

***The University of North Carolina  
Undergraduate Degree Completion Improvement Plan***

---

**The University of North Carolina General Administration**

**December 2016**

## **Executive Summary**

Nationwide, issues of concern for higher education range from timely degree completion, student debt, rising costs for students and families, and public perception about value. The General Assembly passed the original North Carolina Guaranteed Admission Program (NC GAP) legislation in an attempt to address the first two: improving baccalaureate degree graduation rates and reducing debt. Given the heterogeneity of universities' missions and their student populations, as well as the growing number of students who are not counted in the graduation rate metric, the legislation was revised: "By January 1, 2017, the President of the University of North Carolina, in consultation with the Board of Governors, shall adopt a plan to improve student completion of baccalaureate degrees that includes specific targets for each constituent institution's completion rates and that is effective for the 2017-2018 academic year. . . The plan shall allow for a variety of strategies designed to best meet the individual constituent institutions' needs."

The University of North Carolina shares these goals and presents the enclosed Undergraduate Degree Completion Improvement Plan to meet the modified legislative requirements.

UNC has reviewed related national literature and best practices in higher education, conducted system-wide and institutional-specific data analyses, and examined recent NC policy changes. The initial sections of the enclosed report summarize our findings. Based on that work, we identified three foundational areas for a continuous improvement approach for System-level enhancements, including expanded and new work with the community college system, and the individualized constituent institutions' degree completion improvement plans: timely degree attainment, achievement gaps (e.g., gender), and financial issues. UNC institutions have catalogued the breadth of their student success-related programs, and the UNC System has examined these collectively in the context of NC GAP goals.

Based on careful data analyses, the individual universities have identified specific subgroups of students who can make gains in degree attainment by reducing time to degree, with a possible benefit of reducing debt. The degree completion improvement plans reflect the three foundational areas, and then meld those with specific populations and their unique institutional contexts (e.g., large and growing number of transfer students). For example, per national and UNC data, students do not stop out only because of academic issues. The 16 UNC institutions collectively identified more than 70 different student success programs as important for improving retention and graduation rates and degree attainment by the specified student populations. The most commonly cited programs and resources are: early alerts and intrusive advising programs; curriculum and scheduling planning tools; and enriched educational experiences. Several institutions included targeted financial literacy programs as a key to student success. Programs will either be refined, adapted, or expanded to meet the needs of specific student subgroups. Their plans articulate not just where efforts will be focused to address those target populations but the impact that such a focus will have on their key metrics, and the institutions expect that these renewed and systematic efforts, with regular monitoring, will increase performance in every case.

## **Background**

When thinking about the appropriate goals relating to improved student success for UNC students, it is important to consider both a snapshot of the major issues confronting higher education and what some other peer universities and systems are doing to address the same. Three focal areas have been identified from an in-depth scan of the higher education landscape: timely degree attainment, achievement disparities, and financial needs and student indebtedness. This report will address all of these areas, and the System and constituent institutions have identified new and refined plans to address the issues.

Of note, graduation rates, a commonly used statistic that allows national comparisons, consider only first-time, full-time (FTFT) freshmen who enter college only in the fall semester. The data exclude students starting at one institution and transferring to another, which is a very common occurrence at many UNC System institutions. Due to the limitations of common metrics, national organizations have developed more inclusive metrics, including The College Portrait, as part of the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA).<sup>1</sup> The program is designed to provide accessible, transparent, and comparable information and improve accountability. The VSA supplements the traditional National Center for Educational Statistics' Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) measures of retention and graduation with additional data to report on students graduating at any institution and not penalizing institutions for students who remain enrolled beyond the traditional benchmarks (and not always continuously enrolled, but stop-out multiple times and for different lengths of time). IPEDS usually underreports student achievement because those statistics do not account for an increasingly mobile and non-traditional student population. For example, the 2008 System cohort had a graduation rate of 63% at the original institution, but when graduation at any UNC institution is included, the rate rises to 68%.

## **Factors Impacting Student Success**

Student success, and how it may be measured and improved, is the central concern of all institutions of higher education in the state and in the nation. Considerable data and information are available and will be consulted in ongoing fashion. Common areas of interest at the student level include: attainment and time to attainment, costs of attendance and debt burden, and post-collegiate paths (e.g., graduate school, employment). However, an understanding of the various factors that impact, positively or negatively, student success is necessary, as is the understanding that factors may interact with one another to produce complex results that may be difficult to tease out or interpret. (For example, rural county residence and lower income).

As a guide, utilizing literature review and one empirically-tested framework of factors affecting one critical aspect of student success--degree completion--as a starting point allows consideration of four categories of factors: student characteristics, external factors, institutional factors, and shared external-institutional factors. The following will describe key elements and will not be all-inclusive.

---

<sup>1</sup> See [www.collegeportraits.org](http://www.collegeportraits.org).

Student characteristics include:

1. Academic performance measured in several ways (e.g., F in one course, GPA, credit hours attempted/earned), full or part time status, and duration of stop-out. Academic performance is critical in the first year, and a large percentage of stop-outs occur right after.
2. Structural factors may include financial status and unmet need, amount of work hours, commuting time.
3. Non-cognitive factors are perseverance, academic mindset, resilience, and motivation.

External factors play a role and cover high school preparation, especially in math and writing, number of other institutions attended, and other responsibilities, such as family caregiving and dependents.

Institutional factors include advising quality, degree program clarity, financial aid, engagement with faculty (e.g., teaching), faculty satisfaction, integration into extracurricular experiences, and academic support services (e.g., tutoring).

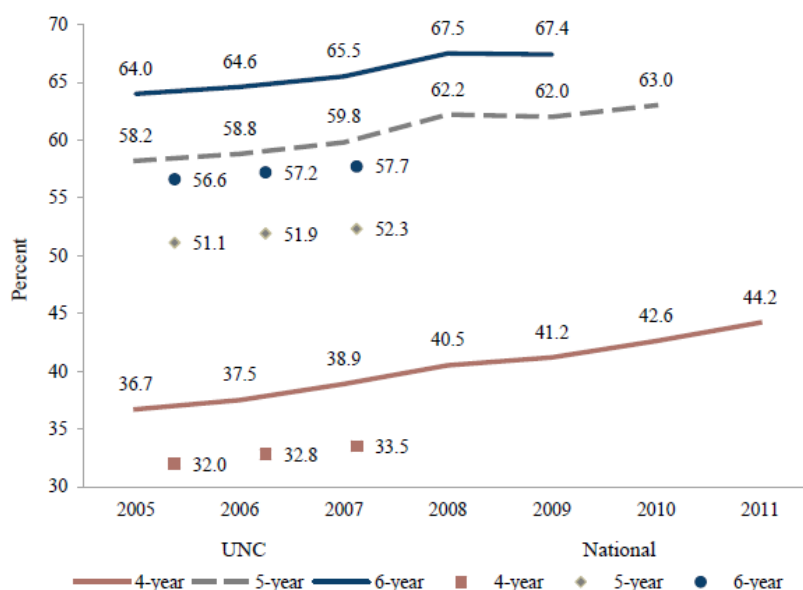
Shared External-Institutional factors refer to a necessary condition and or interaction between the two areas. These can include work hours (total need--a student factor--modified by financial aid, an institutional factor) and/or on-campus employment, early completion of math requirements, and intentions.

### **Graduation Rates, UNC Comparisons, and Transfer Student Impacts**

The General Assembly passed the North Carolina Guaranteed Admission Program (NC GAP) with a core intent to improve baccalaureate degree graduation rates and, via students finishing in shorter timeframes, to reduce student debt accumulated in pursuing the degree. The UNC System shares these goals, and recent data reflect significant progress. Enrollment at UNC institutions continues to grow, and 15 of 16 UNC institution's actual enrollment rates met or exceeded the projected enrollment rates. Even with the larger and growing number of students, within the last five years UNC System student graduation rates have improved more than five percentage points in the four-year graduation rate and three percentage points in the six-year graduation rate. Some recent policy innovations may have helped, but their full impact may still not be seen for a few years given recent implementation (e.g., 2014/2015). UNC students best the national graduation rates by almost 10 percentage points (or 17% higher) than the national average. Additionally, UNC students who do not meet the four-year graduation mark, tend to do so very soon thereafter. On average, students earn their UNC degrees in just more than four years--usually taking only one additional semester or summer term to complete their degree, and not another full year or more.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> 2009 First-Time, Full-Time (FTFT) freshmen earning a degree at any UNC institution took an average of 8.5 fall/spring semesters and two summer terms to graduate. From UNC-GA data files "Z091\_NCGAP 1.8.16."

**Figure 1: UNC Graduation Rates and National Rates for Public Institutions<sup>3</sup>**

The UNC System is comprised of diverse institutions that have different missions and therefore different student populations. While it appears uneven, with some universities' completion rates below 25% for four-year and 40% for six-year graduation rates, it is also important to do comparisons to their board-approved peer institutions (e.g., some UNC institutions are in the top half of the peer set). In addition, the data notably excludes transfer students, which was envisioned in original NC GAP legislation. Students who leave the original institutions often graduate at other UNC schools. Nationally, for the six-year cohort first enrolling in 2009, 23.4% of the student completed their degrees at a different institution than the one where they first enrolled. For non-full-time students, that rate jumps to 36%, meaning only 64% of the cohort remained at the same school.<sup>4</sup>

In 2014, more than one-third (36%) of students graduating from UNC schools were excluded from the national graduation rate statistics because they were not the traditional first-time, full-time students at the time they entered, or they transferred from their original institution. UNC Charlotte and Fayetteville State University are particularly impacted due to the use of traditional metrics of student success, because more than 40% of their undergraduate population are transfer students. Transfer students make up approximately 28% of the System's student body (48,000 students in Fall 2014), and the total number of transfer students increased 17% in the past five years. Most importantly, the majority of UNC transfer students (56%) come to UNC schools from the NC Community College System, and although the demographics generally mirror the traditional UNC student population, transfer students include slightly more Pell grant recipients.<sup>5</sup> The UNC System average for students receiving Pell grant

<sup>3</sup> UNC-GA, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall 2001 and Spring 2007 through Spring 2014.

<sup>4</sup> *Completing College: A National View of student Attainment Rates – Fall 2009 Cohort*. National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, November 16, 2015. Retrieved from: <https://nscresearchcenter.org/signaturereport10>.

<sup>5</sup> All transfer statistics obtained from *The University of North Carolina Transfer Student Report 2014*. Retrieved from [https://www.northcarolina.edu/sites/default/files/unc\\_transfer\\_student\\_report\\_2014rev.pdf](https://www.northcarolina.edu/sites/default/files/unc_transfer_student_report_2014rev.pdf).

assistance at any time in their undergraduate program was 44% in the Fall of 2014. UNC schools range from 25.8% (UNC Chapel Hill) to 81.7% (Elizabeth City State University).

A recent study by the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center noted that enrollment in college full-time immediately after high school no longer represents the majority of postsecondary college students. For all students entering college for the six-year cohort first enrolling in 2009, only 39% enrolled full-time, and almost 54% of the students would alter between full-time and part-time. The study noted a decline in national completion rates due to the Great Recession, with the major factors for students leaving college being: family requirements/expectations, lack of social integration at college, confusion about academic majors, and competing balance between academics and the need for employment.<sup>6</sup> The average age of students starting as undergraduates at UNC institutions has risen to 21 years, with the range spanning 19 to 27 years (FSU).

According to the Lumina foundation, more than 70% of high school sophomores plan to earn a bachelor's degree. While 77% of students from families in the top quartile of earnings earned a degree by the age of 24, only 9% from the lowest income bracket did so.<sup>7</sup> At UNC, students from low income families graduate at a lower rate (60%) than students from higher income families (72%). Underrepresented minorities also graduate at a lower rate (55%) than non-minority students (72%). Thus, later in this report, we detail UNC policy and programs designed to improve these completion rates, which will result in overall higher UNC graduation rates.

Income, academic performance, and college graduation rates are related. A national study began in 2002 (with 10<sup>th</sup> grade students) to track different levels of socio-economic status (SES) students through their educational journeys. By 2012, the study found that only 14% of low-SES, and 29% of middle-SES students attained a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 60% of high-SES students. Additionally, comparing student performance on standardized tests, of the low- and middle-SES students who scored in the top quartile of math in 2002, ten years later only 41% (low) and 53% (middle) had earned a bachelor's degree, compared to 74% of high-SES students. The study found that a student with top scores from a low-income family is equally likely to graduate college as a mediocre student from a high-income family, with 41% of both groups obtaining a degree by their late 20s.<sup>8</sup>

### **Selected National Best Practices**

We next provide an abbreviated summary of national best practices, in order to provide a context for the plans of each UNC institution, which are presented at the end of this report. Some of the programs described below are being implemented at UNC institutions. Examples include pushing for 15 student credit hours per semester, early warning systems, advising enhancements, and others.

---

<sup>6</sup> *Completing College: A National View of Student Attainment Rates – Fall 2009 Cohort*. Retrieved from: <https://nscresearchcenter.org/signaturereport10>.

<sup>7</sup> "Improving the Yields in Higher Education: Findings from Lumina Foundation's State-Based Efforts to Increase Productivity in U.S. Higher Education," September 2015. Retrieved from: [https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server\\_files/files/Improving%20the%20Yields%20in%20Higher%20Education%20Embargoed.pdf](https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server_files/files/Improving%20the%20Yields%20in%20Higher%20Education%20Embargoed.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> "Postsecondary Attainment: Differences by Socioeconomic Status," published on the IES National Center for Education Statistics (updated May 2015). Retrieved from: [http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator\\_tva.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_tva.asp).

Programs that incentivize students to enroll in 30 credit hours per year have shown very good results, with 79% of students who did so eventually graduated, compared to a 69% completion rate for students who took a lighter course load. Only 50% of students at four-year institutions take 15 credit hours per semester, and federal financial aid policies only require student to enroll in 12 credits each semester for “full time attendance” and be eligible for aid. Students who take less than 15 credits per semester have no chance to complete their degrees in four years (eight semesters).<sup>9</sup>

The University of Hawai‘i system experienced a 14.7% increase in the number of undergraduate student completions by implementing a “15 to Finish” campaign. Prior to the effort, only 15% of system freshmen took 15 hours (as of Fall 2011), and only 38% at the flagship campus at Manoa. With an aggressive campaign that emphasized to students the benefits of the 15 credit load (statistics showing better grades, “free” credit hours (12 and 15 cost the same), and the financial and lifestyle benefits of finishing on-time), the system-wide percentages of students taking 15 hours increased in one year to 24% system-wide, and 56% at Manoa. Adams State University in Colorado offered a small incentive scholarship (\$500) to students who completed 30 credits each year, and the number of students doing so rose 11% in two years, and continues to rise.<sup>10</sup> Understanding why students may not start or complete 15 student credit hours in a semester is critical. Factors that can deter this 15 credit hour path include: work hours, family obligations (including providing financial support), commuting time, type of transportation to get to school, and dependents.

Partnered with the 15 credit hours, another best practice using structured schedules has shown success. Structured schedules allow students predictability, by scheduling classes five days per week but either in the morning (8am to noon) or afternoon (1-5 pm). The predictability made life easier for students with jobs and/or children, and often produced natural cohorts, where students moved through the program together. The student-to-student support encouraged connectivity to each other and the institution, and multiple studies have proven that students are more likely to succeed in college when they do not feel lost or alone.<sup>11</sup>

A final example of national best practices are the “Guided Pathways to Success” models, which are designed to improve student transitions and movement through a degree. The nature of the programs differ between colleges and between degrees in a college, but include efforts such as: enhanced degree audits and “intrusive advising” and early warning systems for the students; redesigned large “gateway” courses; guaranteed availability of the “milestone” courses required to move through a program; and enhanced “degree maps” for students in certain majors. By combining the use of degree maps and intrusive advising, Georgia State University improved its graduation rates by more than 20 percentage points in 10 years and saw graduation rates for normally low-performing populations exceed those of the overall student body: Pell grant students, 52.5%; Hispanic students, 57.4%; and African American students, 57.4%, and Georgia State now confers more bachelor’s degrees to African Americans than any other U.S. university. Florida State University also combined degree maps with other strategies, and increased its overall graduation rate by 12% in 10 years (to 74%), and increased its graduation rates for

---

<sup>9</sup> “The Game Changers,” Complete College America report. Retrieved from: <http://www.completecollege.org/gameChangers.html>.

<sup>10</sup> “Best Practices, Full-Time is 15,” from “The Game Changers,” Complete College America report. Retrieved from: <http://www.completecollege.org/strategies.html#stratHolderFullTime>.

<sup>11</sup> “Structured Schedules,” from “The Game Changers,” Complete College America report. Retrieved from: <http://www.completecollege.org/gameChangers.html#clickBoxOrange>

similar populations: 72% for Pell students; 70% for Hispanic students; and 77% for African American students.<sup>12</sup>

The American Association of Colleges and Universities detailed a series of what it terms “high-impact educational practices” in a 2013 report.<sup>13</sup> These practices have been proven nationally to improve student success rates across institutional types. Practices include first year seminars and experiences, learning communities, common intellectual experiences, and collaborative assignments and projects. The UNC institutions included a variety of these high-impact practices, as well as some of the best practices described above, in their individual undergraduate degree completion improvement plans.

### **Understanding Stop Outs and Debt**

The national and UNC graduation statistics, in addition to not accounting for students who transfer to another university and finish, also do not account for students who do not remain enrolled continuously at one school, or “stop outs.” A growing national trend for the past few decades is an increase in students stopping-out to attend to jobs and/or family. The vast majority of students who remain enrolled for more than six years are not continuously enrolled, but “stop out” for several semesters, or move to part-time status. Nationally, at four-year public institutions, more than 37% of students stop out at least once, with a stop-out being defined as no enrollment for at least four months, or generally one semester, in length. Some stop out students return to complete their degrees (after various intervals), but some remain “part-way home.”

Additionally, students who do not start college immediately after high school tend to stop out more, which increases the time-to-completion. As noted by the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, modern college students are more “mobile” (transferring) and challenge the notion of “normal time” to degree completion. The time to obtain a degree is even longer for older students, usually due to life choices related to work and/or family responsibilities.

In the UNC System, 43% of students who stop out do so during or after completing their first year, ranging from 28% to 55%. Another 28% of UNC students who stop out do during or at the conclusion of their second year, ranging from 22% to 33%. Thus, 71% of all UNC stop-outs occur in the first two years of their studies. Of all students who stop out from UNC schools, 40% are Pell students, ranging from 19% to 75%. On average, of the UNC students who stop out, 27% departed school with a GPA of 2.5 or higher. At the System’s minority serving institutions, approximately 35% stopped-out with B- averages (2.8 GPA) or higher.

