February 26, 2025 at 2:15 p.m.
Via Videoconference and PBS North Carolina Livestream
University of North Carolina System Office
223 S. West Street, Board Room
Raleigh, North Carolina

AGENDA

OPEN SESSION

CLOSED SESSION

OPEN SESSION

A-8. Adjourn

Closed Session Motion

Motion to go into closed session to:

➤Prevent the premature disclosure of an honorary award or scholarship.

Pursuant to: G.S. 143-318.11(a)(2).

THE UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

DRAFT MINUTES

January 27, 2025 at 10:45 a.m.
Via Videoconference and PBS North Carolina Livestream

This meeting of the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs was presided over by Chair Terry Hutchens. The following committee members, constituting a quorum, were also present by phone: Kellie Hunt Blue, Cameron Brown, Gene Davis, Kathryn Greeley, Mark Holton, and Sonja Phillips Nichols.

Chancellors participating were James R. Martin and Kimberly van Noort.

Staff members present included David English and others from the UNC System Office.

1. Call to Order and Approval of OPEN Session Minutes (Item A-1)

The chair called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m. on Monday, January 27, 2025. The open session minutes from the November 7 and 13, 2024, meetings were approved by unanimous consent.

2. Licensure Program Approvals (Item A-2)

The following institutions requested licensure approval:
- South University, High Point, an existing licensed institution
- The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, an existing licensed institution
- The University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, an existing licensed institution
- The University of Southern California, an existing licensed institution
- Ultimate Medical Academy, a new applicant for licensure
- Three institutions seek a limited license

Chair Hutchens called for a motion to approve the five requests for licensure approval and the three limited licenses as discussed and to submit to the Board through the consent agenda.

MOTION: Resolved, that the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs approve the five requests for licensure approval and the three limited licenses as discussed and for submission to the Board through the consent agenda.

Motion: Gene Davis
Motion carried

3. Project Lead the Way Course Weighting (Item A-3)

Project Lead the Way requested that seven courses, which have been approved by the American Council on Education under the ACE National Guide, continue to be designated as 5.0-point weighted courses as are Advanced

Placement, international Baccalaureate, and Cambridge International Education courses, within the North Carolina high school curriculum.

Chair Hutchens called for a motion to approve the request that the seven courses discussed and submitted by Project Lead the Way maintain the same 5.0-point weight as AP, IB, and CIE courses and submit to the Board through the consent agenda.

MOTION: Resolved, that the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs approve the request that the seven courses discussed and submitted by Project Lead the Way maintain the same 5.0-point weight as AP, IB, and CIE courses with submission to the Board through the consent agenda.

Motion: Mark Holton
Motion carried

4. North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program (Item A-4)

The committee heard a review of the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program. The program was reestablished by the North Carolina General Assembly with the purpose to "recruit, prepare, and support students residing in or attending institutions of higher education located in NC for preparation as highly effective STEM, elementary, or special education teachers in the State's public schools."

Governor Blue called for a motion to move into closed session to prevent the premature disclosure of an honorary award or scholarship. Pursuant to General Statue 143-318.11(a)(2).

MOTION: Resolved, that the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs move into closed session to prevent the premature disclosure of an honorary award or scholarship. Pursuant to General Statue 143-318.11(a)(2).

Motion: Kellie Hunt Blue
Motion Carried

THE MEETING MOVED INTO CLOSED SESSION at 11:25 a.m.

THE MEETING RESUMED IN OPEN SESSION at 11:31 a.m.

There being no further business and without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 11:32 a.m.

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Sonja Phillips Nichols, Secretary

DRAFT MINUTES

January 29, 2025 at 1:30 p.m.
Via Videoconference and PBS North Carolina Livestream
223 S. West Street, Board Room
Raleigh, North Carolina

This meeting of the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs was presided over by Vice Chair Gene Davis. The following committee members, constituting a quorum, were also present: Kellie Hunt Blue, Cameron Brown, Kathryn Greeley, Mark Holton, and Sonja Phillips Nichols.

Chancellors participating were James R. Martin and Kimberly van Noort. Wade Maki, chair of the UNC Faculty Assembly, also participated.

Staff members present included David English and others from the UNC System Office.

Governor Hutchens, chair of the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs, had a preexisting conflict and asked Vice Chair Gene Davis to step in as chair of the committee this afternoon. Chair Davis called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 29, 2025.

1. **Academic Affairs Update (Item A-1)**

Dr. David English, senior vice president, began with an update on the western institutions' recovery from the impacts of Hurricane Helene. UNC System institutions worked tirelessly to rebuild to ensure the delivery of their missions of teaching, research, and service. This dedication serves as a testament to campus leaders, supporters, faculty, staff, and students, with generous support from the North Carolina General Assembly, which provided critical investment to fuel recovery and progress across the affected institutions. All three institutions — Appalachian State University, Western Carolina University, and the University of North Carolina Asheville — have increased their student enrollment for this spring semester compared to each of the past two years.

