

Board of Governors Policy Discussion on Enrollment, Retention and Graduation
January 7, 2010

Enrollment Growth, Retention and Graduation, Campus Plans for Improvement in Retention and Graduation, and Planning to tie Enrollment Growth to Retention and Graduation

The second policy discussion will focus on enrollment growth, retention and graduation, what each campus is doing to improve retention and graduation, and an outline of the timeline and plans to tie enrollment growth to success in meeting established retention and graduation goals.

The fall 2009 enrollment will be reported and analyzed with attention to magnitude, diversity, and quality. The headcount increase was well over 6,000, bringing University-wide enrollment to 222,322.

Five-years of retention and graduation targets covering the period 2008-09 through 2012-13 have been set for each campus. We will focus particularly on how the campuses are doing with retention, four- and six-year graduation rates, and the graduation rate for community college transfers. Campus plans and campus successes for improvements in these areas will be shared with the Board.

At the September meeting of the Board of Governors, President Bowles announced that he would recommend to the Board that further enrollment growth at UNC campuses be dependent upon their success in achieving established campus goals for improving student retention and graduation rates. A working group of chancellors, led by FSU Chancellor James Anderson, is developing suggestions for the President's consideration on the best methodology for implementing this new approach. Other chancellors in this working group include Steve Ballard (ECU), Harold Martin (NCA&T), Charlie Nelms (NCCU), Jim Woodward (NCSU), Anne Ponder (UNCA), and Linda Brady (UNCG). Staff support will be provided by Karrie Dixon, Alan Mabe, and Jeff Davies.

During its first work session on December 14, the group concluded that it should make a preliminary report to the President by mid-February so that any forthcoming recommendations could impact the request for enrollment funding to be considered by the General Assembly during the 2010 short session. The group also reviewed the most recent graduation and retention rates relative to established campus goals, outlined requests for further relevant data, and identified issues needing further deliberation, including:

- The degree to which predictive models based on incoming characteristics of students and institutions vs. actual performance of students would be useful;
- How incremental campus progress towards meeting retention and graduation goals should impact authorization for enrollment growth;

- How trends in reaching retention and graduation goals should impact requests for enrollment growth;
- A need to analyze the incoming profiles of students who were not successful according to:
 - Academic preparation upon entry
 - Financial need
 - Commitment to degree attainment (one measure is the number of credit hours attempted)
 - Degree progression
- Campus barriers to student success, retention and graduation
- The role of summer bridge and other programs on first-year persistence
- How to assure that students utilize academic support systems.

Additional material will be provided to the Board prior to the January meeting.