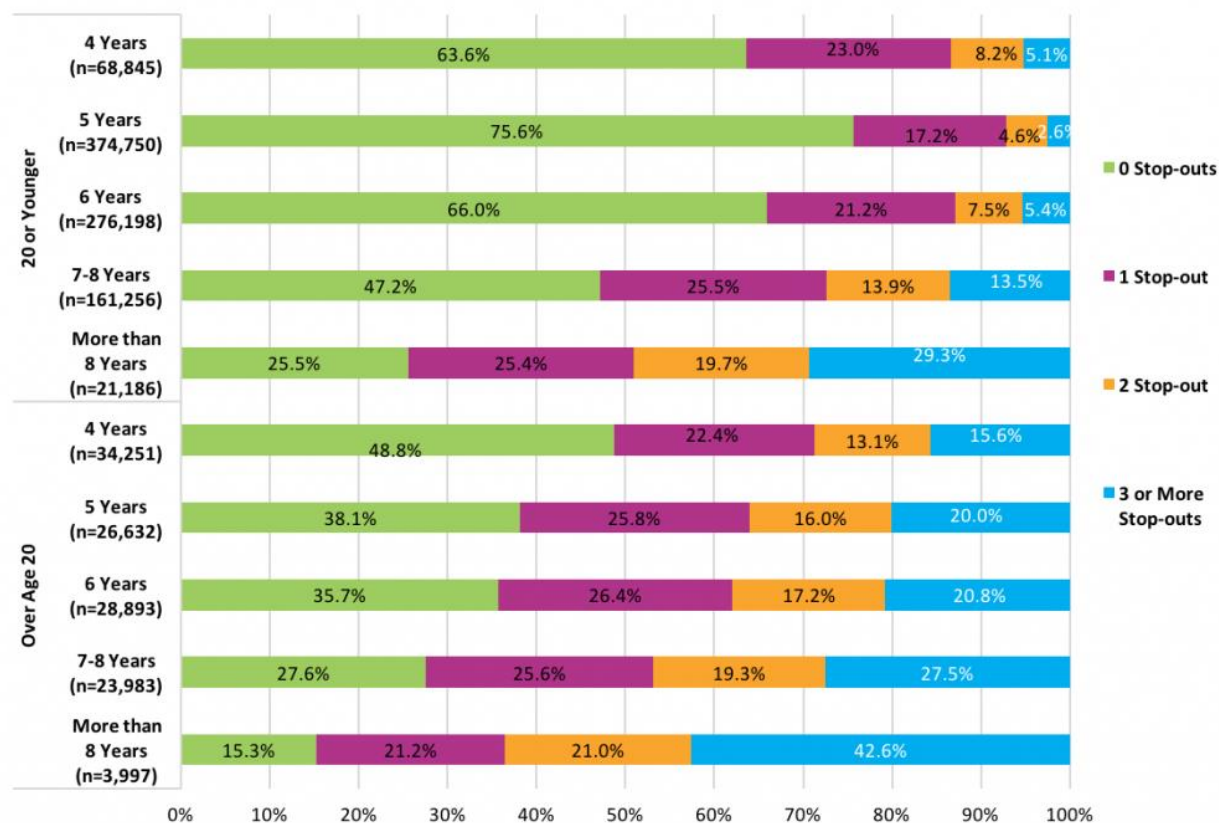
---

<sup>12</sup> “Best Practices, Guaranteed Pathways to Success,” from “The Game Changers,” Complete College America report. Retrieved from: <http://www.completecollege.org/strategies.html#stratHolderPathwaySuccess>.

<sup>13</sup> George D. Kuh and Ken O’Donnell, with Case Studies by Sally Reed, *Ensuring Quality & Taking High-Impact Practices to Scale* (Washington, DC: AAC&U, 2013).



**Figure 2: Percentage of Bachelor's Degree Earners from Four-Year Public Institutions by Total Enrolled Time and Number of Stop Outs and Age<sup>14</sup>**

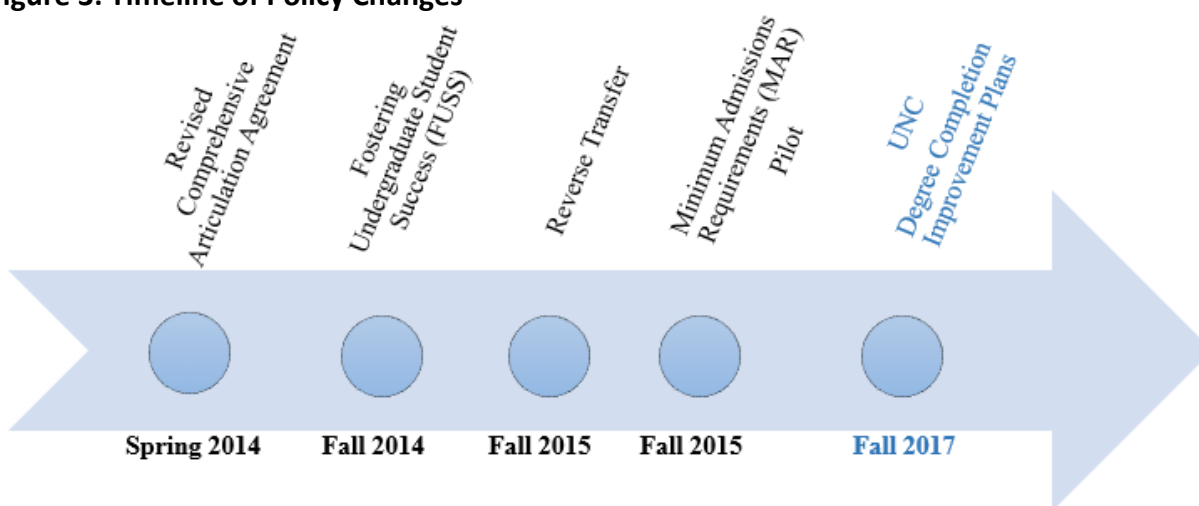


Due to the low costs of tuition and attendance at UNC schools, and because most students who leave do so early in their programs, students who stop-out are not burdened with enormous debt. The average debt for a UNC System student who stops-out during the first year is \$4,277, and the average debt for all stop-out students is \$11,028, with the highest average debt for stop-outs being \$13,039.

### Recent State Policy Changes

The UNC System has implemented quite a few policy changes related to improving student completion, enhancing student success, and ensuring ease of transfer credits. These policy changes also demonstrate a strong and collaborative partnership with the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) and will help us meet degree attainment goals, while keeping student debt among the lowest in the nation. Most of the student success-focused policy changes have occurred within the past two years, and we do not yet have the data to draw comprehensive conclusions on the successes.

<sup>14</sup> *Time to Degree: A National view of the Time Enrolled and Elapsed for Associate and Bachelor's Degree Earners*, National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, September 18, 2016. Retrieved from: <https://nscresearchcenter.org/signaturereport10>.

**Figure 3: Timeline of Policy Changes***Minimum Admissions Requirements (MAR)*

National research suggests that high school GPA (HSGPA) is a much better predictor of student success than standardized test scores. The three year MAR pilot program will provide an opportunity to test what national research and UNC predictive analytics suggest about the positive correlation between HSGPA and student success.

In 2015, the UNC Board of Governors delegated authority to the President of the University of North Carolina to establish a three year MAR pilot program, which is underway at ECSU, FSU, and NCCU. These institutions are authorized to admit students who have HSGPAs above the current UNC MARs, but who do not meet the current SAT/ACT thresholds. The program uses a sliding scale allowing for differing levels of SAT/ACT when correlated to the students' HSGPAs. For example, it allows for a 10-point difference in SAT score as GPA increases. The sliding scale was based on literature showing that standardized test scores may not be the best predictors of success.

The three UNC institutions in the pilot program can admit up to 100 North Carolina first time, full time undergraduates each for the fall semesters of 2015, 2016, and 2017. We will be able to determine if these students are as successful as students meeting traditional admissions requirements.

*Policies and Regulations on Transfer Student Admission and Success*

The regulations on transfer policy are designed to provide System-wide consistency and clarity regarding the definitions and treatment of undergraduate transfer students for admissions purposes, the transfer of credits, and services supporting transfer student success. In the spring of 2015, UNC established minimum transfer guidelines for students seeking to enter the university as transfer students.

Students earning 24 or more transferable credits are not required to meet minimum high school grade point average, standardized test scores, and courses. The policy deemed 24 hours of credit as the minimum threshold students needed to earn if they did not meet Minimum Admissions Requirements (MARs), and doing so demonstrated their success with college-level work. Prior to these 2015 regulations, students needed to meet a 30 credit hour threshold in order to transfer to most UNC campuses. The new policy makes it easier for students to transfer into UNC System schools.

Additionally, each UNC institution must establish programs and resources to promote the success of all transfer students. These programs and resources may include, but are not limited to: special orientation sessions designated first year seminars for transfer students, academic advisement resources specifically for transfer students, financial aid counseling, and inclusion in early warning systems.

#### *UNC Student Success – Fostering Undergraduate Student Success (FUSS)*

The Board of Governors implemented the Fostering Undergraduate Student Success policy in the fall of 2014. FUSS directs campuses to improve degree attainment, retention, and graduation of all students, including transfer students. This faculty-led policy is based on data and best practices that are proven to positively impact student success. UNC institutions have developed campus policies based upon best practices shown to have positively impacted student success. Some of these practices include placing limits on course withdrawals and repeats and establishing baselines for good academic standing, which includes grade point average and percent of credits earned. We are currently assessing the impact of these policies.

#### *Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA)*

The revised CAA helps clarify and ease the transfer of credit between the NC Community College System schools and UNC institutions. The governing boards of UNC and the NCCCS jointly approved the CAA in February 2014.

Students who earn an Associate in Arts (AA) or Associate in Science (AS) degree from one of the 58 North Carolina community colleges are guaranteed admission to one of the 16 UNC institutions. Additionally, students who complete the AA or AS will have satisfied the general education requirements of UNC institutions. To assist students who are in the community colleges but know their intended major for a bachelor's degree, UNC institutions have developed degree pathways that help students determine those courses they should take at the community college level. The clarity helps students reduce unneeded credits (and associated expenses).

For students who transfer prior to earning their AA or AS degree, the Guarantee Universal General Education Transfer Component (UGETC) ensures UNC schools accept course transfers (for those courses specified within the CAA). The process makes the transfer more efficient for the UNC schools, and protects the students from taking additional, unnecessary, and duplicative courses (and their associated costs) at the four-year institutions.

#### *Reverse Transfer Program*

A collaborative effort between the NCCCS and the UNC System, the Reverse Transfer Program (started in the spring of 2015) helps students to earn a certification, and protects students who transferred from a community college but cannot (or may not) finish a bachelor's degree. Students who transfer to a UNC System school from one of the 58 NC community colleges prior to earning their AA/AS are given the opportunity to combine the credits earned at the university with credit already earned at the community college. Once the student completes the required additional coursework at the university, and appropriate associate degree requirements are met, the community college awards the student their AA/AS. To date, more than 2,200 students have earned their associate degrees, translating to an 8% annual increase in those degrees awarded. Emerging data indicate that students who receive their

associate's degree via reverse transfer may have an increased likelihood of completing a bachelor's degree.

*Financial Aid: State and Federal Support*

Affordability is a key factor in both access to and success in a university education. A significant body of research addresses how money influences attendance decisions and progress once enrolled. Generally, lowering educational costs raises both enrollment and completion rates, but research suggests that the structure and complexity of aid programs makes a difference in the extent to which the aid has an effect.<sup>15</sup> Demographics of the recipient (e.g., age, recipient's income) also matter.<sup>16</sup>

Studies show that students from higher-income families and students whose parents have four-year college degrees are more likely than others to earn bachelor's degrees within six years.<sup>17</sup> In 2013, 77% of adults from families in the top income quartile earned at least a bachelor degree by the time they turned 24 (up from 40% in 1970), but only 9% of people from the lowest income bracket earned the same (up from 6% in 1970).<sup>18</sup>

Researchers often use the receipt of the federal Pell Grant to identify low-income students, and policies targeting at-risk students broadly, or low-income student in particular, often are linked to these grant recipients. To qualify for a Pell Grant, a student generally has a family income under \$50,000. More than 76,000 UNC System undergraduates (or about 43%) who were enrolled in fall 2014 received some amount of a Pell Grant at some point while enrolled in UNC institutions.<sup>19</sup> If a student's family income totals less than \$25,000 per year (generally, see footnote), they can qualify for the maximum Pell award (\$5,815 in 2016-17).<sup>20</sup>

Almost half of UNC students who received Pell Grants qualified for the maximum award at some point during their undergraduate studies--more than 37,000 students, equating to 21% of the UNC System undergraduate population. Seven of the 16 UNC institutions witnessed a significantly higher percentage of their undergraduate student population using the grant (sometime during their undergraduate career, statistics drawn from 2014-2015 academic year data): ECSU (82%); NCCU (77%); FSU (74%); NCA&T (71%); WSSU (67%); UNCP (66%); and UNCG (54%). Even with a full Pell grant, there can still be

---

<sup>15</sup> S. Dynarski, S. and J. Scott-Clayton, "Financial Aid Policy: Lessons from Research," (Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 18710, 2013).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. See also, S. Dynarski, "Does Aid Matter? Measuring the Effect of Student Aid on College Attendance and Completion," (Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 7422, 1999); B. Castleman and B. Long, B., "Looking Beyond Enrollment: The Causal Effect of Need-Based grants on College Access, Persistence, and Graduation," (Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 19306, 2013); and Goldrick-Rab, et al., "Reducing Income Inequality in Educational Attainment: Experimental Evidence on the Impact of Financial Aid on College Completion," (Madison, WI: Institute for Research on Poverty, IRP Discussion Paper 1393-12, 2015).

<sup>17</sup> M. Cahalan and L. W. Perna, "Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the United States: 45-year Trend Report," (Washington, DC: The Pell Institute and Penn AHEAD, 2015).

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

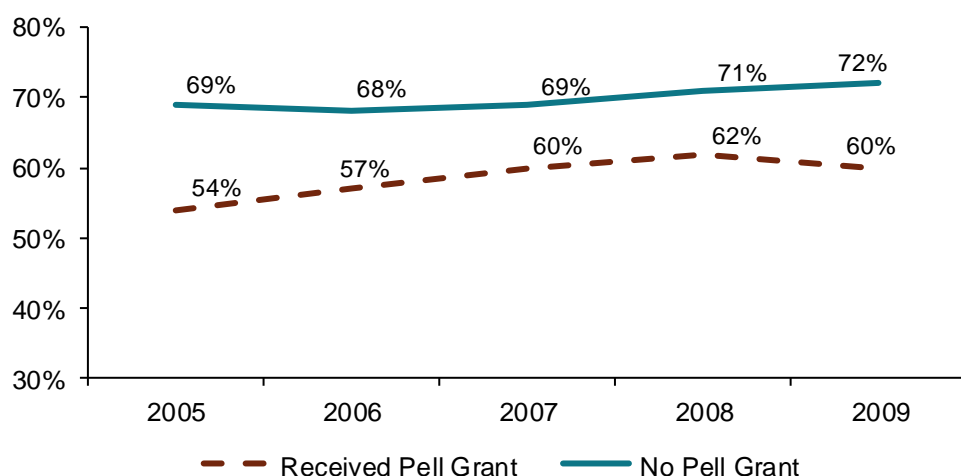
<sup>19</sup> Fall 2014 data are the most current data available for financial aid information. Data retrieved from UNC-GA file: z110\_pell\_status. This data includes all students who received a Pell grant at any point in their academic careers who were enrolled in fall 2014.

<sup>20</sup> These are estimates. The exact determination includes other factors, such as the number of children in college at the time and some other wealth and income factors other than the parents' adjusted gross income.

a large amount of “unmet need” for some students, given the average total cost of attendance at UNC schools exceeds \$17,000 per year, on average. An additional issue is the discontinuation of summer Pell in 2012.

When looking at the UNC graduation rates for first-time, full-time undergraduates, non-grant recipients graduated at higher rates (12 percentage points higher for the most recent year) than those that received Pell Grants. Those data trends hold true across multiple years since 2005; Figure 4 displays the six-year graduation rates for students who did and did not receive a Pell Grant at any point in their undergraduate studies. These findings for UNC schools are consistent with various studies of the national data on Pell and non-Pell Grant recipients.<sup>21</sup>

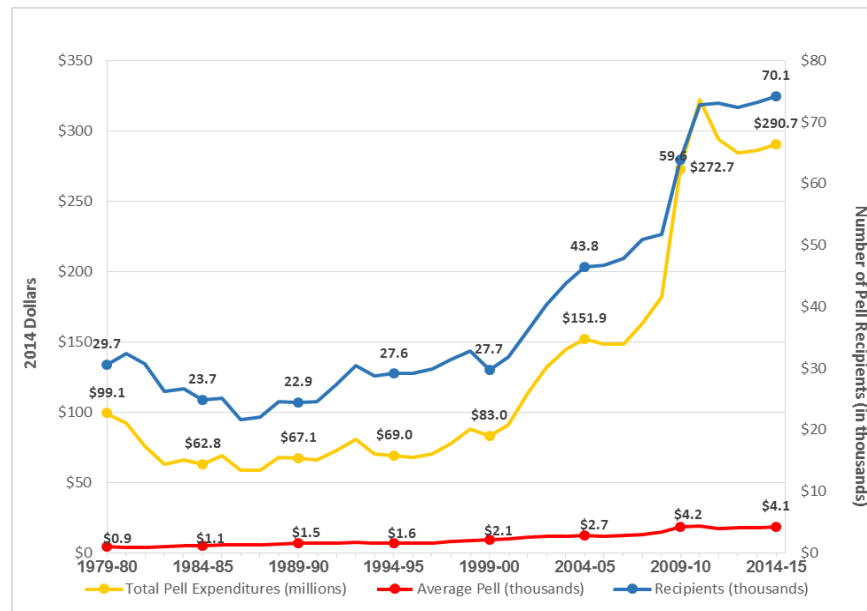
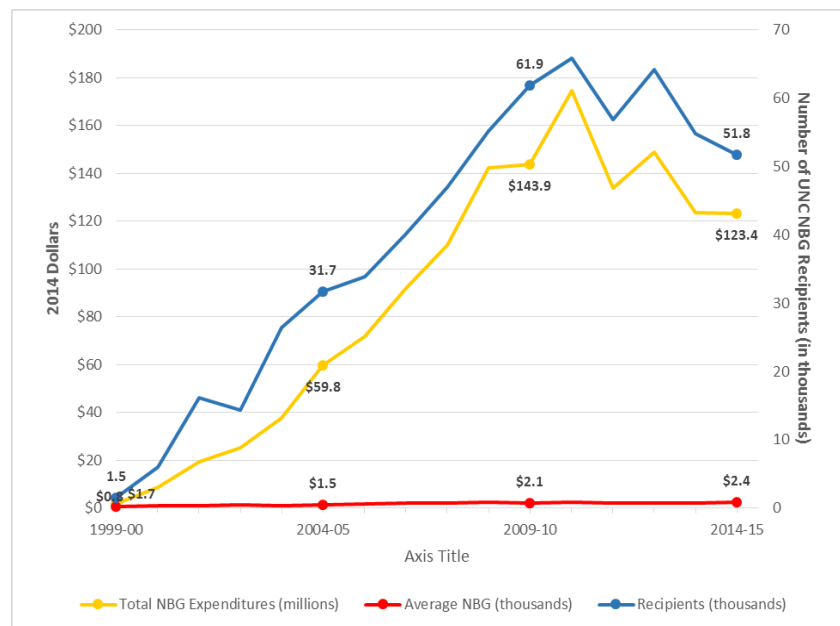
**Figure 4: Six-Year Graduation Rates of First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen, at Any UNC Institution, Fall 2005 through Fall 2009 Cohorts by Pell Grant Status<sup>22</sup>**



Trends in North Carolina provide some insight into the size of the low-income population receiving state and federal need-based aid. During the last decade, UNC schools witnessed an approximate 60% increase in Pell recipients in the state. Almost mirroring the Pell recipients, during the same timeframe UNC saw a 62% increase in recipients of the state’s Need-Based Grant program, even with a drop of about one-sixth in the latter half of the decade.

<sup>21</sup> For an example, S. Alon, “Who Benefits Most from Financial Aid? The Heterogeneous Effect of Need-Based grants on Students’ College Persistence,” *Social Science Quarterly* 92, no. 3 (July 2011), 807-829.

<sup>22</sup> Source: UNC-GA data file z099\_gradrates\_pell.

**Figure 5: Pell Grant Trends in the UNC System****Figure 6: UNC Need-Based Grant Trends in the UNC System**

In addition to these student success programs, North Carolina continues to support students financially via the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority (NCSEAA), which administers inter-institutional programs of student financial assistance. Created by State and federal law and through private resources, the NCSEAA helps North Carolinians meet the cost of higher education. NCSEAA administers two grant programs for the UNC System schools, the Education Lottery Scholarship Program

and the UNC Need Based Grant Program. The NC General Assembly created the Education Lottery Scholarship Program in 2005 to provide financial assistance to NC residents attending eligible North Carolina colleges and universities who demonstrate exceptional financial need. The UNC Need Based Grant was developed to serve North Carolinians who may find it difficult, or impossible, to gain access to higher education within our System, even with federal and institutional resources. These state grant programs complement the efforts of the federal government and the UNC System schools in meeting the needs of students.