2. **Update on UNC System Health Care Initiatives (Item A-2)**

Katherine Martin, vice president, continued her presentation from November on UNC System initiatives aimed at improving health care in North Carolina. The Rural Residency and Medical Education Training Fund will support expanding or establishing new rural residency training programs across ECU Health and UNC Health in six high-need specialties, with the aim of increasing the number of physicians practicing in underserved rural areas across the state. The Board will continue to receive updates on use of the fund and outcomes.

3. **Update on Implementation of Section 400.3.4 of the UNC Policy Manual,** *Policy on Faculty Workload* **(Item A-3)**

4. **Update on Implementation of Section 400.1 of the UNC Policy Manual,** *Policy on Academic Program Planning* **(Item A-4)**

Agenda items A-3. and A-4., as theoretically and practically interwoven, were delivered in tandem. Daniel Harrison, vice president, provided updates on the implementation of two recently adopted or revised policies. The policy on faculty workload has 100 percent compliance Systemwide on both institutional faculty workload policies and individual faculty workload plans. With regard to the policy on academic program planning, all institutions have implemented the program review requirements, and a regulation and user manual are being created to guide new academic program applications, incorporating information on return on investment, workforce needs, and student demand.

5. **UNC Board of Governors Resolution on Literacy in Teacher Preparation, Compliance Results December 2024 (Item A-5)**

Dr. Shun Robertson, senior vice president, and Dr. Ashton Clemmons, assistant vice president, presented the final results of the UNC Systemwide review of teacher preparation in early literacy. As directed by the Board of Governors in the fall, all programs were in full compliance by December 1, 2024.

6. **The Importance of Research for the UNC System (Item A-6)**

Three UNC System chancellors — Chancellor Philip Rogers from East Carolina University, Chancellor Martin from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, and Chancellor Sharon Gaber from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte — presented on the current landscape and impact of university research at their institutions. They shared examples of cross-disciplinary, translational, and use-inspired research, among others, and how research connects students, faculty, staff, and local and regional communities and beyond.

There being no further business and without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

_____
Sonja Phillips Nichols, Secretary

THE **UNIVERSITY** OF **NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM**

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs
Committee on Strategic Initiatives

DRAFT MINUTES

November 13, 2024 at 1:30 p.m.
Via Videoconference and PBS North Carolina Livestream
223 S. West Street, Board Room
Raleigh, North Carolina

This joint meeting of the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs and the Committee on Strategic Initiatives was presided over by Chair Terry Hutchens and Chair Joel Ford. The following committee members for the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs, constituting a quorum, were present in person or by phone: Kellie Hunt Blue, Cameron Brown, Gene Davis, Kathryn Greeley, Mark Holton, and Sonja Phillips Nichols. The following committee members for the Committee on Strategic Initiatives, constituting a quorum, were present in person or by phone: Cameron Brown, Swadesh Chatterjee, Pearl Burris-Floyd, Gene Davis, and John Fraley.

Chancellors participating were Franklin Gilliam, James R. Martin, Philip Rogers, Kimberly van Noort, and Interim Chancellor Heather Norris. Wade Maki, chair of the UNC Faculty Assembly, also participated.

Staff members present included David English, Shun Robertson, and others from the UNC System Office.

The Committee on Strategic Initiatives met jointly with the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs to continue conversations about policies and practices that impact enrollment.

1. **UNC System Fall Enrollment Report and Proposed Actions Taken Pursuant to Section 700.1.3 of the UNC Policy Manual,** *Policy on Out-of-State Undergraduate Enrollment* **(Item A-1)**

Dr. David English began the meeting with an update on fall 2024 enrollment. Overall, UNC System enrollment was up by a little over two percent from last fall, including an increase in first-time freshmen. This was encouraging news especially amidst the backdrop of national news focused on declining enrollment trends. The committee then received an update on institutions' compliance with Section 700.1.3 of the UNC Policy Manual, *Policy on Out-of-State Undergraduate Enrollment*. One institution, Winston-Salem State University, was identified as exceeding its out-of-state enrollment limitation. As this is the first year for an overage by the institution and in accordance with policy, an official warning will be issued.

2. **UNC System Transfer Data (Item A-2)**

Dr. Shun Robertson and Dr. English covered transfer enrollment trends along with some of the credit transfer challenges students can face when applying or enrolling in one of the UNC System institutions. The joint committee learned about a proposed regulation change with a threefold aim. First, the proposed change would codify the need for transfer guides to be updated and regularly published by institutions to make it easier for potential transfer students to plan their academic journey. Second, the regulation would codify what were once ambiguous interpretations or applications around the North Carolina Comprehensive Articulation Agreement. Lastly, the

revision will further efforts to ensure that transfer students receive a timely review of their transfer credits shortly after their acceptance.

