the dean assessed? If we’re going to do this, do it with an eye for quality. We can’t just stick our toe in and do it half-way with resources. This is where I worry... Roster faculty will move to teaching PhDs, and we’ll lose some adjuncts as we do for BPS (the Bachelor of Professional Studies). We’ll start competing for resources for staff. I don’t worry about a two-tier faculty because we’re already there with making exceptions for faculty doing incredible research. We do have different teaching levels because we’re not the same faculty we were 15 years ago. The front-end, can we be serious?

-Graduate programs have developed from a faculty member who wanted to create a program who wanted to make it work. PhDs eventually popping up here for the same reasons we have a master’s program: someone felt a need. In selected areas we would grow. We’ve made a couple runs on PhDs before knowing full well CHE wouldn’t let us do it, i.e. look at Coastal Carolina. Over 25 years I’ve been here, financial support just dwindles away. It could happen this year that we will merge and we will be told, “Here it is. Go make it happen.”

-Then it comes back to program review. For graduate and undergraduate that’s the kind of fixed pie scenario and how ugly it gets because we have our foot in the business community – because we link this to training people for jobs.

-Is anyone discussing revenue in a way that sounds encouraging? State dollars? Seems to me the business programs are the way you can pay for tuition.

-What’s the comparison of the graduate to the undergraduate when we did the cost-study? Operating and personnel 50 percent.

-We’re not paying staff, i.e. when i was program director, I did all the clerical.

-We’re not staffing. Think of more than just faculty. Have to think of research facilities are just by far the largest costs.
Paying assistantships? Graduate program concerned about competitive stipends. We’d get better students if we had the money.

President has been adamant with Board of Trustees that R1s cost more money and warned them that to go down this road, they have to seek alternate avenues for money because costing is more tricky. This president wants to represent the full range of costs with graduate programming. There’s no way to reallocate resources; it has to be new revenue. Where money is concerned, we have to look at tuition and fees and go to the state and say money makers for the state and money losers for the state -- you get what you pay for. You are never going to fund that with grants; you have to have checks.

Money is no object. Or, I'm not hearing that? Which is it? One of our programs received line-support in our budget. Legislature said ‘yes, that’s needed’ and computer science was awarded. $400,000 evidence. Is that there is some understanding related to a particular desire?

Are there comprehensive universities we could look to for a funding model?

I imagine a distant future looking like William & Mary. This would be through an incremental move where we’d add one program at a time OR all at once like other states? I rather doubt the approach we can’t do something we can’t afford.

Incremental addition: Not a moment when you say, “This is how our mission has changed.” You’re saying, “We’ve got to be nimble, and react to 4 other universities coming here.”

Example of budgeting model? Incremental additions: It requires incredible desire from faculty in certain departments and it will probably be business and education. English is coming forward with 2 programs now. We have to be clear at what the costs really are and we have to have facilities in place.

Targeting programs and responding to some need... You have a better chance of getting things through CHE talking about competition. Go in areas where there are less competition?

Budgeting model example: Miami of Ohio is a better peer comparison. I looked at their workload a few years ago. Their faculty are on a 3-3 load. They are an institution that has managed to maintain small class sizes, and quality at undergraduate level is important to them.

Miami of Ohio also has a strategic plan that is impressive.

I have no idea how much funding they get from the state.
-States go to money and strings attached to their monies

<Moderator> This is an interesting discussion on a lot of areas weren’t brought up at other forums. Final results of the faculty survey are going to be released tomorrow at Faculty Senate meeting. Here are the current results summarized: The most pertinent is 85% of faculty responded either supportive or very supportive of increasing master’s programs at the college and 60% of faculty support target-specific PhD programs.

-There’s been a general shift with this Provost. Recently at a Department outing to baseball game the young faculty’s conversation was all about their research. When I was young, the conversation was all about teaching.

-There was a hostility to graduate programs when I came here. I’ve seen the sea change across the schools. Amazing work in our graduate programs. Faculty colleagues are doing really hard work with very few resources. If you give the faculty more resources just imagine what they could do.