To be eligible for these grants, undergraduate students must be legal residents of NC, enrolled in at least six credit hours, and maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements of the attending institution. The grants are limited to 10 full time semesters. If a student takes only six credit hours, this counts as a half semester. Future state grant initiatives include implementing a summer grant program as a way to incentivize students to complete 30 credit hours per year.

Award amounts vary for both grant programs according to information that is generated from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The award amounts may also vary based on legislative appropriations. For the 2015-2016 academic year, the UNC Need-Based Grant budget was \$122.4 M and the Education Lottery Scholarship budget was \$32 M. Currently, the Education Lottery Scholarship ranges from \$100 to \$3,000 for the year and the UNC Need Based Grant ranges from \$500 to \$4200 per year. The Southern Region Education Board (SREB) reported last year that total NC state student financial aid funding decreased by nearly 1%, while for the other southern states there was an average 1.2% increase.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to these grant programs, there are a myriad of other scholarships programs administered by NCSEAA for NC residents. One of the larger programs is the UNC Campus Scholarship, developed in 2002 by NC General Assembly. The intent of this program is to promote diversity and enhance access to undergraduates who may not otherwise be able to attend a UNC System institution because of insufficient financial resources. The Board of Trustees of each UNC institution defines the campus goals and guidelines for the scholarship awards, and recently capped the percentage of tuition dollars that could be used for financial aid to 15% for most institutions. Each campus policy requires the approval of the UNC System President.

## **UNC System Intervention Plans**

### **Micro-Grant/Scholarship Programs and Other Financial Aid Innovations**

Several UNC institutions already offer micro-grant or scholarship programs, and General Administration recently requested proposals from the institutions for examining innovations on a larger scale. UNC will offer grants, up to \$35,000 for each innovation (with institutions matching the grant by at least 33%, in money or well-documented in-kind contributions) in an effort known as Actualizing Innovations Meant to Scale (AIMS). The AIMS project has three categories of innovations, with micro-scholarships as a subcategory of “Utilizing Financial Aid Innovations,” which should be used for specific populations. Examples could include students who have expired financial aid, but need an additional

---

<sup>23</sup> Southern Regional Education Board, *2014-2015 Indicators Report*, March 2016. Retrieved from: [http://www.sreb.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/16e03\\_deindicators14\\_mar16.pdf](http://www.sreb.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/16e03_deindicators14_mar16.pdf).

semester/session to complete their degrees, or efforts to incentivize completing 30 credit hours of coursework in order to stay on-track for graduation.

Micro-grant interventions have received extensive attention nationwide given their positive outcomes.<sup>24</sup> The UNC System will facilitate every institution having a micro-grant program, and assessing impact.

We are also in active discussions about testing financial aid innovations that have been tried in other states and institutions. For example, one is the disbursement of financial aid in monthly fashion, rather than in a lump sum at the beginning of a semester. As described previously regarding Adams State University in Colorado, incentives for completion, such as a small scholarship to students who complete 30 credits each year, will be considered.

### **Financial Literacy Programs**

Fifteen of sixteen UNC campuses are actively engaged in efforts to improve student financial literacy, and some of them included these efforts in their individual plans. Ten constituent institutions currently have internal programs for students, and five (ASU, ECSU, ECU, UNCC, and WSSU) use an external program. NC A&T and NC State use both internal and external programs, and NC State expands their efforts into the curriculum (as does Chapel Hill) and social media (as does ECU). However, only four institutions (ASU, ECU, NCCU, and WSSU) measure the effectiveness of their financial literacy efforts. UNC General Administration is reviewing financial literacy efforts across the System, and will implement a plan to assess effectiveness and increase System-wide use of proven programs.

### **Additional Coordination with NC Community College System**

In addition to the revised Comprehensive Articulation Agreement, all UNC constituent institutions are engaged in successful local collaborations. All of the community colleges and universities work together in many ways through local and statewide partnerships and agreements. Several different types of articulation agreements exist, with the primary objective of aligning the two-year programs to their four-year counterparts and ensuring proper curriculum alignment and credit transfers. Partnerships extend beyond the articulation agreements, and allow the institutions to leverage existing resources, achieve greater efficiencies, and facilitate student access as they move from the community college to the university.

The February 2015 *Report on Study of Bilateral Agreements and Partnerships That Exist Between Constituent Institutions of the North Carolina Community Colleges and Constituent Institutions of the University of North Carolina* counted 12 partnership programs among 8 UNC institutions, and 107 different bilateral agreements. When totaled, the bilateral agreements represented 198 activities

---

<sup>24</sup> See <https://www.eab.com/daily-briefing/2016/02/23/how-microgrants-help-retain-students>; <https://www.goodcall.com/news/how-microgrants-and-micro-loans-are-working-to-improve-college-graduation-rates-04967> ; and <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/02/22/spread-emergency-aid-and-microgrants-show-strong-results>.



within UNC institutions and 653 community college programs.<sup>25</sup> We will also continue the Reverse Transfer program, as described above.

UNC General Administration is currently developing ideas for dual enrollment partnerships with the NC Community College System. For example, a student could save some costs if taking one course at a university and the rest at a community college, yet be enrolled in both. The dual enrollment programs would be designed similar to the Regionally Increasing Baccalaureate Nurses (RIBN) program, and help ensure that students enrolled in university classes are not supplanting courses available to CAA students. Another initiative could investigate cooperation and partnerships between the advising centers at UNC and NCCCS schools and with NCWorks Career Coaches. Assisting students earlier in their post-high school career and course selection would ease the transition to UNC and also save students money by avoiding taking unnecessary classes.

Academic Affairs is developing a position of Director of Community College Partnerships, which would coordinate current and new initiatives with community colleges.

### **Data and Predictive Analytics**

The UNC System's development of the Student Data Mart was a milestone in being able to improve and standardize data collection and data elements related to students and their enrollment in our institutions. Compared to other fields, such as health care, higher education has been evolving its use of predictive analytics--utilizing data, for mining and statistical analyses, to predict or model events in the future. In the business world, predictive analytics has been used to assess demand, change pricing, consider if maintenance is needed, and more.<sup>26</sup>

The application of predictive analytics to improve student outcomes has been recently described in several papers and national conference presentations.<sup>27</sup> The goal would be to better address the following question: "What works, for whom [students], and under what circumstances?" Businesses have sprung up around this issue with corporate vendors offering different solutions that might be used by key people at a university--from advisors, to administrators and faculty--and offer capacities to examine data at the student, course, degree program levels and more. For example, use of predictive analytics might determine a more optimal sequencing of course-taking to enhance time to degree or determine that STEM majors do better with a certain combination of mathematics courses (see Figure 7). Learning management systems that host individual courses may provide data about, for example, how many times and when a student has logged into the course materials, or other interventions (see Figure 8 for an example). As with any data that are tied to individuals, privacy concerns and an

---

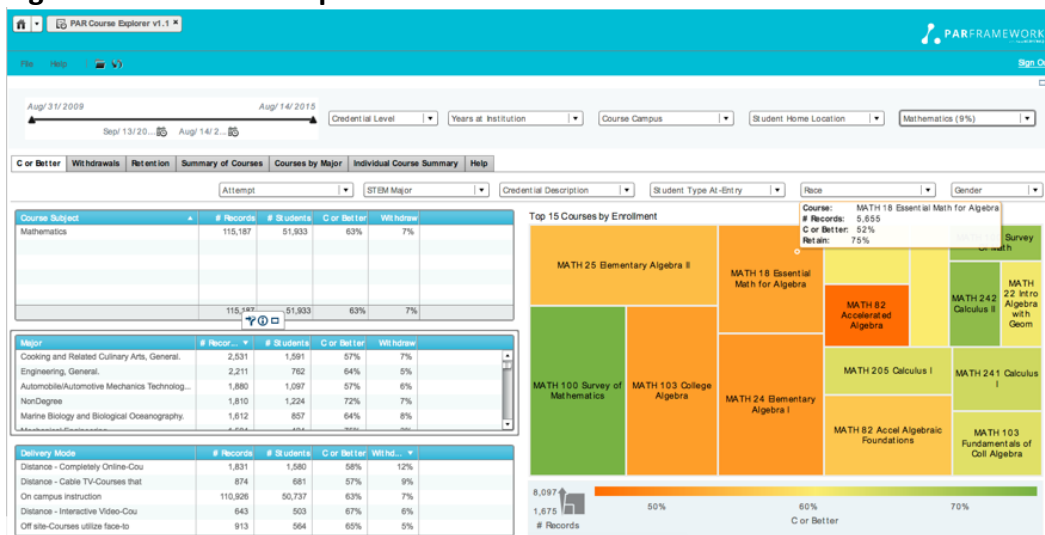
<sup>25</sup> *Report on Study of Bilateral Agreements and Partnerships That Exist Between Constituent Institutions of the North Carolina Community Colleges and Constituent Institutions of the University of North Carolina*, A Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, Senate Appropriations Committee on Education/Higher Education, and the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Education, submitted by the State Board of Community Colleges and the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina, February 1, 2015.

<sup>26</sup> See Jacob LaRiviere et al., "Where Predictive Analytics is Having the Biggest Impact," *Harvard Business Review* (May 25, 2016), retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2016/05/where-predictive-analytics-is-having-the-biggest-impact>.

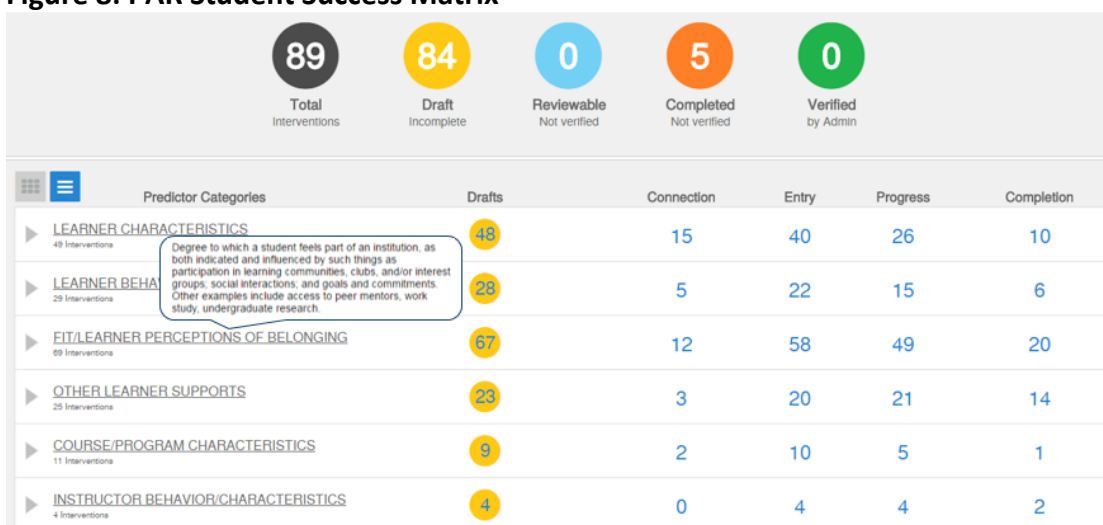
<sup>27</sup> See [http://www.eduventures.com/wpcontent/uploads/2013/02/Eduventures\\_Predictive\\_Analytics\\_White\\_Paper1.pdf](http://www.eduventures.com/wpcontent/uploads/2013/02/Eduventures_Predictive_Analytics_White_Paper1.pdf); <http://www.sheeo.org/sites/default/files/0808-1430-plen.pdf>; and [https://na-production.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/Promise-and-Peril\\_4.pdf](https://na-production.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/Promise-and-Peril_4.pdf).

interpretation as “profiling” are to be considered carefully. Last, with large amounts of data, getting findings that are statistically significant will be expected, but questions will arise about whether the finding is “clinically significant,” as is asked in health care.

**Figure 7: PAR Course Explorer**



**Figure 8: PAR Student Success Matrix**



While UNC institutions have institutional research (IR) offices, these are generally at capacity simply with required reporting to various sources, whether the state or federal government, and a dearth of IR personnel exists across the country. The costs of writing code for such predictive modeling, as well as merging different sources of data that exist in different systems (e.g., student information, financial information, and other), are high, and few institutions are able to do such work “in-house.” Three UNC institutions have decided to purchase membership and services from the Education Advisory Board Company and their Student Success Collaborative (North Carolina State University; University of North Carolina Charlotte; and Western Carolina University). Led by Academic Affairs, a total of eight

institutions--three starting in January 2017--will be participating in a community of practice with the PAR (Predictive Analytics Reporting) Framework, a group originally funded by the Gates Foundation and recently acquired by Hobson's.<sup>28</sup> PAR also includes a Student Success Intervention Matrix that provides a rubric to collect information about specific programs along a number of dimensions, such as learner and instructor characteristics, as well as program details and at what point in the student life cycle the program occurs.

Currently, the UNC System is only able to provide two years of support for the eight institutions that began earlier this year. As a pilot community of practice "study," the first five institutions will be examining how different first year seminar models may correlate with student outcomes (or not): East Carolina University; Fayetteville State University; North Carolina Central University; University of North Carolina Pembroke; and Winston Salem State University. North Carolina A&T, the University of North Carolina Asheville, and University of North Carolina Greensboro will join in early 2017.

### **University Plans to Enhance Student Completion**

All constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina have a longstanding and profound commitment to student success. This commitment is prominent in the respective strategic plans and institutional goals, which include initiatives to improve retention and graduation rates, encourage timely degree completion, implement highly-engaging educational experiences, and offer services and programs that promote student success. UNC institutions are participants in numerous collaborative efforts to support student success. Several institutions are members of the Educational Advisory Board Student Success Collaborative (SSC), while others are participants in the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASC&U) project, "Reimagining the First Year of College." Student success has been infused in the culture of each institution through the investment in staff, programs, services, technology, and facilities that encourage and guide students in achieving their full educational potential.

The Undergraduate Degree Completion Improvement Plan from each UNC institution heightens the emphasis on student success in three important ways. Because of their unique missions, and thus different student populations, each institution has:

1. Identified student populations that are most likely to leave their particular institution without earning a degree and set goals for improving graduation rates and degree attainment among these groups over the next five years;
2. Reformed and invested new resources in student success policies and programs that are most relevant to the identified student populations;
3. Agreed to use and report specific performance data to measure the progress of the specified student groups and to refine student success programs as appropriate.

These three aspects of the institutional plans are summarized in the following sections.

---

<sup>28</sup> See <https://www.northcarolina.edu/news/2016/09/New-Partnership-Between-PAR-Framework-UNC-System-Aims-Improve-Student-Success-Rates>.

## Targeted Student Populations

The institutional plans will improve graduation and other completion rates and degree attainment for certain student subgroups. Data trends identified the following student subgroups for student success initiatives:

- Transfer students, including NC Community College Transfer Students: ASU, ECSU, FSU, NCA&T, NCCU, NCSU, UNCC, UNC-CH, UNCP, and WSSU
- Low income students as determined by Pell Grant eligibility: ECU, FSU, NCSU, UNC-CH, and UNCW
- Male students: ECSU, FSU, NCA&T, NCCU, and WSSU
- First-generation university students: ASU, ECU, UNCA, and UNC-CH
- Underrepresented minority students or students of color: NCCU, NCSU, UNC-CH, UNCP, and UNCW
- All first-time students: ECU, NCA&T, UNC-CH, UNCC (limited to competitive majors), UNCG (limited to certain entry categories), WCU, and WSSU
- Students with specific (low-performing) GPAs and/or entrance scores: ECSU, NCA&T, UNCA, UNCW
- Specific majors: FSU and NCSU (STEM), and UNCSA (Dance and Music)

Utilizing data, these identified student subgroups were based on institutional priorities and data analyses. For example, UNC Greensboro used predictive analytics to identify students least likely to complete degrees. UNC Charlotte targeted undeclared first-time students seeking entry into competitive majors. UNC Chapel Hill will refine programs to assist rural students, while NCA&T seeks to help non-African American students succeed and graduate. In specifying these student populations, each institution set ambitious, but achievable, goals for retention, graduation, and other completion rates and for the number of degrees awarded by 2022. The commonality of student populations identified by many institutions offers an excellent opportunity for sharing of best practices with each population. Such collaborations have the potential for strengthening the impact of this plan on student success in UNC. Some examples follow: ECU proposes to raise its four year graduation rate by nearly 10 percentage points; and NCA&T aims to increase the number of degrees awarded to NC community college transfer students by 132%.

## Strategies for achieving goals for specified student populations

UNC institutions collectively identified more than 70 different student success programs as important for improving retention and completion rates and degree attainment by the specified student populations. The most commonly cited programs and resources are in the following broad categories: early alerts and intrusive advising programs; curriculum and scheduling planning tools; and enriched educational experiences. Universities are either refining, expanding, or creating new programs with no new monies.

Early alert tools, like Starfish, and intrusive advising (e.g., Grades First) are among the most commonly cited programs. These tools are used to support the success of all students by facilitating quick communication between faculty members and advisors about students who are experiencing academic

difficulty. Advisors can direct students to resources for assistance before the academic problems escalate to a point where it is too late for corrective action.

Curriculum and scheduling planning tools, such as Degree Works and Schedule Planner, represent another set of tools cited by institutions to support student success. By enabling students, with the assistance of advisors, to enroll only in courses that fulfill a student's degree requirements, these tools reduce time to degree and eliminate the frustration and costs that come from enrolling in unnecessary courses.

Many of the Systems' schools sought to increase student success by enriching educational experiences. Such programs include first-year seminars, learning communities, inquiry-guided learning, and living-learning communities. First-year seminars provide year-long support during the first year to help students make the transition to the university. Learning communities enroll a group of students in a common set of courses, and in living-learning communities these students also live in the same residence hall. Such learning communities facilitate engaged learning and relation-building among students. Examples include the COAD Learning Community and the ANCHORS living-learning communities at ECU, summer bridge programs at UNCC and UNC-CH, and LEAP at FSU.

With an eye to the financial issues highlighted by NC GAP, several institutions targeted financial literacy programs as key to student success. These programs help all students understand the positive financial consequences of timely degree completion and the lifelong risks of taking on unnecessary debt. Examples include ECU's use of SALT, an online financial literacy program, and Money Matters at FSU. Chapel Hill's Carolina Covenant not only provides academic, social, and financial support, it includes financial literacy aspects as well for low-income.

### **Metrics for monitoring progress of specified student populations**

With a continuous quality improvement approach, the institutions will determine whether or not their efforts have been successful on an ongoing basis. UNC General Administration will work with institutions to provide a report at 1, 3, and 5 years that measures the progress of specified goals. The following metrics will be tracked in an ongoing manner to monitor the progress of the specified student groups:

- Enrollment of specified student populations
- Earned credit ratio: percentage of student populations earning at least 80% of attempted hours (students falling below this threshold not likely to complete a degree)
- Credit accumulation threshold: percentage of specified student populations earning at least 30 credits per calendar year (students who fall below this threshold will not complete degree in four years and will increase indebtedness)
- GPA threshold: percentage of specified student populations earning minimum cumulative GPA associated with degree completion (will vary by campus)
- Gateway courses: percentage of specified student populations earning at least a C in gateway courses (as identified by institution)
- Persistence: annual percentage of specified student populations that re-enroll or earn degree
- Loan indebtedness: monitor indebtedness specified student population on annual basis to determine if loan indebtedness puts student in future risk

- Student work hours (if possible): attempt to monitor impact of student work hours, and impact on other metrics, to degree completion of specified student populations.