3. NC College Connect (Item A-3)

Next, the committees heard from Dr. Bethany Meighen and Dr. Robertson on the NC College Connect program, a program aimed at simplifying the application and admissions process for North Carolina high school students. Through NC College Connect, high school students will be notified of their potential eligibility to attend one of the participating UNC System institutions or community colleges and be directed to a simplified application. Since the launch of NC College Connect this fall, students have completed over 5,000 applications.

There being no further business and without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

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Sonja Phillips Nichols, Secretary
Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs

_____
Swadesh Chatterjee, Secretary
Committee on Strategic Initiatives

AGENDA ITEM

A-2. Academic Affairs Update .... David English

Situation:	The committee will hear an update on recent activities involving academic affairs.
Background:	The University of North Carolina System Office Division of Academic Affairs complements the University of North Carolina System's core academic mission, supports faculty, and ensures success for research and sponsored and international programs. The division also aids with student affairs and other access and outreach activities.
Assessment:	Information will be provided to the committee on recent updates in academic affairs at the UNC System Office and across the 17 institutions.
Action:	This item is for information only.

APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE DISASTER RECOVERY ACT OF 2024
REPORT TO THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

A Report to the
Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee

Submitted by
The University of North Carolina Board of Governors

March 15, 2025

As Required by
Senate Bill 743, Part 1, Section 1.1. "The Disaster Recovery Act of 8 2024 – Part II."

THE DISASTER RECOVERY ACT OF 2024
REPORT TO THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
March 15, 2025

APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE DISASTER RECOVERY ACT OF 2024

SECTION 4 A.6.(i) Reporting Requirements. – By March 15, 2025, the University of North Carolina Board of Governors, the State Board of Community Colleges, and the Authority shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the Fiscal Research Division of the North Carolina General Assembly on the implementation of the program at the institutions of higher education that received funds pursuant to this section, including the number and type of institutions of higher education that were allocated funds, the amount of funds allocated to each institution, the number of emergency scholarship grants awarded to students and the amount of those grants, the use of emergency scholarship grant funds by eligible postsecondary students, any funds reimbursed to institutions due to coverage of losses by alternative funds, and any remaining funds available for awards in subsequent semesters.

Funding Allocation
The General Assembly allocated $5 million to the UNC Board of Governors to provide financial assistance to students affected by Hurricane Helene. In recognition of the severe impact sustained by Appalachian State University, the University of North Carolina Asheville, and Western Carolina University, each of these three institutions was awarded $800,000 to support their students.

The remaining $2.6 million was distributed among the other 13 University of North Carolina System institutions on a pro rata basis, calculated according to the number of students from federally declared disaster areas enrolled at each university. To ensure equitable access to funding, a minimum allocation of $25,000 was guaranteed for each of these institutions.

To maintain accountability and transparency in the distribution of funds, each institution was required to submit tracking reports in December 2024 and January 2025. Any funds not awarded to students by January 24, 2025, were returned and reallocated equally among App State, UNC Asheville, and WCU. This reallocation allowed these institutions to continue supporting students in need and sustaining their enrollment.

Please refer to Table 1, which presents a comprehensive overview of the original funding allocations approved by the UNC Board of Governors for each institution during their November 14, 2024, meeting. This table also details the total number of grants awarded by each institution and the corresponding amounts.

Five institutions collectively returned $472,075 in unspent funds. To maximize the impact of these resources, the returned funds were redistributed among App State, UNC Asheville, and WCU. These institutions had previously requested additional funding to support more students, allowing them to further extend financial assistance to eligible recipients. These additional funds are to be awarded to students no later than Friday, March 7, 2025.

Emergency Scholarship Grants Awarded
The funding provided emergency scholarship grants of up to $2,500 per eligible student to help cover essential expenses that supported their continued enrollment. These grants were designed to alleviate financial hardships by addressing costs such as transportation, textbooks, tuition, fees, relocation expenses, and living expenses.

In total, 4,137 scholarships were awarded across participating institutions. Table 1 provides a detailed breakdown of the number of scholarships awarded by each institution.

The majority of the scholarships were used to cover living expenses (53%) and tuition assistance (19%), reflecting the most pressing financial needs of students. Table 2 offers a categorical breakdown of total funding allocations, illustrating how the grants were utilized to support student success.

