Thank you Madame Chair. It’s a great honor for me to represent the Clemson Faculty Senate at this particularly important point in our history. I can tell you that there is perhaps no more gratifying work than that of a teacher. Each day we seek wisdom and guidance to do our jobs well because the stakes are so very high. As members of the Faculty of Clemson University, our jobs allow us the opportunity to change lives in a positive, lasting manner. Our impact on one student can have a ripple effect on that student’s future family, where generations can benefit from their family’s transcendence from marginality to a future of social and economic prosperity. And that family’s success will benefit their entire community... and so on for our state... and our nation.

Let’s think for a moment about the future of this great institution. Our mission is teaching, research and service, and we have lofty goals. We strive to be the premier public teaching institution in the nation. And we aspire to become a comprehensive land-grant research university at the highest levels of excellence and service to our state.
Our students are of unprecedented academic quality; and our student athletes truly are champions, embodying the highest level of integrity and excellence, both on the field and in the classroom.

Working together, we have accomplished much. Not only is Clemson University a top tier public institution, but we now have achieved the highest Carnegie Research Classification. With limited revenue streams we’ve managed to arrive at this level of success largely through sweat equity. I want to congratulate Interim VPR Dooley and the Office of Research staff for their support of the faculty research mission at Clemson. And I want to thank our Board of Trustees, our administration, our faculty, students and staff, who all share credit for supporting this recognition. Speaking of research, some of our stakeholders remain unclear about the role and purpose of a research mission at a public university. Why should states with limited resources subsidize faculty research in public universities? I believe the answer is comprehensive educational quality.

Some narratives like to typecast the successful university research scientist or scholar as detached from the teaching mission. I believe that this stereotype needs some clarification. While there may be exceptions, on the whole, the best scholars do make the best
teachers. Research, by definition, contributes to generalizable knowledge about our world. As a former student myself, I can state unequivocally that the most valuable lessons, the deepest levels of understanding, the essence of wisdom, come from the most accomplished teacher/scholars. Our scholars are so much more than mere teachers. I’m speaking of those who are actually involved in changing the world, and contributing to new and valuable knowledge regarding technology, health, business, the sciences and the humanities.

As our society pushes for greater and more immediate accountability for use of public funds, we must avoid the natural tendency to become penny wise and pound foolish. Surely you all know the value of true leadership in business, and yet there is a perpetual driving compulsion to deliver a favorable bottom line for each year’s annual report. Yet you also know that strategic success is not based on one year’s bottom line, but performance of a unit over an extended time, often a time frame greater than the tenure of many CEOs. True leaders make wise investments for continual, sustainable future success.
The research mission of Clemson University is the multiplier of our impact, in part because it formulates the basis of all knowledge, born from validity-testing, integrity of logic, and informed decision-making. Our students and our state reap extraordinary benefit from an education system that is objective and protected from bias, and that is the underpinning of the peer review concept, our gold standard. This objectivity is the basis of science, technology, engineering and medicine. Humans did not pilot the first airplane, did not walk on the moon, and did not transplant the human heart based on conjecture. Those technological breakthroughs occurred only through the rigor of mathematics, physics, biology, and engineering. But meaningful societal impact goes far beyond our STEM disciplines. For example, along with those modern miracles, science and technology has also produced weapons of enormous destruction and existential threat. I propose that only the humanities, the social sciences and the liberal arts can provide the wisdom to tell our society and our leaders when, and more importantly, when NOT to use those terrible weapons.

The quality of our faculty is dependent on our ability to attract and retain the best talent nationwide. Thus, we are compelled to seek ways to make Clemson an even better place to work and to live. We recently received results of the 2015 COACHE- survey from the
Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, and I serve on the leadership team to assess and respond to this valuable information. This is a nation-wide quality of work satisfaction survey and our data represents essentially the pulse of this university’s faculty. I want to briefly highlight some results that can have direct bearing on our future success as one of the nation’s top public universities.

- Compared with our benchmark institutions and the national cohort, we do well in a number of areas. We have achieved a commendable balance between institutional expectations and the faculty’s ability to invest in it, including clarity and consistency of expectations. We also do well in departmental engagement... our departmental discussions and professional interactions.

- However, we must face squarely some of our greatest challenges, and identify pathways to overcome those challenges. We need better academic facilities and work resources. This requires strategic institutional foresight and investment. And we need clarity in our tenure and promotion standards. Your Faculty Senate Policy Committee has already been focused this
year on Faculty Manual clarification of our workload policies and expectations for career advancement.

• We need better personal and family-friendly support structures to recruit and retain our world-class faculty. Your Faculty Senate Welfare Committee has been busy sheparding policies for better childcare support, for clarification of our family leave policies, and for creation of a family resources web portal. And we are grateful for the Board’s support in these efforts.

• According to survey results, we also have leadership challenges at the divisional and departmental levels. I know that well-meaning chairs and deans can often be placed into leadership roles without systematic training on how to lead in an academic culture of shared governance. I recommend regular, systematic, and formalized professional development for chairs, deans and directors. A new chair or a new dean without much academic leadership experience or training will find that this type of professional development reduces your stress and uncertainty, increases your effectiveness, and helps boost unit *esprit de corps* and overall unit productivity.
Now...looking to the future, I believe that we can continue to build a better institution. We can continue to build a faculty of the highest quality. We can continue to build an institution that nurtures employees and their families to help us successfully recruit and retain the world’s most accomplished teachers and scholars and leaders. Through careful assessment of our progress and through responsive strategic planning, we can build the premier public teaching and research institution in this nation.

Thank you again for all you do to make Clemson University one of the truly unique and successful public institutions. Thank you for all you do to change lives for the better in South Carolina and beyond.

Madame Chair, that concludes my report.

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President, Faculty Senate