While this list of metrics is not exhaustive, metrics such as these will help each institution to determine whether their programs are making a positive difference in the success of targeted populations. Each institution has made a commitment to use the data in an ongoing way to refine, delete, and/or add support programs to achieve their goals for graduation rates and degree attainment in 2022. Institutions will use these data in a variety of ways. For example, if students of the specified target population are not achieving credit accumulation or GPA thresholds, advisors can use advisement tools to recommend alternative major options. If students of the specified target population are not earning grades of C in gateway courses at a sufficient rate, faculty will be able to identify areas of need for additional academic support. Financial literacy programs will need to be modified if students in the specified population are taking on unnecessary debt.

## **Summary and Conclusion**

Student success, as measured by degree completion, is the highest priority for all UNC institutions. In addition, concerns about student debt will continue to be addressed. Overall, the UNC System's graduation rates (one metric for completion for first time freshmen who enroll in the fall only) are well above the national average for public universities, but there is room for improvement. Many factors impact student success, not just student characteristics or what a university does. The debt associated with students dropping out must be contained, but since 43% of those students who do not complete a degree leave in the first year, their average debt is less than \$4,277. In fact, the overall average debt for all stop-outs is \$11,028. In addition, nearly one-third of students who stop out have a GPA of B- minus or better.

We are committed to the spirit of the original legislation to reduce debt and improve completion, and individual universities have developed detailed plans, using data, to improve completion by focusing on specific subgroups who can achieve gains by refining and expanding existing programs, and sometimes starting new ones. At the System level, we will continue and/or expand existing programs with the community colleges (e.g., the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement), utilize new efforts in predictive analytics, and develop and test innovations such as micro-grants to ensure success. We will also track interim measures of progress and be able to report at 1, 3 and 5 years on continuous positive change. We know we can do better for all types of students, not just the traditional first time in college freshman, and this is critical since more transfer and adult students are enrolling at many of our universities, and they deserve similar levels of attention and programming for their success.

## **Individual UNC Institution Plans**

We have distilled each university's full Undergraduate Degree Completion Improvement Plan into the Executive Summaries that follow. Executive Summaries for each institution will begin with identified/targeted subgroups, examples of selected programming for some subgroups, and an example of a completion goal.

Complete institutional plans are posted at: <https://sites.google.com/a/northcarolina.edu/udcip/>

## Appendix A

### Appalachian State University

**Identified/Targeted Subgroups:**

First Generation, First-Time, Full-Time First Year students  
Community College Transfer Students

**Example Program for a Subgroup**

*Mapworks* early alert system (applied to both groups)

**Example/Selected Completion Goal for a Subgroup:**

Increase First Generation subgroup from average of 8.9% of degrees in a graduating class to 20% by 2022

Appalachian State University has a long history of focusing upon student success and has been recognized nationally for initiatives to impact the first-year and transfer student experience. As a result of efforts to engage students with high-impact educational practices, the retention and graduation rates for the first-time, full-time freshman cohorts at Appalachian are well above the state and national averages. The four-year and six-year graduation rates have been steadily increasing. From the 2008 to the 2012 cohort, the four-year graduation rate increased from 44.2% to 52.1%, and the average time to graduation for our students is 4.5 semesters. Even with these impressive quality measures, improving retention and graduation rates continues to be a top priority.

**Targeted Student Populations and Plans to Enhance Degree Completion**

Appalachian seeks to contribute to the University of North Carolina's goal to increase degree completion by improving the outcomes of student populations who have illustrated lower degree completion rates as compared to our total undergraduate degree cohort. The student populations identified are First-Generation (FG), First-Time Full-Time First-Year Students and Community College Transfer Students (main campus).

*First-Generation (FG), First-Time Full-Time First-Year Students*

1. Degree recipients as first generation college students mean = 317
2. Percentage increase in number of degrees awarded to group = Percent of degrees in a graduating class will increase from 9% to 20%.
3. Number of degrees awarded in 2022 to members of this subgroup = 786

|   | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | Average | 2022 Projection |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------------|
| <b>First Gen (First Enrolled as Freshmen)</b> | 321     | 297     | 333     | 317     | 786             |
| <b>% FG</b>                                   | 9.6%    | 8.1%    | 9.0%    | 8.9%    | 20.0%           |
| <b>Total Undergraduate Degree Cohort</b>      | 3334    | 3662    | 3716    | 3571    | 3928            |

The percent of degrees in a graduating class will increase in large part due to the increase in our ability to identify first generation. With our ability to better identify these students, and focused attention on students who most need assistance and engagement opportunities, our intent is to work toward closing the gap between first generation student graduation rates and the cohort as a whole. The chart above illustrates this projected trend. Graduation rates of first generation students in recent years have been about 5% points lower than the overall freshman cohort. We expect to narrow that gap to about 2% in the timeframe for this report.

*Community College Transfer Students (Main Campus)*

1. Degree recipients as community college transfer students mean = 558
2. Percentage increase in number of degrees awarded to group = Percent of degrees in a graduating class will increase from 16% to 18%.
3. Number of degrees awarded in 2022 to members of this subgroup = 707

|  | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | Average | 2022 Projection |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------------|
| <b>CC Transfer Graduates (MC)</b>        | 482     | 573     | 620     | 558     | 707             |
| <b>% CC Transfer (MC)</b>                | 14.5%   | 15.6%   | 16.7%   | 15.6%   | 18.0%           |
| <b>Total Undergraduate Degree Cohort</b> | 3334    | 3662    | 3716    | 3571    | 3928            |

While the percentage increase in community college transfers as a proportion of the graduating class of 2022 does not increase dramatically, the number of degree recipients does because our freshman and transfer cohorts continue to grow steadily. In recent years, our community college transfer students have graduated at lower rates than the transfer population as a whole. We intend to close this gap while increasing transfer graduation rates. Our transfer student 4-year graduation rate (measured by the term of entry/transfer to the degree conferral date) goal is 72.0%, which will be an increase of about 2.5% points from the current overall rate, and about 5 percentage points from recent community college transfer rates (based on the recent three-year average). With focused attention on transfer students there will be increases in our numbers of graduates, and graduation rates, among students who enrolled at Appalachian State after attending community college.

### **Total Degree Completion Goals**

These projections were determined based on recent institutional graduation rate trends as well as peer comparisons. Graduation rates have improved each year, and with continued enrollment by competitive freshman classes, we anticipate a steady increase in graduation rates in the coming years.

Due, in part, to increases in first-generation graduation rates, we anticipate the following increases in first-time, full-time, first-year cohort graduation rates:

4-Year Rate: 52.1% to 53.6%

5-Year Rate: 70.5% to 72.0%

6-Year Rate: 71.7% to 73.2%



## APPENDIX P

Increases in graduation rates of community college transfer students will contribute to an overall increase in graduation rates of main campus transfer students. We anticipate the 4-year graduation rate for transfer student cohorts to increase from 70.6% to 72.0%.

### Appalachian State University Continuous Improvement Plan

| Program Name and Brief Description | Type                          | Level of Student                                | Targeted Subgroup                | Student Success Program: Selection, Refinement, and Rationale  |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|--|
| The Office of Student Success      | General support               | All Years                                       | FTFT FG and CC Transfer students | Resources exist to target FG and CC transfer students; will refine <sup>1</sup>                      |
| Mapworks                           | Early Alert                   | All new first-year students and transfers       | FTFT FG and CC Transfer students | Already targeting FG and CC transfer students; will refine <sup>2</sup>                              |
| Learning Assistance Program*       | General support               | All Years                                       | FTFT FG and CC Transfer students | Resources exist to target FG and CC transfer students; will refine <sup>3</sup>                      |
| The Office of Transfer Services    | Support for transfer students | Any transfer students                           | CC Transfer students             | Transfer students already targeted; resources exist to target CC transfers; will refine <sup>4</sup> |
| University Housing                 | General support               | All freshmen and some transfers + upperclassmen | FTFT FG and CC Transfer students | Resources exist to target FG and CC transfer students; will refine <sup>5</sup>                      |
| Wellness and Prevention**          | General support               | All Years                                       | All Students                     | Resources exist to target FG and transfer students; will refine <sup>6</sup>                         |

\*The Learning Assistance Program encompasses a broad range of services such as ACCESS Scholars, Student Support Services (TRiO), Academic Services for Student-Athletes, University Tutorial Services, Academic Skills Instruction, and College STAR.

\*\*Wellness and Prevention encompasses a broad range of services such as Alcohol and Other Drug Counseling (AOD), BASICS: Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students, Nutrition and Weight Management, Sexual Health Education, Mental Well-being Training, Sexual Assault Prevention, and Spiritual Health.

<sup>1-6</sup> Each of these areas has ongoing efforts to support student success, though those efforts are not necessarily targeted toward FTFT FG or CC transfer students. Please see the previous pages for area-by-area explanations of refinements to be made.

## **Appendix B**

### **East Carolina University**

#### **Identified/Targeted Subgroups:**

First-Time, Full-Time students

First-Time students (both full- and part-time) who are Pell grant recipients

First-Time students (both full- and part-time) who reported first-generation status on the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)

#### **Example Program for a Subgroup**

SALT online financial aid program applied (FTFT Pell grant recipients)

#### **Example/Selected Completion Goal for a Subgroup:**

Reduce 4-year, 5-year and 6-year graduation rate gaps between first-time full-time students and Pell-grant recipients up to 3 percentage points

### **Student Success Initiatives**

#### **1. Student Schedule Planner**

Initiated during the spring 2016 early registration period, Schedule Planner is a tool for students to use when planning their course schedules and allows students to view a multitude of variations based on their parameters for courses and times. Marketed to students as an effective and efficient tool to create their “ideal” schedules, this tool has great potential to encourage students to enroll for 15 or more credit hours in appropriate courses to stay on track to graduate. Students who use Schedule Planner register for 15 or more credit hours at a higher rate (average of 10%) when compared to non-users (University of Alabama and University of Connecticut data). According to the vendor, schools utilizing Student Scheduler have seen an increase in Persistence (+3.1%) and graduation rates (+3.5%) (Collegescheduler.com).

We believe that students will be more likely to register for 15 or more hours per semester of courses appropriate to their major if they are provided an effective and efficient vehicle to create a “best schedule.” We want to utilize the Student Schedule Planner for tracking utilization and create marketing strategies to promote its use. By creating appropriate course schedules each semester, students are more likely to stay on track to graduate in four years.

#### **2. SALT online Financial Program**

ECU purchased Saltmoney.org software to increase the financial literacy of our students. The software was rolled out to students via email in the spring and summer terms of 2014. We have taken SALTmoney.org wallet cards and used presentations from the site when invited to speak to students in COAD 1000 (freshmen success seminar). We also use and recommend the SALT site when presenting on financial wellness at campus-wide events.

We believe that students must be better educated concerning financial decisions and debt. Many students stop out of the university when support funds are not available. By utilizing the information provided to students, they will have a better understanding of student debt and repayment options. The goal is to reduce student debt and increase students’ fiscal responsibility.

### 3. First-generation Student Support Programs (COAD 1000 and ANCHORS Living-Learning Community)

The purpose of COAD 1000 is to assist new students in making a successful transition to higher education, both academically and personally. This course fosters a sense of belonging; promotes engagement in the curricular and co-curricular life of the university; articulates to students the expectations of the University and its faculty; and helps students develop and apply critical thinking skills. Special topic sections of COAD 1000 are offered for first-generation students.

The ANCHORS Living-Learning Community invites first-generation students to arrive on campus two weeks prior to the beginning of classes. This early introduction to college is helpful for “first in their family” students in making the transition to college, learning important study skills, and engaging with each other. During the subsequent semester, students take an additional course together.

First-generation students in these two programs have identified services they believe will enhance a successful transition to college. Suggested refinements include: a mentoring program, a student organization for first-generation students (which would include workshops on financial aid, FAFSA, etc.), and marketing materials for ESL students and families.

### Institutional Goals

Based on the analysis of historical data, ECU has set the following goals for 2022:

- Increase 4-year graduation rate from 37% to **46%**: based on a projected cohort of 4400, a 46% graduation rate would mean **2024** students from that cohort graduated within 4 years, **396 more** than if we remained at our current 4-year graduation rate of 37%.
- Increase 5-year graduation rate from 56% to **65%**: based on a projected cohort of 4400, a 65% graduation rate would mean **2860** students from that cohort graduated within 5 years, **396 more** than if we remained at the 2010 cohort 5-year graduation rate of 56%.
- Increase 6-year graduation rate from 62% to **70%**: Based on a projected cohort of 4400, a 70% graduation rate would mean **3080** students from that cohort graduated within 6 years, **352 more** than if we remained at our current 6-year graduation rate of 62%.
- Reduce 4-year, 5-year and 6-year graduation rate gaps between first-time full-time students and Pell-grant recipients by half to 3 percentage points.
- Reduce 4-year, 5-year and 6-year graduation rate gaps between first-time full-time students and first-generation students by half to 3 percentage points.

It is difficult to estimate the impact of increasing graduation rates of first-time students who are Pell recipients and first-time students who are first-generation college students on the overall graduation rates of first-time, full-time students because there is considerable overlap in these two populations (Pell & first-generation). Approximately 40% of Pell recipients are also first-generation college students. In our methodology for accessing impact, we first projected an approximate expected number of Pell recipients for the 2016, 2017, and 2018 FTFT cohorts (1500 per cohort) & the expected number of first-generation students (1000 per cohort). Adjusting for overlap, the projected enrollment for the two groups of students in these cohorts is 1870 (collectively, each year).

## East Carolina University Continuous Improvement Plan

| Program Name and Brief Description  | Type   | Level of Student | Targeted Subgroup                                       | Student Success Program: Selection, Refinement, and Rationale  |
|---|--|------------------|---|--|
| Student Schedule Planner  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Degree completion</li> <li>15+ semester hours (SH)/semester</li> <li>Course selection</li> </ul>  | All              | FTFT freshmen   | Pilot - Tracking to determine if student are more likely to register for 15 SH when they use Course Scheduler and tracking persistence and graduation rates. Fall 2016/spring 2017 is the first full year that ECU will use this tool. (Spring 2016 was a pilot implementation.) Data will be analyzed for AY 16/17 to determine credit hours for users/non-users. |
| SALT online Financial Program   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased understanding of credit and debt literacy</li> <li>Persistence to graduation</li> </ul> | All              | Pell Students and first-generation Students             | Scale up program with enhanced marketing and mentoring to increase student use. Many students who stop out cite financial reasons. We have tracked SALT usage and identified hi-use modules. Using this information will drive a marketing plan.   |
| First-generation Student Support Programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>COAD 1000</li> <li>ANCHORS Living-Learning</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First year success</li> <li>Engagement to campus</li> <li>Major and career counseling</li> </ul>  | All              | Freshmen who self-identify as first-generation students | Scale up programs (COAD 1000 and ANCHORS Living-learning community-(both in early development) to support first-generation students. ANCHORS is new fall 2016; no data. COAD 1000 first-gen (3 years data): Retention rates 4% higher than university rates.   |

## Appendix C

### Elizabeth City State University

#### Identified/Targeted Subgroups:

First-Time, Full-Time male students

Transfer male students

Students whose cumulative GPA falls below 2.0

#### Example Program for a Subgroup

E4U, a program that targets students identified as at-risk during academic campaigns (for students whose cumulative GPA falls below 2.0)

#### Example/Selected Completion Goal for a Subgroup:

Improve FTFT male student graduation rates from 37.5% to 50.5% by year 5

ECSU is committed to providing resources and services to engage, enrich, and empower students to attain a college degree. In an effort to improve retention and graduation rates, the University utilizes a multifaceted approach to identify, intervene, and engage at-risk students. In particular, we will focus on first-time, full-time (FTFT) males, transfer males, and students whose cumulative GPAs fall below a 2.0 as the targeted populations for interventions. The below table identifies current and new success efforts to improve retention and graduation rates of these targeted subgroups.

#### Summary of Goals

Baseline metrics using the average graduation rates for the identified subgroups have been established to identify goals for retention and graduation rates among each of these subgroups. These baseline metrics for first-time/full-time males and transfer males is noted in the table below. Students with GPAs below 2.0 were established through comparing the 2009 graduation rate for students who are on probation and suspension (6.76%) were compared to the institutional (38.8%) and System's (62.8%) 6-year graduation rates for the 2009 cohort.

**Table 1: Degree Attainment Benchmarks for FTFT Males and Transfer (Males)**

| Subgroup             |                    | 6-year        |
|----------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| FTFT<br>(Males)      | Black (B)          | 33.33%        |
|                      | White (W)          | 41.67%        |
|                      | <b>B &amp; W</b>   | <b>37.5%</b>  |
|                      | <b>Institution</b> | <b>38.8</b>   |
|                      | <b>UNC System</b>  | <b>62.8%</b>  |
| Transfers<br>(Males) | Black (B)          | 42.31%        |
|                      | White (W)          | 51.85%        |
|                      | <b>B &amp; W</b>   | <b>47.08%</b> |
|                      | <b>Institution</b> | <b>38.8%</b>  |
|                      | <b>UNC System</b>  | <b>62.8%</b>  |

## APPENDIX P

ECSU has determined that an increase in the number of degrees awarded by 2.5% annually through 2022 is an appropriate goal for each subgroup. Table 2 reflects the projected number of degrees awarded to the subgroups after the 2.5% annual increase.

**Table 2: Projection of Degrees Awarded**

| Subgroup          | Baseline        | Year 1           | Year 2           | Year 3           | Year 4           | Year 5          |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| FTFT (Males)      | 37.5% (n=47)    | 40.0%<br>(n=50)  | 42.5%<br>(n=53)  | 45.0%<br>(n=56)  | 47.5%<br>(n=60)  | 50.5%<br>(n=63) |
| Transfer (Males)  | 47.08<br>(n=18) | 49.58%<br>(n=19) | 52.08%<br>(n=20) | 54.58%<br>(n=21) | 57.08%<br>(n=22) | 59.58<br>(n=23) |
| Academic Standing | 6.76%<br>(n=5)  | 9.26%<br>(n=7)   | 11.76%<br>(n=9)  | 14.26%<br>(n=11) | 16.76%<br>(n=12) | 19.26<br>(n=14) |

### Elizabeth City State University Continuous Improvement Plan

| Program Name and Brief Description                                    | Type                             | Level of Student              | Targeted Subgroup  | Student Success Program: Selection, Refinement, and Rationale  |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Target Freshmen-encourages freshmen academic engagement               | Intrusive Advising               | First Time/Full Time Freshmen | First-time, full-time Target subgroup -Males                                   | <b>Refinement:</b> Program focus includes FTFT students. 203 students in 2016 cohort currently being monitored. The 6-year average for males is 67.7% as compared to and 6-year average 72.9 % for the university  |
| E4U- targets students identified as at-risk during academic campaigns | Early Warning Intrusive Advising | All students                  | Students with GPAs below 2.0. Target subgroup students on suspension/probation | <b>Refinement:</b> Existing retention effort that supports students whose GPA is below 2.0. The average graduation rate for students who had GPA below 2.0 was 7% compared to the institutional average of 39%.  |
| Track Transfer Initiative   | Advising and Engagement          | New Transfer Students         | Male Transfer Students   | <b>New Initiative:</b> To increase the number of degree completers and decrease time to degree among transfer students, and males in particular. The average graduation rate for transfer students is 47%. The 6-year average retention rate for males is 65% as compared with the University average of 72.95%. |

## Appendix D

### Fayetteville State University

**Identified/Targeted Subgroups:**

First-Time, Full-Time males

STEM majors

North Carolina Community College transfer students

Pell grant recipients

**Example Program for a Subgroup**

University Studies, a semester-long student success course focused on advisement, career, and degree planning (Pell grant recipients)

**Example/Selected Completion Goal for a Subgroup:**

Increase degrees awarded to Pell grant recipients to 750, or an increase of 24% over the current 3-year average of 605

Fayetteville State University (FSU) is a historically Black university with a current enrollment of 6,200, approximately 90% of whom are undergraduates. FSU is also one of the most diverse universities in the state, with a student body made up of approximately 66% African-American students, 50% adult learners, 20% military affiliated, and nearly 70% eligible for Pell grants.