Table 1: Emergency Scholarship Grants

Institution	Number of Scholarships Awarded	Initial Allocation	Amount Awarded	Reallocated Amount	Revised Allocation
ASU	768	$ 800,000	$ 800,000	$ -	$ 957,358
ECU	171	$ 235,729	$ 203,801	$ 31,928	$ 203,801
ECSU	18	$ 25,000	$ 25,000	$ -	
FSU	24	$ 25,000	$ 25,000	$ -	
N.C. A&T	55	$ 69,282	$ 69,282	$ -	
NCCU	42	$ 41,612	$ 41,612	$ -	
NCSU	266	$ 541,373	$ 541,373	$ -	
UNCA	907	$ 800,000	$ 800,000	$ -	$ 957,358
UNC-CH	48	$ 429,212	$ 92,231	$ 336,981	$ 92,231
UNCC	749	$ 653,112	$ 653,112	$ -	
UNCG	94	$ 202,566	$ 202,566	$ -	
UNCP	19	$ 59,777	$ 29,671	$ 30,106	$ 29,671
UNCW	147	$ 247,769	$ 185,609	$ 62,160	$ 185,609
UNCSA	7	$ 25,000	$ 14,100	$ 10,900	$ 14,100
WCU	794	$ 800,000	$ 800,000	$ -	$ 957,358
WSSU	28	$ 44,568	$ 44,568	$ -	
Total	4,137	$ 5,000,000	$ 4,527,925	$ 472,075	

Table 2: Emergency Scholarship Grants Funding Categories

Institution	Tuition	Fees	Transportation	Textbooks	Living Expenses	Relocation Expenses	Other	Total Awarded
ASU	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 800,000	$ -	$ -	$ 800,000
ECU	$ 90,549	$ 750	$ 10,100	$ 12,300	$ 82,002	$ 6,600	$ 1,500	$ 203,801
ECSU	$ 2,056	$ 1,600	$ 4,700	$ 1,800	$ 9,478	$ 4,911	$ 456	$ 25,000
FSU	$ 500	$ 2,000	$ 1,100	$ 1,200	$ 17,600	$ 100	$ 2,500	$ 25,000
N.C. A&T	$ 31,500	$ 6,750	$ 6,250	$ -	$ 24,782	$ -	$ -	$ 69,282
NCCU	$ 9,612	$ 1,000	$ 6,000	$ -	$ 25,000	$ -	$ -	$ 41,612
NCSU	$ 219,124	$ 35,239	$ 53,559	$ 22,148	$ 211,303	$ -	$ -	$ 541,373
UNCA	$ 100,897	$ 97,668	$ 134,959	$ 67,350	$ 240,549	$ 158,578	$ -	$ 800,000
UNC-CH	$ 79,280	$ 200	$ 3,043	$ 500	$ 8,696	$ -	$ 512	$ 92,231
UNCC	$ 186,730	$ 17,450	$ 44,342	$ 12,650	$ 347,260	$ 44,680	$ -	$ 653,112
UNCG	$ 14,460	$ 250	$ 31,001	$ 4,615	$ 136,437	$ -	$ 15,803	$ 202,566
UNCP	$ 3,853	$ -	$ 2,274	$ 158	$ 20,773	$ -	$ 2,612	$ 29,671
UNCW	$ 49,575	$ 6,512	$ 16,476	$ 8,420	$ 26,103	$ 72,523	$ 6,001	$ 185,609
UNCSA	$ 5,000	$ -	$ 2,500	$ -	$ 850	$ 2,250	$ 3,500	$ 14,100
WCU	$ 78,715	$ 42,255	$ 92,655	$ 61,335	$ 470,645	$ -	$ 54,395	$ 800,000
WSSU	$ 14,358	$ -	$ 3,180	$ -	$ 20,670	$ 1,590	$ 4,770	$ 44,568
Totals	$ 886,209	$ 212,087	$ 412,639	$ 192,476	$ 2,440,848	$ 291,232	$ 92,049	$ 4,527,925
Percent	19.50%	4.60%	9%	4.20%	53.90%	6.40%	2%	

THE **UNIVERSITY** OF
NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and
Programs
February 26, 2025

AGENDA ITEM

A-3.   Financial Aid Updates: FAFSA and Next NC Scholarship ....Andrea Poole and Mary Shuping

Situation: The Next NC Scholarship is a financial aid program that helps most North Carolinians from households making $80,000 or less pursue higher education by fully covering tuition and fees at any community college or covering more than half, if not all, of tuition and fees to attend any UNC System institution.

Background: Upon the recommendation of both the UNC System and the North Carolina Community College System, the 2021 Appropriations Act consolidated multiple existing scholarship programs into one streamlined, expanded program totaling nearly $180 million. This new structure will make it easier for North Carolinians to know how much aid they can get so they can make the most informed decisions for their future.

Students attending a community college will receive at least $3,000, covering tuition, fees, and books. Those attending a UNC System institution will get a minimum of $5,000, paying for more than half, if not all, of tuition and fees at any UNC System institution. More aid is available for students based on need.

The 2021 Appropriations Act also provided $1.25 million for a public awareness campaign about the new program. The campaign includes paid and earned media, social media, partner toolkits, and a website: https://nextncscholarship.org/. Research from the campaign indicates that hearing about the availability of funding increases a student's intention to enroll in higher education.

