

DRAFT

The University of North Carolina Online Initiative

The goal of the online initiative is to build an additional integrated access point for marketing campuses' online degree and certificate programs to a wider audience both in North Carolina and beyond the borders to a national and international audience. First and foremost, it is meant to increase access to educational opportunity to North Carolinians wherever they are in the State. It will function to direct student inquiries to the campus programs in which they express an interest.

Features of University of North Carolina Online

Based on market research for branding and advertising
Coordinated marketing to bring traffic to site for all campus online programs
Online degree program search engine
Online certificate search engine
Online course search engine by term
Decision-tree software to help students find a program to meet their needs
Multiple accesses to search engines
Link to military education site
Link to 2+2 online degree programs sites.
Drive inquiries to campuses that have programs in which students' are interested
Drive inquiries to campuses in which students express an interest
Direct national and international inquiries to available courses and programs
Generates custom e-mail with PDF information about program(s) of interest
Provide supporting information to students about online learning
General information about admission and financial aid but linked to campus for specifics
FAQ sections for students interested in online courses and programs
Quality assurance processes
Seamless interinstitutional registration, financial aid, and cashier functions (TBD)

Project Development

Campuses have been building and offering online degree and certificate programs for several years. Campuses have invested in online program development and GA has used its distance learning fund to support campuses building or completing online degree programs, particularly in high-need areas. Discussions have taken place over the past couple years about the need for more coordination of online programs especially the marketing function. In the fall of 2006 a goal was set to be prepared to announce the University of North Carolina Online by April 2007. Multiple working groups with heavy campus input have been addressing the various aspect of the project since then. Learn NC was contracted to do much of the technical work for this site, and for the past few months a working group has met each Monday afternoon to track progress. Cross and Associates was contracted to do the market analysis and branding of the site and is in the midst of that work, with results being provided regularly to the working team. Teams are working everyday on aspect of the site with the various parts now coming together.

Timelines

February 15-March 6: Campuses review narrative material about programs to be included in online site database.

March 5-13: Outside consultant reviews plans for University of North Carolina Online and provides assessment and recommendations. [Dr. Bruce Chaloux, Director, Electronic Campus, Southern Regional Education Board]

March 28-30: University of North Carolina Online ready to go live; in house reviews.

April 2-18: University of North Carolina Online live for campus review, assessment, and recommendations.

April 2-15: Outside consultant on business plan for University of North Carolina Online.

April 19-30: Any revisions or additions based on review and use of site by campuses and students.

May 1-7: Final communication plan in place to coordinate announcement at GA and at campuses.

May 1-7: Advertising plan in place for summer, primarily NC oriented.

May 11: Formal announcement of University of North Carolina Online in conjunction with Board of Governors meeting.

May 11: Plan for next stages of the development of the University of North Carolina Online.

May-June: Dialogue with campuses about programs for national audience.

June-August: Dialogue with campuses about programs for select international venues.

July: Outside consultant on University of North Carolina Online plan for offering degree programs in international venues.

Future Developments

Expand into national and international arenas—develop revenue streams

Develop special site for high school students taking online college courses

Consider economy of scale for help-desk functions and infrastructure support

Explore economy of scale in online delivery of courses

Develop active brokering entity to find students for campus programs

Add additional features to the site

Integrate site more closely with CFNC