**Summary of Goals**

| Student Subpopulation   | Rationale for Selection   | Goals for Subpopulation: By 2022:  |
|---|---|--|
| FTFT Male students  | <p>Average one-year retention (2009-2014)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Males: 69%</li> <li>o Females: 75%</li> </ul> <p>4-year graduation (2011):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Males: 10%</li> <li>o Females: 21%</li> </ul> <p>5-year graduation (2010):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Males: 20%</li> <li>o Females: 32%</li> </ul> <p>6-year graduation (2009)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Males: 26%</li> <li>o Females: 35%</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· One-year retention: 75%</li> <li>· 4-year graduation: 18%</li> <li>· 5-year graduation: 25%</li> <li>· 6-year graduation: 33%</li> </ul> <p>Number of FTFT Males who earn degrees in 2022: 125 compared to the 72 in 2015-16 or an increase of 72%.</p> |
| STEM Majors (Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Forensic Science, Math, Biology Education, Math Education) | The number of degrees awarded in STEM disciplines has been among the lowest at FSU; the total number awarded in past three years (2012-2016) is 234 or 8.3% of 2,813 degrees awarded. The need for STEM majors, especially in southeastern NC, makes  | Increase degrees awarded in these disciplines from three-year average of 78 to 110, or increase of 40%.  |

## APPENDIX P

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
|   | it important for FSU to increase degrees awarded in these areas.  |   |
| North Carolina Community College System NCCCS Transfer Students   | Many low-income, military, African-American, and Hispanic students begin their higher education careers at NCCCS. Enabling NCCCS transfer students to comp will increase degree attainment among students least likely to complete degrees. Over the past three years, NCCCS transfers students have constituted an average of 35% (1,531 of 4,381) of our new transfer students and 40% (374 of 939) of student completions. | Goal: Increase number of degrees awarded from 3-year average of 374 to 500, or an increase of 34%.                      |
| Pell Grant Recipients   | Pell-grant recipients are among the most vulnerable of all u/g students in terms of degree completion. In the past 3 years, Pell degree attainment has lagged behind Pell recipients' enrollment; they have constituted 70% of undergraduate enrollment and 65% of all u/g degree recipients.   | Increase degrees awarded to Pell grant recipients to 750, or an increase of 24% over the current 3-year average of 605. |
| <p>These efforts will lead to increases in the overall four, five, and six year graduation rates for FSU FTFT students:</p> <p>4 – year graduation rate: 17% (2011 cohort) increase to <b>22%</b> (2018 cohort)</p> <p>5 – year graduation rate: 26.8% (2010 cohort) increase to <b>33%</b> (2017 cohort)</p> <p>6 – year graduation rate: 31.7% (2009 cohort) increase to <b>40%</b> (2016 cohort)</p> |   |   |

### FSU Continuous Improvement Plan

| Program Name and Brief Description   | Type               | Level of Student    | Targeted Subgroup | Student Success Program: Selection, Refinement, and Rationale   |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---|
| LEAP Scholars Program (Learning and Engagement at Accelerated Pace) – Summer Bridge Program for high achieving students  | First-year success | First-time students | FTFT students     | This program will serve FTFT males, STEM graduates, and Pell grant recipients. In initial year 62 of 62 LEAP scholars earned C or better in their math and English courses and earned an average GPA of 3.80. Based on annual data about credit accumulation and GPAs, program will revised to meet needs of target subpopulations. |
| Freshman Interest Groups (FIGs) – learning communities comprised of students with same intended major; Year-long Freshman Seminar is “anchor” course for FIGs. | First-year success | First-year students | FTFT students     | FIGs will serve FTFT males; some are designed specifically for STEM majors. FIGs have positive impact on Pell grant recipients. Ninety-four percent of students in FIGs enrolled in 15 credits or more in their first semester. Based on one-year retention rates, credit accumulation, and   |



# APPENDIX P

|  |                       |   |                                     |  |
|--|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|
|  |                       |   |                                     | freshman GPAs, FIGS will be revised.   |
| University Studies (UNIV 110) – semester-long student success course for transfer students focuses on advisement; career and degree planning.  | First year success    | Transfer students with fewer than 30 transfer credits | Pell grant recipients               | Will use specifically for NCCCS transfer students. Freshman transfer students who complete UNIV 110 have an average GPA of 2.95 in their first semester compared to 2.58 of those who did not complete it. Will revise course based on specific outcomes of students who complete the course. One possible revision: currently course required only of transfer students with fewer than 30 credits; may be expanded to those with fewer than 60 credits.                                    |
| Bronco Connect (Starfish) – enables faculty to easily identify students experiencing academic difficulty; alerts are communicated to students and advisors; interventions are recorded in the system to assess their impact.                       | Early Alert           | All undergrad students                                | FTFT students and transfer students | Bronco Connect has potential to improve degree completion among all student subpopulations. In first year, of students who earned a D or F at midterm, 62 percent who received early warnings earned a C or better in the course, compared to 33% who did not receive early warning. Use of Bronco Connect will be revised based on data provided about progress of student subgroups. Possible revision: students in subgroups may be flagged in system to be given more focused attention. |
| High Impact Practices (HIPs) – highly engaging; demand considerable time and effort; facilitate learning outside the classroom; require meaningful interaction between faculty and students and diverse others; frequent and substantive feedback. | Academic engagement   | All students  | All subgroups                       | Based on research from NSSE, low-income students are least likely to participate in HIPs throughout the nation. We seek to make them available to all students. In most recent NSSE, 44% of seniors reported participating in two or more HIPs. Feedback from targeted student population about effect of participation in HIPs will provide good basis for revision of HIPs' content and offerings. Our research on HIPs will be of interest to national audiences.                         |
| Retention Awards –. This program helps minimize student indebtedness.  | Minimize indebtedness | All students with unmet financial need                | All subgroups                       | Will use for all student subpopulations to the extent that they are eligible. Retention awards facilitate persistence all students.  |
| Money Matters – Financial literacy program conducted by Financial Aid Office   | Financial literacy    | All students  | All subgroups                       | Yes will use for all student subpopulation. Program helps minimize student indebtedness and default rates.   |

## **Appendix E**

### **North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University**

#### **Identified/Targeted Subgroups:**

First-Time, Full-Time freshmen  
 African American males (FTFT freshmen)  
 Transfer students  
 Non-African American students  
 Entering freshman with SAT math scores below 400

#### **Example Program for a Subgroup**

GradesFirst, an Early Alert and Advising Tracking System (FTFT freshmen)

#### **Example/Selected Completion Goal for a Subgroup:**

Increase number of degrees awarded to transfer students by 132%

#### **Subgroup Identification and Information**

##### *First Time, Full Time (FTFT) Freshmen*

The University goal of 85% FTFT first year retention by 2020 requires a 10% increase in the rate in the next four years. NC A&T recently created a robust plan to address first year retention that implements a number of student success initiatives. For example, the “Preeminent Advising” model was implemented in fall 2016 utilizing shared advising between faculty and professional academic coaches. In addition, a modified and enhanced “Early Alert” system utilizing Grades First as the technology platform was also implemented in fall 2016. The collection of first year retention initiatives are based on best practices.

##### *African American males as a subgroup of First time full time freshman*

African American males compose 45% of the NC A&T student population. The average first year retention of African American males is roughly 1.5% lower than all FTFT freshman and the four-year graduation rate is approximately 8% lower for African American males. The gap is even larger for African American males who receive Pell awards where the average four-year graduation rate is approximately 10% lower than the overall cohort. Our goal for this group is to increase 2.5 percentage points per year for retention, 2% for 4-year graduation, and 1.5% for 6-year graduation.

##### *Transfer students*

NC A&T’s transfer student population has changed dramatically in the last two years, and makes up at least 29% of new student class which translates to a significant portion of the undergraduate student body. Enrollment grew from 410 transfer students in Fall 2012 to 726 in Fall 2016. The four-year graduation rates for students transferring from NCCCS in the Fall 2009 and 2010 cohorts are 54% and 56%. NC A&T has a goal of enrolling 1500 transfer each fall by the year 2020. There will be a minimum of a 132% increase in degree production assuming a minimum of 44% of the 1500 transfer students are from the NCCCS and a minimum of 55% four-year graduation rate.

##### *Non-African American Students*

The percentage of non-African Americans enrolled at NC A&T in Fall 2013, Fall 2014, and Fall 2015 was 18.2%, 20%, and 20.48%, respectively. Our goal is to increase the percentage of non-African American students at the institution to 30% by the year 2020. NCA&T will target its resources to increase the

recruitment, retention, and graduation of non-African American students. In keeping with the goal of 85% retention, 35% for 4-year graduation, and 55% for 6-year graduation, the institution will recruit 50% more non-African American students. For the FTFTF group, this translates to retaining 425 non-African American students, graduating approximately 175 in four years and 265 in 6 years.

#### *Entering freshman with SAT math scores below 400*

Based on a sample of Fall 2005 thru Fall 2014 entering cohorts of first-time full-time new undergrads at A&T, there is a significant difference between the SAT Math <400 group and the SAT Math ≥400 group in the 1-year retention: 71.8% compared to 75.6%. There is a significant difference in the 4-year graduation rate between the SAT Math <400 and SAT Math ≥400 groups, except for the Fall 2008 and the Fall 2010 cohorts, with a gap ranging from the smallest 1.55% for Fall 2010 to the largest 8.5% for Fall 2005. For all the years, the total showed a difference of about 6% between the two groups. The goal of the Co-Requisite Developmental Math Course Redesign is to reduce time to degree by at least one semester for a cohort of 400 first time full time freshman. Typically, freshman with SAT math scores less than 400 took a semester for Math 099 before enrolling in Math 101. In the new model, both groups (SATM <400 or 400 to 440) will enroll in one of two versions of a co-requisite model. This change in the curricular pathway will reduce time to graduation by at least one semester for approximately 400 first time full time freshmen each academic year.

#### **Summary of Goals**

NC A&T's goal is to increase the cohort first year retention rate from 75% to 80% with a corresponding increase to 80% for the targeted subgroups. In concert with increase in first year retention rate, the goal is to increase the four-year, five-year, and six-year graduation rates from 24% to 35%, 37% to 44%, and 45% to 55%, respectively. The collective result of increased first-year retention and graduation rates will be an additional 576 degrees over the project period. The 576 increase translates to 117 (20%) students who entered with a SAT math sub score less than 400, 172 (30%) non-African American students, and 259 (45%) African American male degrees awarded to the respective subgroups. The values in parentheses represent the percentage of each group in the yearly cohort. Degrees received by NCCCS transfers increases from a baseline of 156 to 363 during the project period due to increase in transfer population and targeted transfer interventions. The total increase in degrees awarded to first-time, full-time freshman and transfer students total 783.

### North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University Continuous Improvement Plan

| <b>Program Name and Brief Description</b>       | <b>Type</b>   | <b>Level of Student</b>  | <b>Targeted Subgroup</b>      | <b>Student Success Program: Selection, Refinement, and Rationale</b>  |
|---|---|--|-------------------------------|---|
| GradesFirst                                     | Early Alert System (EAS) & Advising Tracking System | EAS – First-Time Full-time Freshmen<br>Advising Tracking – All Students      | First-Time Full-Time Freshmen | New program. Rationale: Focused improvements in retention, persistence & graduation targets in NCA&T Strategic Plan   |
| Co-Requisite Developmental Math Course Redesign | Time-to-Degree                                      | Students with SAT Math Subscore below 440 (and comparable ACT Math Subscore) | First Time Full Time Students | A new program. Reduce Time-to-Degree by at least 1 Semester   |
| Project M.A.R.C.H.                              | Male retention program                              | African American males   | FTFT African American males   | Program refinement. Rationale: Focus on African American male experiences with exploration of interaction with faculty, research involvement, and living learning communities                 |
| FRST ePORTFOLIO assessment                      | Evaluation  | Freshmen   | All targeted subgroups        | A new financial literacy program. Rationale: The evaluation will identify the level of impact of the changes made in the freshman seminar course to respond to the needs for student success. |

## **Appendix F**

### **North Carolina Central University**

**Identified/Targeted Subgroups:**

White students  
Hispanic students  
Black students  
Transfer students

**Example Program for a Subgroup**

Aspiring Eagles Academy (AEA), an academically-based enrichment program designed to promote the success of underprepared students (applied to all subgroups except transfer students)

**Example/Selected Completion Goal for a Subgroup:**

Increase number of degrees awarded for black students by 22% from 282 (5-year average) to 344 by 2022

NCCU desires to provide opportunities for a successful student transition to college, support academic development, provide assistance with basic college requirements, and provide motivation for students to successfully complete their postsecondary education. NCCU will help to create and strengthen a campus climate supportive of students who are first generation and low-income and traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education. In accomplishing this, NCCU hopes to ultimately increase the retention, progression, and graduation rates of students.

The FY 2016-2017 enrollment projections will represent a 1.0% flat estimate for enrollment and regular term, and in distance education, in some areas. As an institution, we continue to feel the 1.0% flat estimate is a conservative decision, which will allow our campus enrollment goals to stabilize. We have worked extremely hard in strengthening our undergraduate admission efforts, which are targeting specific student populations using predictive analytics, expanding partnerships with community colleges, and enhanced marketing and communication. Below, we have identified targeted groups that would focus our efforts regarding degree completion. We have also made modest projections through 2022.

#### **Bachelor's Degrees Awarded by FTFT Race/Ethnicity Projections (2016-2022)**

| <b>FTFT Undergraduate Degree Projections by Race/Ethnicity<br/>4% Increase</b> |  |              |              |              |              |              |
|--|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|  | <b>Based On 5-<br/>Year Trend<br/>Average)</b> | <b>17-18</b> | <b>18-19</b> | <b>19-20</b> | <b>20-21</b> | <b>21-22</b> |
| White  | 113  | 117          | 122          | 127          | 132          | 137          |
| Hispanic   | 34   | 35           | 37           | 38           | 40           | 41           |
| Black  | 282  | 294          | 305          | 318          | 330          | 344          |
| Transfer (3 <sup>rd</sup> )  | 59   | 61           | 63           | 66           | 69           | 71           |

# APPENDIX P

| FTFT Undergraduate Cohort by Race/Ethnicity<br>4% Increase |                                |  |        |  |      |      |  |      |      |  |      |
|--|--------------------------------|--|--------|--|------|------|--|------|------|--|------|
|  |                                |  | COHORT |  | GYR4 |      |  | GYR5 |      |  | GYR6 |
| Race/Ethnicity   | Based on 5-Year Average Cohort |  | N      |  | N    | %    |  | N    | %    |  | N    |
| White  | 23                             |  | 24     |  | 4    | 16.4 |  | 6    | 25.8 |  | 7    |
| Hispanic   | 12                             |  | 12     |  | 3    | 22.7 |  | 4    | 32.0 |  | 4    |
| African American Male                                      | 362                            |  | 376    |  | 41   | 11.4 |  | 110  | 30.9 |  | 139  |

| Transfer Graduation 3-Year     |        |  |    |    |
|--------------------------------|--------|--|----|----|
| Transfer                       | Cohort |  | N  | %  |
| Based on 3-Year Average Cohort |        |  |    |    |
|                                | 184    |  | 52 | 28 |
| 4% Increase                    | 192    |  | 54 | 28 |

## North Carolina Central University Continuous Improvement Plan

| Program Name and Brief Description   | Type                       | Level of Student    | Targeted Subgroup   | Student Success Program: Selection, Refinement, and Rationale  |
|--|----------------------------|---------------------|---|--|
| UNIV 1100—First Year Seminar: This course is designed primarily to introduce students to college life and develop skills necessary for their success.                    | First-year success         | First-year students | First-time, full-time students – their progress toward degree completion is reported by “traditional” retention, persistence and graduation rates | Many first-time students are also Pell grant recipients; UNIV 1100-First Year Seminar have positive impact on both targeted groups – first-time students and Pell grant recipients |
| Aspiring Eagles – The Aspiring Eagles Academy (AEA) is an academically based enrichment program designed to promote the success of underprepared students.               | Student Success            | First-year students | First-time, full-time students  | The last four cohorts of this program has higher retention and graduation rates than our general student population. There is a residential component to this experience.          |
| University College’s Academic Success and Enrichment Services: Program has full time Academic Counselors to assist first-year students experiencing academic challenges. | First-year student success | First-year students | First-time, full-time students  | While there may be a need for additional staffing, this is a proven intervention.  |

## APPENDIX P

|  |                 |              |              |  |
|--|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--|
| Early Warning and Midterm Grade Reports: Notifies students if their academic performance is deficient (D or F grade) at 4 weeks (early warning) and again at 8 weeks (midterm grade reports). The effort particularly targets first-time freshmen who are adjusting to the demands of college and may be unaware of academic issues early on in the first term | Student Success | All students | All students | All instructors are requested to participate, the effort particularly targets first-time freshmen who are adjusting to the demands of college and may be unaware of academic issues early on in the first term. In addition to entering the grade into Banner, faculty are asked to enter comments about the student's class behavior and mark the student as "at risk for failing" within the GradesFirst student information system. |
|--|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--|

## Appendix G

### North Carolina State University at Raleigh

**Identified/Targeted Subgroups:**

Underrepresented minorities (URM) students (FTFT)  
 Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) students (FTFT)  
 Low socioeconomic status (SES) students (FTFT)  
 Transfer students

**Example Program for a Subgroup**

Learning and Living Villages (applied to all subgroups except transfer students)

**Example/Selected Completion Goal for a Subgroup:**

Increase 6-year graduation rates of low SES students from current 67% (5-year average) to 73% by 2022

NC State was founded with a purpose: to create economic, societal and intellectual prosperity for the people of North Carolina and the country. We began as a land-grant institution teaching the agricultural and mechanical arts. Today, we are a pre-eminent research enterprise that excels in science, technology, engineering, math, design, the humanities and social sciences, textiles and veterinary medicine. Our targeted subgroups include the following:

**Summary of Goals**

We have used IPEDS data to review past trends for our three FTFT subgroups. The data is presented below.