Assessment: The Next NC Scholarship launched in fall 2024 and is helping improve access to UNC System institutions and NC community colleges for most students with incomes below $80,000. The committee will hear a presentation on the launch of the program, Helene-recovery funds made available through the program, and next steps.

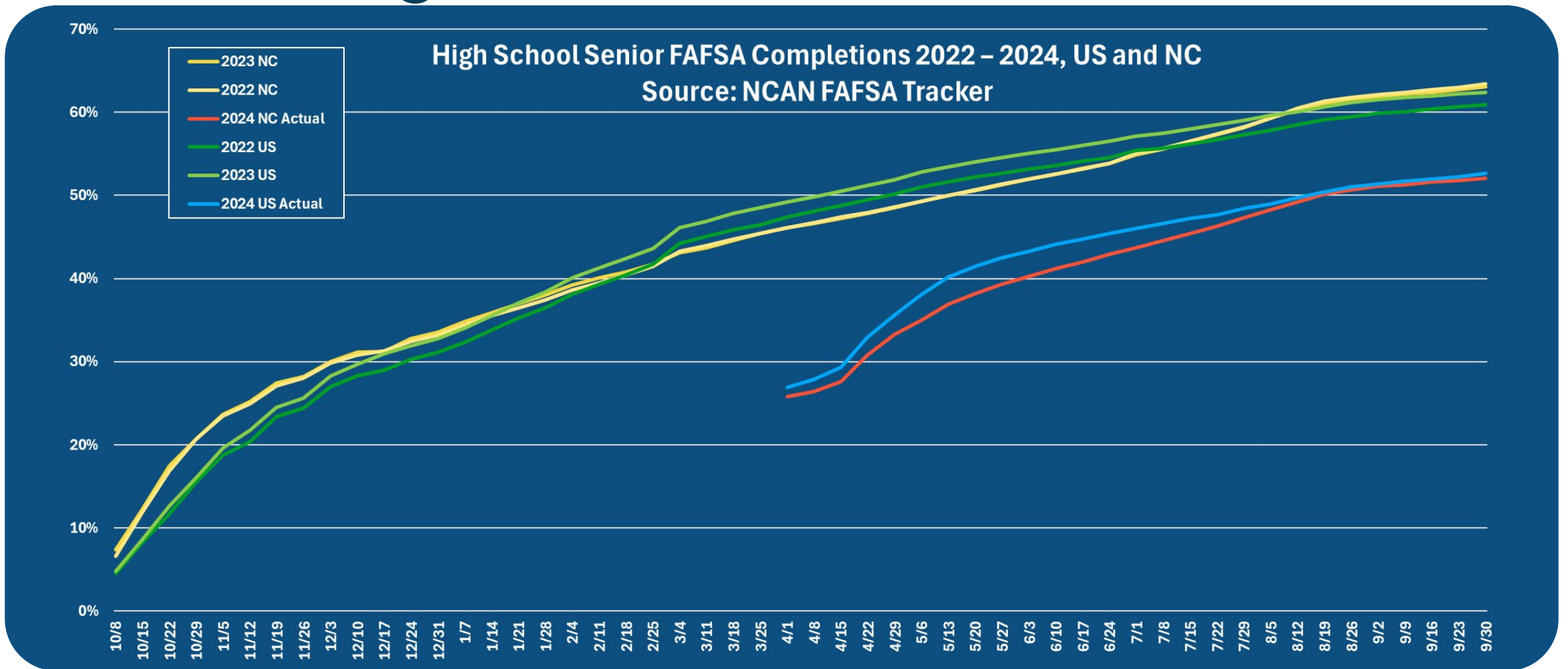**Action:**   This item is for information only.

Outline

1. 2024–25 FAFSA Recap

2. 2024–25 Next NC Scholarship and Helene Recovery

3. What's next?

NCSEAA

2024–25 FAFSA Recap

FAFSA: High School Seniors

High School Senior FAFSA Completions 2022 – 2024, US and NC
Source: NCAN FAFSA Tracker

Legend:
- 2023 NC
- 2022 NC
- 2024 NC Actual
- 2022 US
- 2023 US
- 2024 US Actual

FAFSA: New and Returning Students

FAFSAs Filed by NC Students

Legend:
- By Sept 30 (green)
- By May 15 (teal)
- By Jan 31 (dark blue)

All NC Students
- 2023-24 / 2024-25
- By Sept 30: -3%
- By May 15: -14%
- By Jan 31: -50%

w/any UNC, CC, or Private on FAFSA
- 2023-24 / 2024-25
- By Sept 30: -2%
- By May 15: -12%
- By Jan 31: -49%

w/ any UNC on FAFSA
- 2023-24 / 2024-25
- By Sept 30: -2%
- By May 15: -9%
- By Jan 31: -44%

w/ any CC on FAFSA
- 2023-24 / 2024-25
- By Sept 30: -2%
- By May 15: -17%
- By Jan 31: -60%

w/any Private on FAFSA
- 2023-24 / 2024-25
- By Sept 30: -4%
- By May 15: -12%
- By Jan 31: -44%

Note: Includes ISIRs received as of Jan 31, May 15 and Sept 30 for 2023-24 and 2024-25. FAFSA for students with an NC address and no prior bachelor's degree. Sector-specific categories include students that listed any institution in those sectors in their first three schools selected on the FAFSA. A student may be in more than one sector category.