**URM** - Hispanic/Latino, American Indian/Alaska Native, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Two or more races

4-, 5- and 6-year graduation rates and total degrees for Fall 2005 – Fall 2009 Cohorts

| Cohort           |      | 4-year GR | 5-year GR | 6-year GR | Degrees in 4 years | Degrees in 5 years | Degrees in 6 years |
|------------------|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Term             | Size |           |           |           |                    |                    |                    |
| Fall 2005        | 722  | 30%       | 56%       | 65%       | 214                | 400                | 466                |
| Fall 2006        | 752  | 31%       | 59%       | 67%       | 236                | 444                | 506                |
| Fall 2007        | 823  | 37%       | 65%       | 72%       | 301                | 530                | 594                |
| Fall 2008        | 834  | 36%       | 66%       | 72%       | 303                | 552                | 604                |
| Fall 2009        | 834  | 35%       | 65%       | 71%       | 292                | 546                | 593                |
| Average          |      | 34%       | 62%       | 70%       |                    |                    |                    |
| <b>2022 Goal</b> |      | 37%       | 66%       | 72%       |                    |                    |                    |



## APPENDIX P

**STEM** –2 digit CIP code prefixes 03, 11, 15, 26, 27 and 40, plus 01.0801, 01.9999, and 30.1901

4-, 5- and 6-year graduation rates and total degrees for Fall 2005 – Fall 2009 Cohorts

| Cohort           |      | 4-year GR | 5-year GR | 6-year GR | Degrees in 4 years | Degrees in 5 years | Degrees in 6 years |
|------------------|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Term             | Size |           |           |           |                    |                    |                    |
| Fall 2005        | 2159 | 30%       | 52%       | 58%       | 658                | 1142               | 1257               |
| Fall 2006        | 2411 | 29%       | 54%       | 59%       | 706                | 1307               | 1420               |
| Fall 2007        | 2506 | 31%       | 54%       | 60%       | 789                | 1373               | 1511               |
| Fall 2008        | 2475 | 32%       | 56%       | 60%       | 790                | 1388               | 1495               |
| Fall 2009        | 2426 | 34%       | 58%       | 63%       | 835                | 1412               | 1521               |
| Average          |      | 32%       | 55%       | 60%       |                    |                    |                    |
| <b>2022 Goal</b> |      | 38%       | 62%       | 68%       |                    |                    |                    |

**Low SES** - Pell grant awarded in first enrolled term

4-, 5- and 6-year graduation rates and total degrees for Fall 2005 – Fall 2009 Cohorts

| Cohort           |      | 4-year GR | 5-year GR | 6-year GR | Degrees in 4 years | Degrees in 5 years | Degrees in 6 years |
|------------------|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Term             | Size |           |           |           |                    |                    |                    |
| Fall 2005        | 663  | 29%       | 55%       | 62%       | 192                | 364                | 410                |
| Fall 2006        | 739  | 31%       | 57%       | 63%       | 229                | 421                | 469                |
| Fall 2007        | 782  | 36%       | 63%       | 69%       | 282                | 493                | 540                |
| Fall 2008        | 795  | 33%       | 64%       | 71%       | 262                | 508                | 564                |
| Fall 2009        | 946  | 34%       | 64%       | 70%       | 322                | 606                | 665                |
| Average          |      | 33%       | 61%       | 67%       |                    |                    |                    |
| <b>2022 Goal</b> |      | 36%       | 66%       | 73%       |                    |                    |                    |

### North Carolina State University at Raleigh Continuous Improvement Plan

| Program/Initiative Name and Brief Description             | Type   | Level of Student        | Targeted Subgroup  | Student Success Program: Rationale and Refinement  |
|---|--|-------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Learning and Living Villages (LLVs) -</b>              | Co-curricular/<br>Residential                              | Freshmen,<br>sophomores | FTFT students:<br>URM, STEM and<br>low SES                       | <b>Refinement:</b> Institute 1st year live-on campus requirement for 2017-18 to enhance participation; provide a systemic, coordinated mechanism for targeted and relevant support provisions by student group; create coordinated assessment opportunities across all villages. |
| <b>First Year Programs (FYP)</b>                          | First-year<br>common<br>curriculum                         | Freshmen                | FTFT students:<br>URM, STEM and<br>low SES                       | <b>Refinement:</b> Create a common assessment plan; expand FYPs programs across colleges; increase shared use of staff programming and teaching resources; include introduction to career development through collaboration with Career Center.                                  |
| <b>Academic Advising Services and Technologies (AAST)</b> | Degree planning<br>and course<br>selection, early<br>alert | All levels              | FTFT students:<br>URM, STEM and<br>low SES; transfer<br>students | <b>Refinement:</b> Full implementation of Student Success GPS across departments, coordinated oversight of targeted at-risk populations, proactive primary role for 1st and 2nd year advisors, and continued realignment of advising model                                       |

# APPENDIX P

|   |   |                   |   |  |
|---|---|-------------------|---|--|
| <b>Transfer Student Recruitment and Success</b>                                   | Degree planning, course selection, academic preparation and support, transition | Transfer students | Transfer students                                       | <b>Refinement:</b> To improve the overall transfer student experience, we want to add staff who would focus on academic advising, career counseling, cross curricular degree advising, and peer mentoring. |
| <b>Educational Innovation through Course Delivery and Learning Technologies –</b> | Course delivery and learning technologies                                       | All               | FTFT students: URM, STEM and low SES; transfer students | <b>Refinement:</b> Investments are required to further analyze and quantify the cost and benefits of these methods, and then to scale those with the greatest potential ROI.                               |

## Appendix H

### University of North Carolina at Asheville

**Identified/Targeted Subgroups:**

Students entering with the lowest 10% of standardized test scores

Students entering with an SAT score of >1,000 and GPA of < 3.0

First generation in college students

**Example Program for a Subgroup**

JumpStart, a first year experience (students entering with SAT score >1,000, GPA <3.0)

**Example/Selected Completion Goal for a Subgroup:**

Increase 4-year graduation rates of first generation students from projected 29% to 35%

UNC Asheville is the only UNC System institution with a Carnegie classification as a baccalaureate college focusing on arts and sciences; and is a founding member of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC). In recent years, approximately 79% of full-time, first-time students entering UNC Asheville returned for the following fall semester and the within-institution six-year graduation rates have averaged 60%. However, students with low admissions test scores, students with high admissions test scores but poor high school grades, and first generation students have been far less likely to return after their first year and are far less likely to graduate within six years. Therefore, UNC Asheville has determined that these groups should receive increased focus and intervention to improve their retention and graduation rates.

**Summary of Goals**

Increase 4-, 5-, and 6 year graduation rates for students in each of these subcategories by 6 percentage points, or 11 more graduates. The below chart illustrates the goals for each category of the target population for full-time students entering UNC Asheville in Fall 2017.

| # Degrees and % Graduated After ...                  | Years of Study |     |     |     |     |     |
|--|----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|  | 4              |     | 5   |     | 6   |     |
| All Students (n = 700)                               |                |     |     |     |     |     |
| With NC GAP Student Success Programs                 | 284            | 41% | 410 | 59% | 431 | 62% |
| Otherwise  | 273            | 39% | 399 | 57% | 420 | 60% |
| Students with SAT < 1000 (n = 75)                    |                |     |     |     |     |     |
| With NC GAP Student Success Programs                 | 29             | 39% | 40  | 53% | 45  | 60% |
| Otherwise  | 25             | 33% | 35  | 47% | 41  | 54% |
| Students with SAT >= 1000 and HS GPA < 3.00 (n = 25) |                |     |     |     |     |     |
| With NC GAP Student Success Programs                 | 8              | 32% | 14  | 55% | 15  | 58% |
| Otherwise  | 7              | 26% | 12  | 49% | 13  | 52% |
| First Generation Students (n= 75)                    |                |     |     |     |     |     |
| With NC GAP Student Success Programs                 | 26             | 35% | 38  | 51% | 42  | 56% |
| Otherwise  | 22             | 29% | 34  | 45% | 38  | 50% |
| Not NC GAP Eligible Students (n = 525)               | 220            | 42% | 318 | 61% | 329 | 63% |

## University of North Carolina at Asheville Continuous Improvement Plan

| Program Name and Brief Description | Type                  | Level of Student | Targeted Subgroup  | Student Success Program: Selection, Refinement, and Rationale  |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|--|--|
| Sumer SOAR                         | Summer Bridge Program | Select FTFT      | Lowest 10% of standardized test; earned GPA of at least 2.0 required for enrollment in fall semester | <b>REFINEMENT:</b> Group has high overlap with lower 10% of FTFT students. Students will enroll in a rigorous five-week summer collegiate experience to build their scholastic abilities. Availability of financial aid for summer session will allow this program to serve this population of students.   |
| JumpStart                          | First-year Experience | Select FTFT      | SAT score >1,000, GPA <3.0; regularly admitted   | <b>REFINEMENT:</b> Group has high overlap with lower 10% FTFT students. The program will be restructured to serve this particular population through the incorporation of elements of UNC Asheville's successful Academic Recovery Program as well as new content developed as part of UNC Asheville's GA-funded Advising/Student Success grant intended to improve work ethic and intrinsic motivation. |
| AVID for Higher Education          | First-year Experience | Select FTFT      | Criteria: First-generation or AVID high school participant; regularly admitted                       | <b>Current Initiative:</b> Data show potential to retain students in a vulnerable group of FTFT students. UNC Asheville partners with the national AVID for Higher Education organization which supports first-generation and Pell-eligible students as they transition to college.  |

## **Appendix I**

### **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

**Identified/Targeted Subgroups:**

Students with financial need  
Underrepresented minority students  
First generation students  
Transfer students

**Example Program for a Subgroup**

Summer Bridge program, an introduction to college life with a focus on academic skill enhancement and community building

**Example/Selected Completion Goal for a Subgroup:**

Increase 4-year graduation rates of underrepresented minority students from current 77.9% to 82.9% by 2020

UNC-Chapel Hill highlights three student success initiatives that target students facing certain challenges (e.g., with high financial need, from underrepresented groups, attending a rural high school, first in their family to attend college, and/or a junior transfer from a community college or other four-year school). These student success programs, the Carolina Student Transfer Excellence Program, the Carolina Covenant Program, and the Summer Bridge Program, have been underway for several years at UNC-Chapel Hill. Two programs have as their primary focus to establish an early and strong foundation for the transition from pre-college to college. The third provides financial and academic support beginning in the first semester of college and lasting through graduation. Each program targets students may face particular challenges related to educational preparation in high school and financial burden.

**Carolina Student Transfer Excellence Program (C-STEP)**

C-STEP identifies talented low- to moderate-income students while they are still in high school or early in their community-college careers. The program guarantees eventual admission to UNC-Chapel Hill for these students if they earn an appropriate associate degree and successfully complete the program. C-STEP programming includes academic-advising sessions for students at their home community colleges and before they matriculate to UNC-Chapel Hill.

In Fall 2017, C-STEP expects to help 107 junior transfers make the transition from community colleges to UNC-Chapel Hill. Assuming stable funding and no new partnerships with additional community colleges, the program currently has the capacity to expand to 140 students enrolling as junior transfers each year. If we can secure additional funding, we will act quickly to establish new partnerships with additional colleges and increase the capacity of the program. This additional capacity would be devoted to students who are similar to those already enrolled in the program, almost all of whom are low-income, first-generation-college, veterans or military-affiliated, and/or non-traditionally aged.

**The Carolina Covenant Program**

The Carolina Covenant was designed to promote both access and student success at UNC, offering support for low-income students to both enroll at the University and progress toward on-time graduation. While the Covenant's eligibility criteria are entirely related to family financial circumstances--defined as 200% of federal poverty guidelines or less with typical assets--the program's

demographics are disproportionately first-generation and minority. The Carolina Covenant provides a no-loans financial aid package that is intentionally paired with comprehensive academic and personal support services. The Covenant space--both physical and metaphorical--has evolved into a center for a supportive, safe community for the students in the program. Faculty mentors, social networking events, academic skills workshops, peer mentoring, and one-stop logistical support through the Office of Scholarships and Student Aid have helped bolster the retention and success of the University's lowest-income students. The curriculum also includes a component related to financial literacy.

We propose to expand offerings to the financially independent students into the Covenant, pairing targeted services with low-loan financial aid packages. This new concentration on this population will target non-traditional students returning to school including veterans, transfer students, and students with dependent children. Our goal is to improve 4-, 5-, and 6-year graduation rates for all Covenant scholars by 5% percentage points to bring these students with high financial need to the general population of UNC-Chapel Hill students. This Covenant enhancement continues to include a large representation of first generation and underrepresented minority students.

### **The Summer Bridge Program**

The Summer Bridge program remains true to its original program intent to serve underrepresented students, students from rural areas of the state, first-generation and those schools where students lack access to a rigorous college-prep curriculum. Approximately 40 student participants receive an introduction to college life with a focus on academic skill enhancement and community building. Students enroll in an English composition course, and depending on their math background, they take a math or chemistry as deemed appropriate. To augment the classroom experience, students participate in tutoring/review sessions led by student staff each day. Additionally, students are required to attend at least one in-depth academic advising session with the Dr. Marcus Collins, who will serve as their academic adviser during their first-year and possibly beyond.

In early 2017 we anticipate hiring a new Summer Bridge staff member who will be conducting targeted outreach and recruitment to North Carolina schools and communities. In addition to providing general support to the Bridge operations, this staff member will be charged to increase representation of those students who are first generation in North Carolina. Summer Bridge scholars and summer bridge staff will host information sessions and meeting in the communities served by Bridge to educate parents and potential students, along with high school counselors about the program. With increased donor support for first generation college students through the College of Arts and Sciences, we would seek to grow the program by approximately 50% to 60-65 enrolled students in each cohort.

### **Summary of Goals**

The table below provides our campus goals, assuming a 25%-30% enrollment increase through 2022 for the students served by these programs. Target graduation rates shown in the table are derived in part from work from the Thrive@Carolina Steering Committee, which helps set institutional milestones for student success for the university community.

Ideally, by 2022 all student subgroups will attain graduation rates of at least 93% (4-year), 94% (5-year), and 95% (6-year). However, we specified 4-, 5-, and 6-year graduation rates for 2022--as a function of each student group--to be a five percentage point increment from their current 2016 levels. We believe these values to be realistic goals given what our highlighted programs and the expansions that we expect over the next few years.

## APPENDIX P

| Student Group                      | Baseline  |                                  |                                  |                                  | Goals for 2022<br>Entering Class of Fall 2017 |                          |                          |                          |
|------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|                                    | Total Degrees Awarded Last Three Years (per year) | Current 4-Year Graduation Rate % | Current 5-Year Graduation Rate % | Current 6-Year Graduation Rate % | Degrees Awarded by 2022 (increase of 25%-30%) | 4-Year Graduation Rate % | 5-Year Graduation Rate % | 6-Year Graduation Rate % |
| All First-Time, Full-Time Students | 12,273  | 84.1                             | 90.2                             | 91.4                             |   | 89.1                     | 95.0                     | 96.4                     |
| Students with Financial Need       | 2,500 (833)                                       | 81.6                             | 88.8                             | 90.1                             | 1,042-1,084                                   | 86.6                     | 93.8                     | 95.1                     |
| Underrepresented Minority Students | 1,959 (653)                                       | 77.9                             | 84.6                             | 86.0                             | 816-849                                       | 82.9                     | 89.6                     | 91.0                     |
| First Generation College Students  | 2,179 (726)                                       | 76.5                             | 84.6                             | 86.2                             | 908-944                                       | 81.5                     | 89.6                     | 91.2                     |
| Junior Transfer Students           | 1,126 (375)                                       | 64.7<br>2-year rate              | 81.7<br>3-year rate              | 85.3<br>4-year rate              | 469-488                                       | 69.7<br>2-year rate      | 86.7<br>3-year rate      | 90.3<br>4-year rate      |

*Note.* There is overlap among these targeted groups. Graduation rates are based on tracking of a single incoming cohort (2010 for first-time, full-time students). C-STEP targets junior transfer students; Carolina Covenant targets students with high financial need; and Summer Bridge targets students who are first in their family to attend college. C-STEP and Covenant serve all students; Summer Bridge serves all students except transfer students.]

### UNC Chapel Hill Continuous Improvement Plan

| Program Name and Brief Description                    | Type   | Level of Student   | Targeted Subgroup  | Student Success Program: Selection, Refinement, and Rationale  |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| C-STEP (Carolina Student Transfer Excellence Program) | Admissions and support for community college transfers | 90+ hours, cumulative 2.0 GPA, stopped out of school for at least 1 year | Junior Transfer Students with High Financial Need. High School seniors or community college students whose household incomes fall at or below 300 percent of the 2015 federal poverty guidelines as indexed by family size;          | Candidates must be enrolled (or plan to enroll) in a course of study that will lead to the AA or AS degree and earn the degree with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.2; program may be expanded to include more community colleges   |
| Summer Bridge   | 6-week transition program                              | First-year students  | First Generation College Students. Primarily from small/rural high schools   | Students must apply with 2 teacher recommendations; program is paid by the university  |
| Carolina Covenant                                     | No-loans financial aid and academic support services   | Undergraduate Students   | Students with High Financial Need. From historically low-income families (AGI does not exceed 200% of federal poverty guidelines, based on family size), dependent on parents, and meet academic, income and financial need criteria | Students pursuing undergraduate degree; continued eligibility dependent on making steady progress toward degree, and enrolled full-time during regular academic year. Support includes orientation, mentoring, academic advising, early intervention, and workshops financial, physical and mental wellness support, and community service and Study Abroad opportunities. |

## **Appendix J**

### **University of North Carolina at Charlotte**

#### **Identified/Targeted Subgroups:**

Undeclared FTFT Freshmen seeking admission to competitive majors

NC Community College transfer students entering the university with 45 or more credit hours

#### **Example Program for a Subgroup**

EAB Guide, a mobile app and interactive tool that “guides” students along a completion journey (transfer students)

#### **Example/Selected Completion Goal for a Subgroup:**

Increase 4-year graduation rates of transfer students from 61% to 68% by 2022

Through our investment in high impact practices, UNC Charlotte has made steady progress in the retention and graduation of first time full time freshmen while increasing the entering class size from 2,864 to 3,451. Because students transfer within the UNC System, graduation rates are typically 6% higher for freshmen admitted to UNC Charlotte when graduation from any UNC institution is taken into account. For the cohort admitted in 2009, the 6-year graduation rate at UNC Charlotte was 53.3% and 59.3% at any UNC institution.

UNC Charlotte also enrolls a large population of transfer students each year. In fall 2016, 3,023 transfer students were admitted. Including January admissions, our transfer class for 2016-17 is expected to be 4,149. Only about 28% of the transfer class enters with sufficient credit for a general education exemption, and although 61% come from NC community colleges, relatively few have degrees. Because transfer students enter with varying amounts of credit, comparing the time to degree for first time full time freshmen (FTFR) and full time transfer FTTR) students is difficult. While native juniors graduate at a rate of over 87% within 4 years, transfer students lag the native juniors by about 15%.

#### **Targeted subgroups and interventions**

**Freshman Subgroup:** Undeclared FTFT Freshmen seeking admission to competitive majors:

Undeclared freshmen students enroll in University College, and these students have the lowest one-year retention rate of all colleges (80% in the most recent year). Our data tell us that about half of our undeclared FTFT Freshmen are students seeking admission to competitive majors, such as engineering, business and nursing. Students who are unable to achieve entry into a desired major by their junior year have a significantly lower graduation rates than the average for native juniors (70% v. 87% within four years). In order to increase the graduation rates of these students, early proactive advising and careful tracking in progression courses are needed. These students need structured environments to enable them to either complete the required prerequisites for admission in the desired major or to be guided into majors in which they can be successful. At UNC Charlotte, this is a group of about 500 students annually. Thus, impacting the success of this group with one of the lowest retention and graduation rates could increase degree completions by 25-50/cohort.

Our goals for this group of students are to increase first and second year retention within the university to at least the university average and ensure entry into a major by the 5<sup>th</sup> semester/junior year, preparing these students to graduate at the university average for those achieving junior status. The



next table shows the projected increments in 4-, 5-, and 6-year graduation rates and the number of new graduates projected, assuming a cohort size of 500.

**Goals for FTFT Freshman subgroup graduation rates**

| Graduation | Rate*    |     | # Graduates | Increment over previous year | Increment from increased rates |
|------------|----------|-----|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 4 Year     | Current  | 21% | 105         |                              |                                |
|            | Proposed | 23% | 115         |                              | 10                             |
| 5 Year     | Current  | 42% | 210         | 105                          |                                |
|            | Proposed | 47% | 235         | 120                          | 15                             |
| 6 Year     | Current  | 49% | 245         | 35                           |                                |
|            | Proposed | 58% | 290         | 55                           | 20                             |
| Total      |          |     |             |                              | 45                             |

\* Current rates are based on 3-year rolling averages.

**Transfer Student Subgroup:** Transfer students entering the university with significant amounts of credit have completed most of their General Education courses and must make a timely entry into a major in which they can be successful in order to stay on track for graduation. Any delay will increase time to degree, which is likely to contribute to attrition since, in comparison, to our native freshmen, transfer students are more likely to be first generation and to have greater financial need. Those transferring from the NC Community Colleges with 45 or more credits graduate at a rate of 60 to 62% within four years of entry. Our goal is to integrate these students into appropriate majors within a semester. Our overall target for graduation four years after achieving junior status is an increase of 7%.

Assuming a cohort of 1,575 entering UNC Charlotte in 2017 and meeting the subgroup criteria, we would expect increases in 2, 3, and 4-year graduation rates of 1, 4, and 7% in 2019, 2020, and 2021. This would increase the total number of graduates for the cohort by 110.

**Goals for transfer student subgroup graduation rates**

| Graduation | Rate*    |     | # Graduates | Increment over previous year | Increment from increased rates |
|------------|----------|-----|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2 Year     | Current  | 21% | 331         |                              |                                |
|            | Proposed | 22% | 347         |                              | 16                             |
| 3 Year     | Current  | 49% | 772         | 441                          |                                |
|            | Proposed | 53% | 835         | 488                          | 47                             |
| 4 Year     | Current  | 61% | 961         | 189                          |                                |
|            | Proposed | 68% | 1071        | 236                          | 47                             |
| Total      |          |     |             |                              | 110                            |

**Overall goals:**

1. Decrease time to degree and increase graduation rates from UNC Charlotte of first time full time (FTFT) freshmen by at least another 5% while continuing to provide access to an increasingly diverse population of students with significant financial need. As a function of our mission for access, we anticipate continuing to enroll freshman classes with average SAT scores of about 1100 and average HSGPAs in the 3.8-4.0 range. We have already made significant progress on first year retention. Thus, we need to focus on graduation and time to degree. For this area, we will look at a subgroup of FR who enter the university as “undeclared” seeking admission to competitive majors.

## APPENDIX P

2. Reduce the time to degree for FTTR students and to begin to close the gap in graduation rates between FR and TR students for those transferring from North Carolina Community Colleges with or without the associate's degree. Our focus will be on a subgroup of students entering with 45 or more credit hours.

### University of North Carolina at Charlotte Continuous Improvement Plan

| Program Name and Brief Description                | Type   | Level of Student   | Targeted Subgroup  | Student Success Program: Selection, Refinement, and Rationale   |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| Freshman learning communities                     | Academic support   | Freshmen, Transfers  | FTFT Freshmen seeking admission to competitive programs  | Data show increased retention and graduation. Expansion of opportunity needed for non-residential students (see HPEX as a model.)   |
| DegreeWorks                                       | Degree planning and audit  | All  | New NCCC Transfers with $\geq 45$ hours  | Based on transfer credit and goals, allow students to estimate time to degree in different programs and choose the best fit. This is a program being implemented at present.                |
| SSC Campus-success markers                        | Early alert, risk assessment and progression tracking              | All  | FTFT Freshmen seeking admission to competitive programs; New NCCC Transfers with $\geq 45$ hours | Enables advisors to target students not on track to progress. This is a new program and can highlight early deviations from degree plans  |
| EAB Guide   | Mobile app enabling consistent, personalized, timely communication | New students   | New NCCC Transfers with $> 45$ hours   | Interactive tool that 'guides' students along a completion journey. Customized journeys for targeted populations such as Pell recipients, small high schools, veterans, adult students etc. |
| Supplemental Instruction                          | Academic support   | All  | FTFT Freshmen seeking admission to competitive programs.   | Improves performance in gateway courses. We will test a new "embedded SI" model.  |
| 49er Gold Rush Grants                             | Scholarships   | Degree completion targets seniors in good standing with unmet need | FTFT Freshmen seeking admission to competitive programs; New NCCC Transfers with $\geq 45$ hours | Experiences at other institutions suggest success in promoting graduation. This is a new initiative that includes both a grant and a commitment to a completion plan.                       |
| IPASS: Integrating risk analytics and early alert | Intrusive advising   | New students   | FTFT Freshmen seeking admission to competitive programs; New NCCC Transfers with $\geq 45$ hours | New program implementation. Allows early, 'smart,' and sustained intervention with students at high and moderate risk. Facilitates specialized interventions for specific student groups.   |
| HPEX Advising major                               | Advising   | New students   | FTFT Freshmen seeking admission to competitive programs  | Opportunity for exploration of health professions careers; supports early selection of major. Expand this model into other broad fields for undeclared students.                            |

## **Appendix K**

### **University of North Carolina at Greensboro**

#### **Identified/Targeted Subgroups:**

First-time, Full-time undergraduate students that fall within deciles 1-4 of predictive modeling

#### **Example Program for a Subgroup**

Required enrollment in Foundations for Learning (FFL 100) & Health and Human Sciences (HHS 125)

#### **Example/Selected Completion Goal for a Subgroup:**

Increase 4-year graduation rate by 20%, from 30% to 36%

Based on the purpose of the NCGAP legislation and the performance of students at UNCG, the targeted subgroup for UNCG includes first-time, full-time (FTFT) undergraduate students that fall within deciles 1-4 of predictive modeling. Since the University began its predictive modeling with the fall 2014 freshman cohort, there is no data yet regarding graduation rates for students in deciles 1-4. However, retention rates from the past three years indicate that students in this subgroup require support programs that proactively engage students in overcoming academic and personal obstacles.

**UNCG's goal is to increase first to second-year retention to 85% in five years.** The university's 4-, 5-, and 6-year graduation rates (for fall 2010 cohort) stand at 30%, 50%, and 54% respectively. If UNCG meets its goals for the targeted subgroup, **533** more students from the 2014 cohort will graduate (168, 170, and 195 in years 4, 5, 6 respectively), and our 4-, 5-, and 6-year **graduation rates will increase to 36%, 55%, and 60%.**

#### **High-Impact Strategies utilized in this effort:**

1. Intrusive Academic Advising for Exploratory (Undecided) Students
2. First Year Transition Courses - Foundations for Learning (FFL 100) and Health and Human Sciences (HHS 125)
3. Implement academic support services to improve academic performance through Student Success Center programming
4. Support for Students in Academic Recovery
5. Establish (30, 45, 60, 90) milestones as part of program maps to facilitate defining when students are 'off track' towards graduation

## University of North Carolina at Greensboro Continuous Improvement Plan

| <b>Program Name and Brief Description</b>   | <b>Type</b>  | <b>Level of Student</b>  | <b>Targeted Subgroup</b>  | <b>Student Success Program: Selection, Refinement, and Rationale</b>   |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| Intrusive Academic Advising for Exploratory (Undecided) Students  | Intrusive advising, retention, persistence, transition, academic support             | All  | New first-time, full-time Exploratory majors within deciles 1-4                                     | We will track for the subgroup. Over the past two years, approximately 45% of Exploratory majors are categorized in deciles 1-4. We will refine the program to require students in this subgroup to participate in 1 additional required meeting with their academic advisor, and when early alert flags are raised.   |
| Foundations for Learning (FFL 100) & Health and Human Sciences (HHS 125)  | Transition, retention, academic support  | Freshmen cohort  | New first year students, exploratory majors, and students identified and falling within deciles 1-4 | We will track for the subgroup. A high touch initiative focused on major exploration, academic skills, personal reflection, and connection to academic resources. We will refine the existing program to require enrollment in FFL 100 or HHS 125 for students in targeted subgroup.   |
| Student Success Center - Tutoring and Academic Skills Programs, Student Support Services (TRIO), Supplemental Instruction Program | Retention, Persistence, Intrusive advising, academic support, transition, Completion | All  | Determined contact with students ranked in deciles 1-4.   | We will track for the subgroup. Support programs include one-on-one engagement with students to assess academic needs, enhance academic skills, inform students about campus resources, and aid in progress toward graduation. We will refine SSC services for deciles 1-4 by communicating with students that receive Starfish Early Alert flags to sign up for services. We will also require students that receive services to meet with their tutor at least 3 times per semester. |
| Academic Recovery Programs  | Intrusive advising, retention, persistence   | Required of any student on academic probation or returning from suspension | Students ranked in deciles 1-4 that fall into probation or suspension categories                    | We will track for the subgroup. On average, more than 30% of students in decile 1-4 fall on academic recovery. We will refine the program by requiring students in the decile group to meet a minimum of 1 time a semester with an academic recovery specialist, in addition to completing their required ARS program.   |
| Milestones Initiative - establish (30,45,60,90) milestones as part of tracking students toward graduation                         | Intrusive advising, retention, persistence   | All  | Continued contact with students in deciles 1-4 throughout their academic progression.               | A new program we will track for the subgroup. This automated 30, 45, 60, 90 credit hour checkpoint system notifies students when they are off-track towards graduation. Communication includes options to adjust registration, enroll in winter or summer sessions, or earn transfer credits to stay on track.   |

## **Appendix L**

### **University of North Carolina at Pembroke**

**Identified/Targeted Subgroups:**

Transfer students

First-time, full-time American Indian students

First-time, full-time male students

**Example Program for a Subgroup**

HAWK Alert, an early warning and kudos program (all subgroups)

**Example/Selected Completion Goal for a Subgroup:**

Increase FTFT American Indian student 4-year graduation rate by 43%, from 13.8% to 19.8%

Maximizing student success is one of three goals in UNCP's 2013-19 Strategic plan. UNCP is deeply committed to improving retention and graduation rates and has taken an approach to maximize student success by improving its recruitment strategies and enhancing its academic support systems. Recent efforts have resulted in increasing the first-time, full-time (FTFT) student 6-year graduation rate from 32.7% to 38.3% when comparing Cohort 2007 to 2009; and 4-year graduation rate from 14.9% to 20.6% when comparing Cohort 2008 to Cohort 2012. However, UNCP knows more work is needed to increase graduation and retention rates overall, but specifically with men and American Indian students.

There were a total of 1202 first-time, full-time freshmen enrolled in Fall 2009; among them, 560 (46.6%) were males, 642 (53.4%) were females, and 138 (11.48%) were American Indian students. Compared with female students, more male students tend to stop out from UNCP in their first three years. The Fall-to-Fall retention rate for males is 68.8%, 7.7% lower than female students (76.5%); the 3-year average of retention rate for males is 62.5%, 9% lower than female students (71.5%). Male students also had lower 4- and 6-year graduation rates than females; the 4-year graduation rate for males is 13.8%, 8.2% lower than females (22%); the 3 year average of 4-year graduation rate for males is 15.8%, 7.1% lower than females (22.9%); the 6-year graduation rate for males is 33.4%, 9.1% lower than females (42.5%); and the 3 year average of 6-year graduation rate for males is 30.6%, 8.4% lower than female students (39%). Compared to other racial groups, American Indian students tend to have higher retention rates in their first two years. However, American Indian students have lower 4- and 6-year graduation rates when compared to other racial groups. Interestingly, American Indian students persist longer at UNCP when compared to other racial groups as they have higher 8- and 10-year graduation rates. This indicates that American Indian students tend to stay longer at UNCP to earn a degree compared to their peers. Transfer students at UNCP have much higher graduation rates when compared to students entering in as freshman. However, improvements in graduation rates for transfer students are needed as they are much lower in comparison to the graduation rates for all transfer students in the UNC System.

## Degrees Awarded by Subgroups of Students

|  | 2012-2013  | 2013-2014   | 2014-2015  |
|--|------------|-------------|------------|
| <b>Total undergraduate degree recipients</b> | <b>984</b> | <b>1011</b> | <b>907</b> |
| Women  | 631        | 641         | 577        |
| Men  | 353        | 370         | 330        |
| American Indian or Alaska Native             | 135        | 151         | 134        |
| Black or African American                    | 294        | 300         | 281        |
| White students                               | 413        | 425         | 388        |

### Institutional Goals

Based on the analysis of historical data, UNCP has tentatively set\* the following goals for 2022 using Fall 2009 cohort data:

- Increase FTFT 4-year graduation rate from 18.1% to **24.1%**: based on a projected cohort of 1200, a 24% graduation rate would mean **289** students from that cohort graduated within 4 years, **71 more** than if we remained at our current 4-year graduation rate of 18.1%. If we meet our targeted goals, we will graduate 153 more students (31 in the AI subgroup; and 122 in the male subgroup) and our overall 4-year graduation rates will improve from 13.8% and 13.8% (respectively), to 19.8%, and 19.8%.
- Increase FTFT 5-year graduation rate from 33.5% to **39.5%**: based on a projected cohort of 1200, a 39.5% graduation rate would mean **474** students from that cohort graduated within 5 years, **72 more** than if we remained at the 2010 cohort 5-year graduation rate of 33.5%. If we meet our targeted goals, we will graduate 279 more students (54 in the AI subgroup; and 225 in the male subgroup) and our overall 5-year graduation rates will improve from 28.3% and 28.2% (respectively), to 34.3%, and 34.2%.
- Increase FTFT 6-year graduation rate from 38.3% to **44.3%**: based on a projected cohort of 1200, a 44.3% graduation rate would mean **532** students from that cohort graduated within 6 years, **72 more** than if we remained at our current 6-year graduation rate of 38.3%. If we meet our targeted goals, we will graduate 309 more students (52 in the AI subgroup; and 257 in the male subgroup) and our overall 6-year graduation rates will improve from 33.3% and 33.4% (respectively), to 39.3%, and 39.4%.
- Reduce 4-year, 5-year, and 6-year graduation rate gaps between first-time, full-time students and first-time, full-time American Indian students by half to 3 percentage points.
- Reduce 4-year, 5-year, and 6-year graduation rate gaps between first-time, full-time students and first-time, full-time male students by half to 3 percentage points.
- Increase 2-year graduation rate of transfers from 13% to **18%**: based on a projected cohort of 150, an 18% graduation rate would mean **27** students from that cohort graduated within 2 years, **7.5 more** than if we remained at our current 2-year graduation rate of 13%.
- Increase 4-year graduation rate of transfers from 37% to **42%**: based on a projected cohort of 150, a 42.5% graduation rate would mean **63** students from that cohort graduated within 4 years, **7.5 more** than if we remained at our current 4-year graduation rate of 37%.
- Increase 6-year graduation rate of transfers from 53% to **58%**: based on a projected cohort of 150, a 58% graduation rate would mean **87** students from that cohort graduated within 6 years, **7.5 more** than if we remained at our current 6-year graduation rate of 53%.

\*Please note that these goals are estimates because the Strategic Enrollment Planning team has not yet met to fully analyze the data and determine the goals. It is scheduled to meet later this semester.

## University of North Carolina at Pembroke Continuous Improvement Plan

| Program Name and Brief Description         | Type  | Level of Student  | Targeted Subgroup                      | Student Success Program: Selection, Refinement, and Rationale   |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Native Strong: American Indian Orientation | Campus Engagement   | New AI Freshman   | FTFT AI Freshman                       | Program has shown promising retention rates for AI students. Will scale up program with increased marketing to encourage student participation. Will also invite new AI transfers in the future.  |
| HAWK Alert Program                         | Early Warning/Kudos   | All; special emphasis on freshmen                         | Transfers, FTFT Males and AI students  | Data shows students are more successful if contact is made with the student. Refine to target all AI students, transfer students and males.   |
| Mid-Year Academy                           | Probation Counseling/Degree Completion<br>Intrusive Advising<br>Academic Engagement | All: special emphasis on freshmen and sophomores          | Transfers, FTFT Males and AI students. | Data shows students are more successful if they participate in this program and subsequent programming. Increase marketing to transfer, male, and AI students.  |
| Emerging Scholars                          | Learning Communities<br>Campus Engagement<br>Service Learning<br>Intrusive Advising | All: Targeted towards at-risk students and freshman males | FTFT males and AI students             | Data shows if students have a higher sense of belonging, they are more likely to be retained. Can track students that participate. Refine marketing and recruitment efforts. Expand the number of students participating. Will secure specific advisors for targeted populations. |

## **Appendix M**

### **University of North Carolina at Wilmington**

#### **Identified/Targeted Subgroups:**

Students of color

Students with high financial need/Pell recipients

First year students on academic probation at any point in their first academic

#### **Example Program for a Subgroup**

Peer Mentor and Academic Success Program (all subgroups who are identified as “at risk” by instructors or peer mentors)

#### **Example/Selected Completion Goal for a Subgroup:**

A rise of 2% in retention and graduation rates for all subgroups by 2022; meaning four-year graduation rate of 65.7% for Pell recipients

UNCW continues to work towards establishing classroom environments and a campus organizational culture with a focus on student engagement leading to success. The University has a strong record in sustaining student engagement as indicated by critical retention, four- and six-year graduation rates (for transfers and first-time full time students), time to degree, and degrees awarded.

Our new strategic plan calls for us to increase both retention and graduation rates for FTFT students (from 85% to 90%; from 71.2% to 75% respectively) while working to sustain and improve graduation rates for transfer students. We have embarked on a range of focused efforts designed to help us to identify, support, and engage our students in more effective ways, and to take advantage of our self-identified areas of strength, including University College professional advising for all new FTFT students; high participation rates in demonstrably effective high-impact practices (50% of FYS in Learning communities; an effective First-Year Seminar); and shared intellectual experiences through our common reading program and strong Honors College. These new focused efforts include:

- A new working committee focused on retention at UNCW with cross campus participation headed by our Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Director of University College
- The development of a Part Way Home program and degree aimed at encouraging degree completion, a partnership between the Provost’s office and our College of Arts and Sciences
- A new mandatory requirement for FTFT students to live on campus during their first year
- A newly inaugurated Advising Council and Task Force, designed to increase and strengthen best practices in advising across our advising cultures
- A set of new UNC GA supported initiatives to discourage stopping out through pilot intervention programs

UNCW’s targeted subgroups for this initiative, all of whom exhibit lower degree completion rates, includes:

- Students of color (Non-white students at UNCW, despite diverse characteristics, face some similar challenges; we also would like to target efforts to a larger group).



- Students with high financial need/Pell recipients. These students are especially at-risk for degree completion as cost of attendance continues to rise and as they experience pressure to work long hours as a student but are also well-positioned to benefit from sustained attention and support from the University College.
- First year students on academic probation at any point in their first academic year (a group of exclusively FTFT students; we see this as an easy group to identify who are most likely to benefit from more persistent advisor and other University College based interventions).

We expect that more focused attention on these students in conjunction with the development of new and several existing intervention strategies will improve their retention and persistence, and contribute to a stronger graduation rate, resulting in more degrees awarded at UNCW by 2022. We would seek to increase retention and graduation rates by 2% for these subpopulations (not to exceed the % of the overall undergraduate population).

### **Institutional Goals**

If we manage to meet our target of increasing retention and graduation rates by 2% for these targeted populations, by 2022 we would expect our retention rate for students of color to rise to 85.2% (relative to the four-year average of 2011-14); for Pell recipient students to move to an average 85.4%; for probationary students to rise to 59.2%. The 4 and 6-year graduation rates for the same cohorts (relative to the average of the 2009-2011 cohorts for four-year graduation and the 6-year graduation rate for the 2009 cohort) could be expected to rise to 49.9/73% for students of color; 44.4/65.7% for Pell recipients; 8.7/43.7% for probationary students.

It is challenging to project numbers of additional degrees awarded because we anticipate enrollment growth, but projecting a 2022 cohort group of 2500 FTFT students, we would hope to move, at a minimum, from awarding, for that cohort, with the adjusted retention and graduation rates, 320 degrees (within six years) to students of color (an increase of 18 additional degrees over baseline); 340 degrees to Pell recipients (an increase of 21 over baseline); and 98 degrees to probationary students (an increase of 8 over baseline).

In sum, the Director of the University College and Dean of Undergraduate Studies will coordinate with our registrar and IPAE to use annual retention/persistence data, as well as strategy-specific data noted above, for our targeted GAP groups. UC and Undergraduate Studies, in partnership with our Provost, will work to implement and refine this plan, supporting and sustaining student success at UNCW.