NCSEAA

5

2024–25 Next NC Scholarship and Helene Recovery

![NEXT NC SCHOLARSHIP logo]

Most NC students with AGI $\leq$ $80K qualify for at least $5K to attend a UNC institution and $3K to attend a NC community college.

File a FAFSA to apply

How it works:

- Combines federal Pell Grants and state funds to ensure students get at least the minimum awards of $5,000 for UNC and $3,000 for NCCCS

- Eligible students have AGI $\leq$ $80,000 and SAI (federal need calculation) $\leq$ 7,500

- More aid is available based on need

NCSEAA

Next NC Campaign Results: Key Metrics

- 47% of survey respondents recognize Next NC when shown the name or ads
- 150K new users on landing page
- 25M impressions, including 600K in FAFSA-challenged counties over the summer

Awareness: I know about Next NC

- More adults are considering community college, 4-year rates and high schoolers are steady
- Adults recognizing Next NC are much more likely to consider higher education
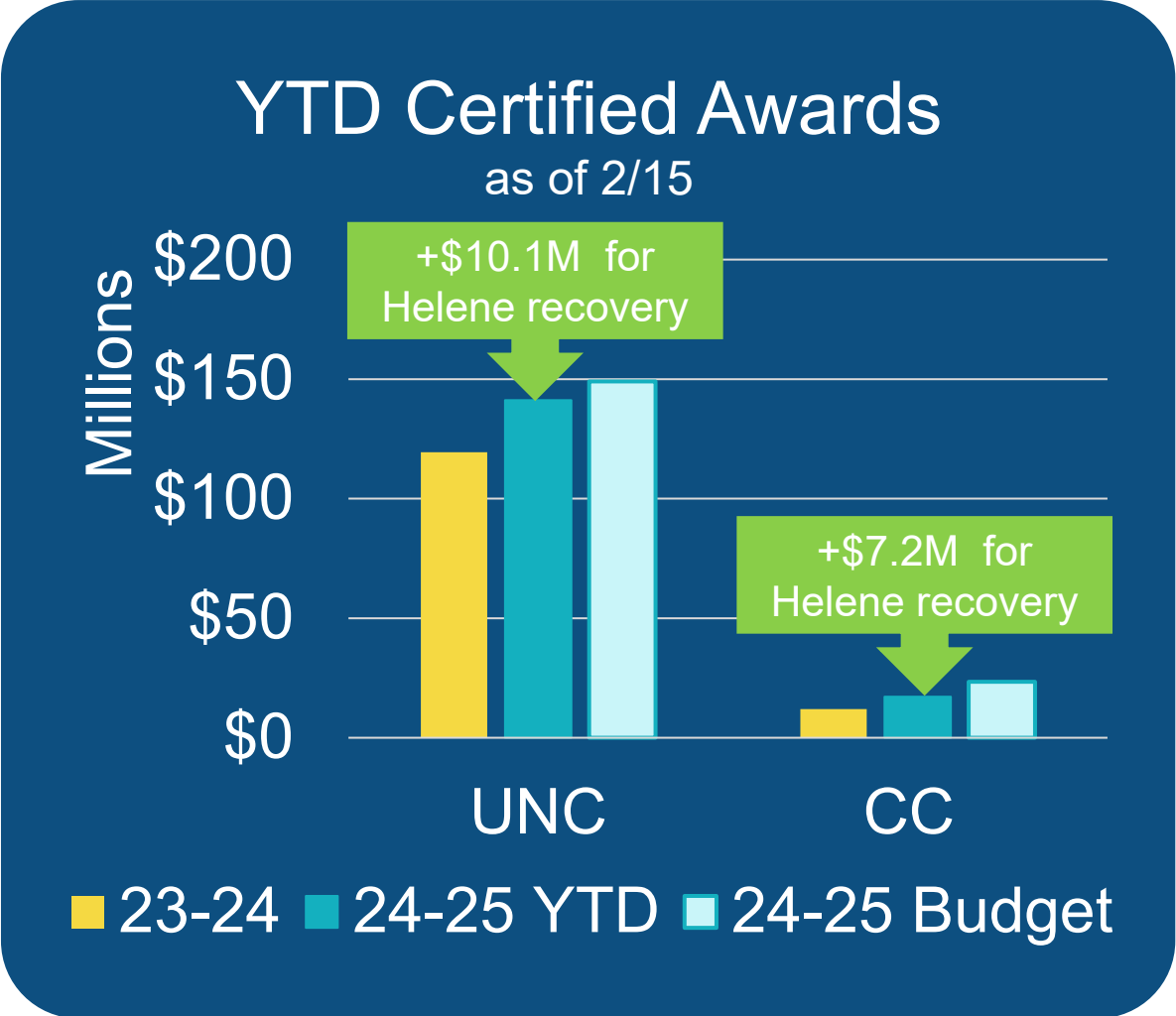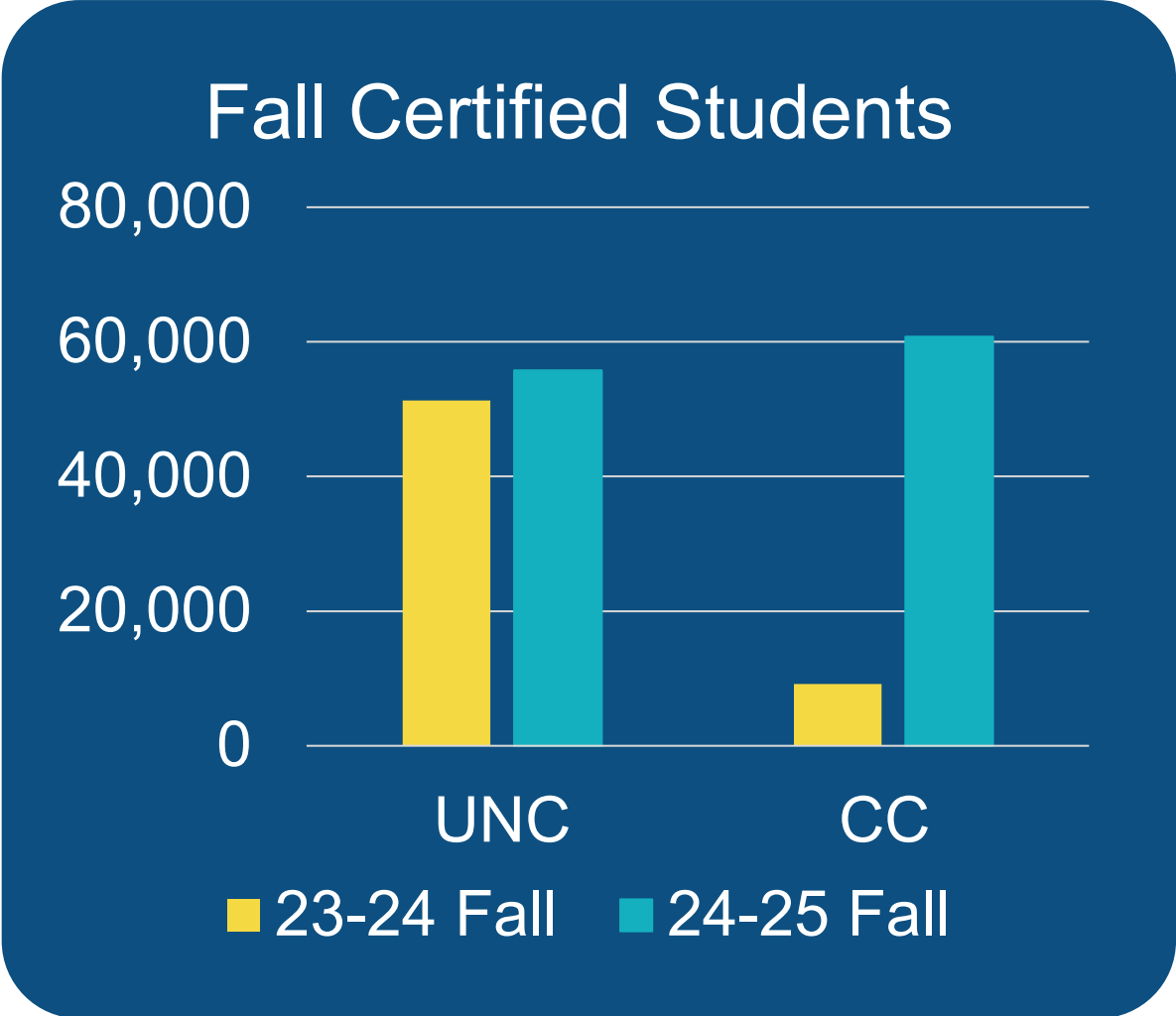
Perception: I think college is affordable

- Likelihood to complete a FAFSA decreased for adults (8ppts) and high schoolers (13 ppts)

Behavior: I plan to fill out the FAFSA

Next NC Scholarship Students and Awards

Fall Certified Students

- 23-24 Fall
- 24-25 Fall

YTD Certified Awards
as of 2/15

+$10.1M for Helene recovery

+$7.2M for Helene recovery

- 23-24
- 24-25 YTD
- 24-25 Budget

NCSEAA

Helene Recovery

Senate Bill 743 enacted, included a number of student aid provisions:

- Section 4A.7: Additional aid to impacted state grant recipients

- Section 4A.6: Emergency grants (similar to Florence)

- Sections 4A.3 and 4A.4: Tuition grants for certain CCs and UNCA

23,000+ UNC and CC Helene-impacted students received additional Next NC Awards

NCSEAA

What's Next?