## UNC Wilmington Continuous Improvement Plan

| <b>Program Name and Brief Description</b>   | <b>Type</b>                 | <b>Level of Student</b>                            | <b>Targeted Subgroup</b>  | <b>Student Success Program: Selection, Refinement, and Rationale</b>  |
|---|-----------------------------|--|---|---|
| Beginning Student and First Year Fall Student Surveys: University College and Student Affairs administer two surveys to identify students who are at risk for departure.  | Early Alert System          | Freshmen   | We would use this intervention in modified form for all three of our targeted subgroups.  | An existing program that provides crucial data on student adjustment and early academic success. Data for identified subgroups can be tracked and questions can be adjusted to focus on the identified subgroups. We will refine surveys to help identify and target groups for interventions and sustain intervention efforts over a longer time frame.  |
| Peer Mentor and Academic Success Program: University College and University Learning Center work together to support students who are on contract or on academic probation to increase GPA and progress towards degree completion | Degree Completion           | Freshmen and Sophomores                            | Ordinarily, all students who have a GPA below 2.0 are placed in this program. We will extend this program to students in all 3 GAP groups who are identified as “at risk” by FYS instructors (see below) or peer mentors. | An existing mentoring program builds strong connections between successful students and new students facing challenges. Potential to retain students who are academically at-risk. We will refine to focus attention in the spring semester on identified groups and track effectiveness and numbers in connection with First Year seminar peer mentors by developing a semester’s end survey of peer mentors to identify at-risk students who may belong to identified groups. |
| Staff/Faculty Mentoring   | Retention/Degree Completion | 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester 1 <sup>st</sup> year FTFT | Students on academic probation or other GAP group students (Pell, Students of color) identified as being “at risk” by First Year Seminar Instructors and Peer Mentors   | A new program will recruit first year seminar instructors from the fall semester to mentor selected at-risk students during the spring semester.  |

## **Appendix N**

### **University of North Carolina School of the Arts**

**Identified/Targeted Subgroups:**

Students in the School of Dance

Students in the School of Music

**Example Program for a Subgroup**

Arts School Student Monitoring, an early warning program embedded in the Arts Schools

**Example/Selected Completion Goal for a Subgroup:**

Increase 4-year graduation rate by 26% for School of Music students from 51.6% (5-year average) to 65%

Every new undergraduate student at the UNC School of the Arts has undergone an application process including an audition and/or interview, resulting in admission directly into one of five majors: Dance, Drama, Design and Production, Filmmaking, and Music. Upon matriculation, students move through their degree program in a cohort approach. This system differs from a typical approach to undergraduate study, where a student begins the majority of his or her work in general education studies and may not be immersed in specific major coursework until their second or third year.

The cohort nature of the program impacts graduation rates beyond Year 4, as the majority of students graduate in four years, with students who do not graduate on time with their cohort struggling to finish their degree at all, even in a fifth or sixth year. Thus, UNCSCA correspondingly focuses on four-year graduation rates, as opposed to the more traditional five-year or six-year rates. The four-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time freshman has increased consistently over the past fifteen years, and now sits at 68%. Although four-year graduation rates have continued to increase in recent years, persistent gaps remain between the different schools. For example, the four-year graduation rate in the schools of Dance and Music have averaged 56% and 52%, respectively, over the past five years. During that same time frame the School of Drama has averaged an 81% four-year graduation rate.

**Four-Year Graduation Rates by School**

| School              | Average Graduation Rate |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Dance               | 55.7%                   |
| Design & Production | 62.8%                   |
| Drama               | 80.5%                   |
| Filmmaking          | 69.1%                   |
| Music               | 51.6%                   |

### Campus Goals for 2022

UNCSA is committed to continually improving student success, and we have established the following goals for First-Time Full-Time Students: **Six-year graduation rate for 2016 FTFT Cohort: 72%; Five-year graduation rate for 2017 FTFT Cohort: 71%; Four-year graduation rate for 2018 FTFT Cohort: 70%.** In order to meet these goals, we will target our two schools with the lowest graduation rates for specific improvement:

|                 | Baseline Graduation<br>(past 5 years)<br>Degrees Awarded and % | Increase in number of<br>degrees awarded | 2018 Cohort 4-Year<br>Graduation Goal |
|-----------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| School of Dance | 19 and 55.7%   | 22                                       | 65%                                   |
| School of Music | 14 and 51.6%   | 17                                       | 65%                                   |

The proposed increase of graduation rates in Dance and Music would raise the campus graduation rate average from 68% to 70%.

### Plan for Achieving Goals

Three current student success initiatives have been identified, targeting populations that are most clearly 'at risk' due to historical graduation data. These initiatives include:

**Part-Way Home Students:** those students that have left UNCSA without a degree. Emphasis on online liberal arts courses, offered primarily during the summer, along with arts-based advanced standing, is a tool used to address this student population. The Division of Liberal Arts is actively contacting students who fall into all of the above categories, working in tandem with the appropriate Arts school to determine a path to degree attainment wherever possible.

**Arts School Student Monitoring:** an early warning program embedded in the Arts Schools, through which all students in danger of failing to make acceptable progress in their art or to meet established thresholds in their art school coursework or Liberal Arts requirements are kept informed about their academic status. Communication with the student includes the identification of available resources to aid in addressing any deficiencies. First-year Dance students and first and second-year music students are of particular concern as 'at risk' populations in academic success and are targeted in this initiative.

**Student Support Team:** an early intervention program through which students at risk due to personal issues are identified and assisted. *Maxient* system software, which serves as an electronic repository for confidential information, is utilized to house an online reporting system of concern. Reports entered into the system, whether under an individual's name or anonymously, are directed to the Team, prompting a team member to reach out to the 'at risk' individual with an inquiry and appropriate resources. Students experiencing personal issues that impact their academic success are found at all undergraduate levels and are the final population targeted with this third initiative.

## University of North Carolina School of the Arts Continuous Improvement Plan

| Program Name and Brief Description   | Type                | Level of Student   | Targeted Subgroup   | Student Success Program: Selection, Refinement, and Rationale   |
|--|---------------------|--|---|---|
| <u>UNCSA Part-Way Home</u> : encourages students who failed to complete their degree to return and finish  | Degree Completion   | All students that have left UNCSA without a degree, with particular focus on art certificate students  | Part-Way Home; in particular, the targeted subgroup of second and third-year dance students   | Existing program, but with new attention to recently withdrawn students (1-3 years). Contact eligible students. Data captures inquiries/responses from this group, along with records of subsequent degree completions.                               |
| <u>Arts School Student Monitoring</u> – structured systems in all five arts schools supporting regular progress reporting                                      | Early Alert/Warning | Intentional reporting system for all levels of undergraduate students, personal accountability for at-risk students in arts or academic coursework | All students who are in danger of falling below established GPA thresholds in liberal arts and/or art school coursework, or not progressing at the required pace in their arts work; in particular, the targeted subgroup of first and second-year music students | Established system of midterm progress reports, letters of concern/ warning/probation from advisors. Newly-instituted Arts Advisors in the School of Music a recent refinement. Intention to work on standardizing documentation in the arts schools. |
| <u>Student Support Team</u> – staff from Campus Police and Student Affairs responding to concerns raised about current students from peers, faculty, and staff | Early Intervention  | Students of concern at any level   | Students at risk due to personal issues of all levels/majors, impacting the student's well-being and/or academic success  | Recently institutionalized online Maxient reporting system for students of concern, with follow-up from team. Data reports about case work, subsequent student success readily available.   |

## **Appendix O**

### **Western Carolina University**

**Identified/Targeted Subgroups:**

First-time, Full-time freshmen (FTFTF)

**Example Program for a Subgroup**

Catamount Gap, a Summer Learning Community bridging the gap from high school to college

**Example/Selected Completion Goal for a Subgroup:**

Increase the 6-year graduation rate from 52.9% (5-year average) to 57.7% for the 2016 cohort

Based on current trends in higher education and forecasting for the future, the Division of Student Success at WCU established a Strategic Plan to give direction to our retention and graduation practices. Currently, WCU strives to increase retention and reduce stop-out by promoting High Impact Practices (HIPs) that can reach all students. WCU also recognizes that the sophomore year is a critical point in students' careers and has implemented plans to enhance sophomore student satisfaction, persistence, grit, and commitment to degree completion. Additionally, through better utilization of WCU's advising system, GradesFirst 2.0 (a product of Educational Advisory Board), we can utilize analytics and tracking tools to monitor students' progress towards degree. Finally, WCU continues to provide summer learning opportunities as a "pathway toward degree" for students in specific disciplines such as nursing, education, and STEM. Specific student subgroups that are monitored for retention include:

- All First-Time, Full-time Freshmen (FTFTF)
- Students enrolled in the Academic Success Program (ASP). ASP is a conditional admission program in that students who are invited to participate MUST successfully complete a 5-week intensive summer program. Students are enrolled in six to seven credit hours of courses, all of which count toward graduation, and these students participate in academic, social, and transitional support events, workshops, and seminars.
- Honors Students.
- FTFTF enrolled in a transition course. Transition course are one-hour-credit courses in which students learn about campus resources, procedures and policies, and how to negotiate college life.
- FTFTF enrolled in a First-Year Seminar. First-Year Seminars allow students to experience the intellectual lifestyle of the WCU community. First Year Seminars count as a core Liberal Studies requirement for all degree programs.
- FTFTF who are first-generation: First-time, Full-time freshmen who are the first person in their immediate family to attend college.
- Students enrolled in Catamount Gap: This 5-week summer program bridges the gap from high school to college life in an active investigation of how academic, social, and personal development are intertwined. Students receive academic support opportunities such as individualized tutoring and writing consultations, supplemental instruction group study sessions, and academic skill workshops, while earning 6-8 credits toward graduation.
- Students who participate in a Learning Community: these integrated learning environments have the potential to provide a significant impact on learning outcomes and establish a strong support network.

**WCU Goals**

WCU plans to increase total graduates by 25% and increase our 6-year graduation rate to 60% by the year 2020. Based on current trends of WCU FTTF graduation rates, our goal is to yield a 6-year graduation rate of 57.7% for the 2016 cohort, a 53.9% 5-year graduation rates for the 2017 FTTF cohort, and a 40.3% 4-year graduation rate for the 2018 FTTF cohort.

**Western Carolina University Continuous Improvement Plan**

| <b>Program Name and Brief Description</b>   | <b>Type</b>  | <b>Level of Student</b>  | <b>Targeted Subgroup</b>   | <b>Student Success Program: Selection, Refinement, and Rationale</b>   |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| Finish Line Program: Degree completion program for students who did not finish their bachelor's degree.   | Degree Completion  | 90+ hours, cumulative 2.0 GPA, stopped out of school for at least 1 year | Degree Completion - Part-way home – open to new or returning student with a 2.0 GPA and 90+ completed hours.                                 | <u>Rationale:</u> By increasing support for this population, WCU assists students who transition back to WCU for degree attainment.<br><u>Refinement:</u> In AY 2016-2017, the criteria for the program was adjusted to capture more students; any students who have been away for 1 year and who have completed 90+ hours with a 2.0 GPA are included.  |
| Transition courses: one credit hour courses in which students learn about campus resources, procedures and policies, and how to negotiate college life. | Academic Engagement; Degree completion; Financial Literacy; First-year success | FTTF   | First-time, full-time students who receive Pell grants. A specific section of USI 130 or COUN 140 is reserved for students who receive Pell. | Students will be placed into Pell-specific transition courses during the initial advising process.<br><u>Rationale:</u> Approximately 41.6% of WCU's FTTF are Pell recipients.<br><u>Refinement:</u> A pilot program is underway to group first generation students into specific sections. Further refinement of this program includes creating specific sections for Pell recipients, who will receive enhanced instruction on financial literacy. |
| Catamount Gap: Summer Learning Community bridging the gap from high school to college over a 5-week summer term.  | Academic Engagement; First-year success  | FTTF who begin enrollment in the summer.                                 | FTTF students enrolled in a summer learning community who have an unweighted High School GPA < 3.0.  | <u>Rationale:</u> By providing increased support for this subgroup, we can potentially increase the WCU's overall fall-to-fall retention rate.<br><u>Refinement:</u> Students enrolled in Catamount Gap who have an unweighted High School GPA < 3.0 will be monitored during the summer term and linked with a learning community in the fall and spring term.  |

## Appendix P

### Winston-Salem State University

**Identified/Targeted Subgroups:**

First-time, Full-time freshmen (FTFTF)

Male First-time, Full-time freshmen

Transfers with associate degrees

**Example Program for a Subgroup**

Male Renaissance Program, which helps minority male students persist from semester to semester and supports them to complete their degrees and graduate in a timely fashion

**Example/Selected Completion Goal for a Subgroup:**

Increase the 4-year graduation rate for transfer students with associate degrees from 61% to 71%

Winston Salem State University (WSSU) has focused on improving the retention and graduation rates of first-time, full-time (FTFT) students for a number of years, as well as the graduation rates of transfer students. During the past five (5) years, WSSU has averaged about 5% below its targeted retention rate goals (2015-16: 83% target; 77.3% actual), while still remaining ahead of its peers. We have been consistently ahead of our 6-year graduation rate targets (2014-15: 43.5% target; 46.3 actual), but below targets for 4-year transfer student graduation rates (2014-15: 68% target; 66% actual). WSSU has also focused on degree efficiency, reducing the average number of credit hours a student attempts from 137 to 128 since 2013.

**Summary of Goals**

WSSU has set graduation goals for FTFT freshmen, male FTFT freshmen, and transfers from community college with an associate degree for 2022. For FTFT freshmen, the overall 4-, 5-, and 6-year graduation rates will improve from the five year averaged rate of 20%, 39%, and 45% respectively to 25%, 45% and 52%; for the sub-group of males the rates will improve from 15%, 33% and 41% to 20%, 40% and 50% respectively; and for the transfer students the improvement in the 4-year rate will be from 61% to 71%. This would then increase the total headcount of graduates each year over the baseline value assuming that the size of the freshman class, the size of the male sub-population and the number of transfers remained at the baseline value or increased.

**Winston-Salem State University Continuous Improvement Plan**

| Program Name and Brief Description  | Targeted Subgroup   | Student Success Program: Selection, Rationale, and Refinement  |
|---|---|--|
| GradesFirst is an Early Warning/Early Intervention software that faculty members and other staff use to assist students of any level who need help; identify students who are experiencing academic difficulty; and alert the necessary personnel so that | Because it is used for all undergraduate students, GradesFirst will have a positive impact on progression and degree completion for first-time, full-time students, males | GradesFirst has the potential to improve degree completion among first-time, full-time students, males, and transfer students. Data from other populations who have used this early alert system have demonstrated success. For example, Women's Basketball players in particular, saw an increase in team GPA from Spring 2015 of 2.64 to |



## APPENDIX P

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <p>interventions can take place, be recorded and assessed.</p>   | <p>and transfer students.</p>  | <p>2.92 for Spring 2016. Using this system, coupled with interventions yields positive chance. It is an existing program, which we will refine for the subgroups as follows:</p> <p><b>NFTF</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ GradesFirst Campaigns sent to this group three times each semester</li> <li>➤ Intervention notes/follow-ups analyzed</li> <li>➤ Midterm grade report used to send alerts to advisors/Class dean</li> </ul> <p><b>Males</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ GradesFirst Campaigns sent to this group three times each semester</li> <li>➤ Intervention notes/Follow-ups analyzed</li> <li>➤ Midterm grade report used to send alerts to advisors/class dean</li> <li>➤ <b>Transfer Students</b></li> <li>➤ GradesFirst Campaigns sent to this group three times each semester</li> <li>➤ Intervention notes/follow-ups analyzed</li> <li>➤ Midterm grade report used to send alerts to advisors/class dean</li> </ul>   |
| <p>Tutoring/SI/Online Tutoring: Tutoring is provided in all disciplines and at all levels across the WSSU campus. Our face to face tutoring covers courses with traditionally high DFW rates. The tutoring centers are staffed by directors, consultants, peer tutors and para-professional tutors who provide face-to-face and online consultations for all students. Supplemental Instruction (SI) is an international, peer facilitated academic assistance program that targets historically difficult courses to improve student performance and retention by offering regularly scheduled, out-of-class study review sessions.</p> | <p>Research from National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) shows that High Impact Practices have especially positive impact on retention and success of students from racial minorities and those with lower academic profiles.</p> | <p>Over 40% of students according to NSSE data worked with students to understand course materials. Through ongoing tutoring/SI efforts and our newly acquired Online tutoring initiative, we intend to increase this percentage. Percentages of DFW rates are between 15- 20% lower for currently tutored students as compared to non-tutored students in the same classes. It is an existing program, which we will refine for the subgroups as follows:</p> <p><b>NFTF:</b> A list of the cohort will be used to determine who used tutoring services; analysis of the cohort will be conducted-#of visits (duplicated and unduplicated, GPA analysis, retention)</p> <p><b>Males:</b> A list of the cohort will be used to determine who used tutoring services; analysis of the cohort will be conducted-#of visits (duplicated and unduplicated, GPA analysis, retention)</p> <p><b>Transfer Students:</b> A list of the cohort will be used to determine who used tutoring services; analysis of the cohort will be conducted-#of visits (duplicated and unduplicated, GPA analysis, retention)</p> |
| <p>RAMDITON is the name of WSSU's welcome week for first-year students and is designed to give students a head start on their academic tenure at the University, through a series of activities aimed to provide them with information that they would need to be successful as a college student. Curricular and co-curricular programming, in a variety of formats,</p>  | <p>This program has been ongoing for seven years and has been revamped to align with the new strategic plan. Goals and outcomes have been defined, and students can be placed in targeted subgroups so that assessments can be</p>     | <p>Using RAMDITON with the specific cohorts (NFTF and Males) will provide opportunities to get them on the right track at an early stage in their academic journeys. It is an existing program that needs data refinement to target males:</p> <p><b>NFTF</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Check accuracy of schedules</li> <li>➤ Ensure alignment with advisor</li> <li>➤ Complete RAMDITON and NSSE surveys</li> <li>➤ Ensure continued alignment with Legacy</li> </ul>   |

## APPENDIX P

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| are implemented to provide students with a holistic college experience.  | made.   | <p style="text-align: center;">Leader</p> <p><b>Males</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Check accuracy of schedules</li> <li>➤ Ensure alignment with advisor</li> <li>➤ Complete RAMDITON and NSSE surveys</li> <li>➤ Ensure continued alignment with Legacy Leader</li> <li>➤ Participate (mandatory) in the “For Brothers Only” Mentoring Program, Male Renaissance Program, or Special Population Group</li> </ul>   |
| First Year Experience: A two-semester course for first-year students to introduce them to WSSU’s tenets of social justice and a set of skills that will empower them to succeed in their academic pursuits, their personal relationships and in their life’s work through an educational process defined as liberal education. | This course is targeted to NFTF but may also look at males as a learning community.   | <p>Because of the NFTF have a high chance of dropping out during their first year, the FYE will provide opportunities for students to engage with faculty, staff and students across campus to help them transition into their courses, living arrangements, university life, etc. It is a new program.</p> <p><b>NFTF</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Compare retention rates of students who completed FYE course with those who did not</li> <li>➤ Compare GPAs of those who completed an FYE course with those who did not</li> <li>➤ Collect assessment data on Learning outcomes defined for program (Critical Thinking, Oral Communication, Written Communication, Critical Reading) via projects and surveys</li> </ul>   |
| Male Renaissance Program helps minority male students persist from semester to semester and to support them to complete their degrees and graduate in a timely fashion via three programmatic areas- academic enrichment, academic support, and career and leadership development  | This program has proven somewhat effective at building community among a male cohort.   | An existing program that needs data refinement in order to target the male cohort of NFTF: Cohort will participate in the Academic Enhancement Program; analysis will be conducted-midterm grades for cohort, analysis of weekly hours in AEP Program, Weekly academic reports by ASC, Progress reports to/from professors   |
| Transfer Advising Model: New transfer students have the opportunity to get personalized, customized advising by appointment and are advised through their major by class deans in UCALL so they stay on track  | This model is showing promise at engaging this subgroup of students early in their matriculation so that they are more likely to stay on track. | <p>The Transfer Advising Model at WSSU is a customized approach at engaging transfer students BEFORE and during their academic journeys. This creates a better sense of belonging and allows personnel to keep track of students through more “intrusive nurturing.” An existing program; needs data refinement for transfer students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Reports of #of transfer students who intend to enroll vs. advised and registered by RAMDITON; by 1<sup>st</sup> day of classes; by census date</li> <li>➤ Reports of percent of cohort advised during early registration</li> <li>➤ Midterm report of cohort and any interventions put in place to assist them</li> <li>➤ Interventions reports to include</li> <li>➤ Final grade reports of cohort</li> </ul> |