2025–26 Next NC Scholarship

> Formula and guarantee to student will stay the same.

>> At least $5,000 per year for eligible UNC students from households earning $80,000 or less.

> Working on analysis of shift from EFC to SAI for future years.

The *Next NC Scholarship* is a new financial aid program that helps most North Carolinians from households making **$80,000 or less pursue higher education** by fully covering tuition and fees at any community college or more than half, if not all, of tuition and fees to attend any public university in the state.
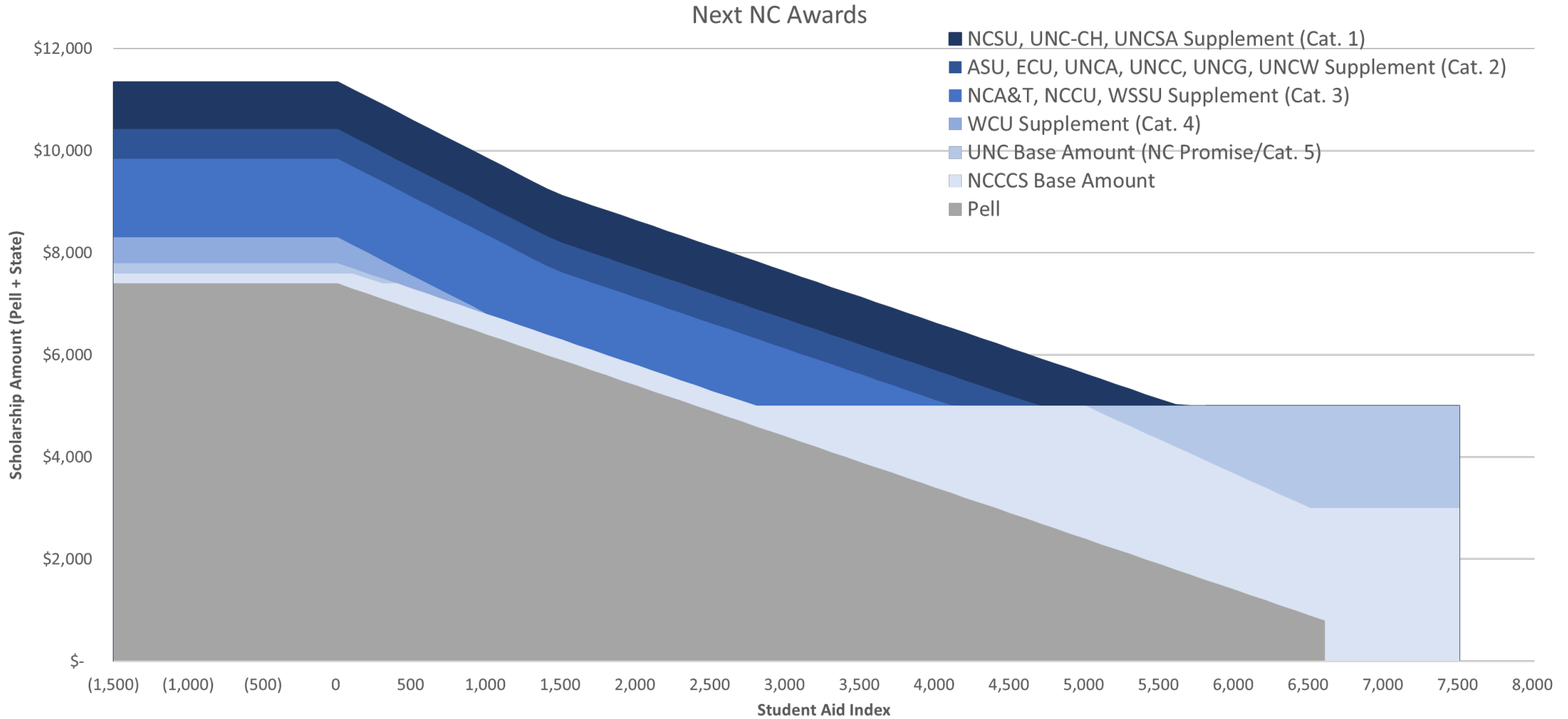
That's money that doesn't have to be repaid.

Eligible students will receive at least $5,000 to cover more than half, if not all, of their tuition and fees at NC public universities.
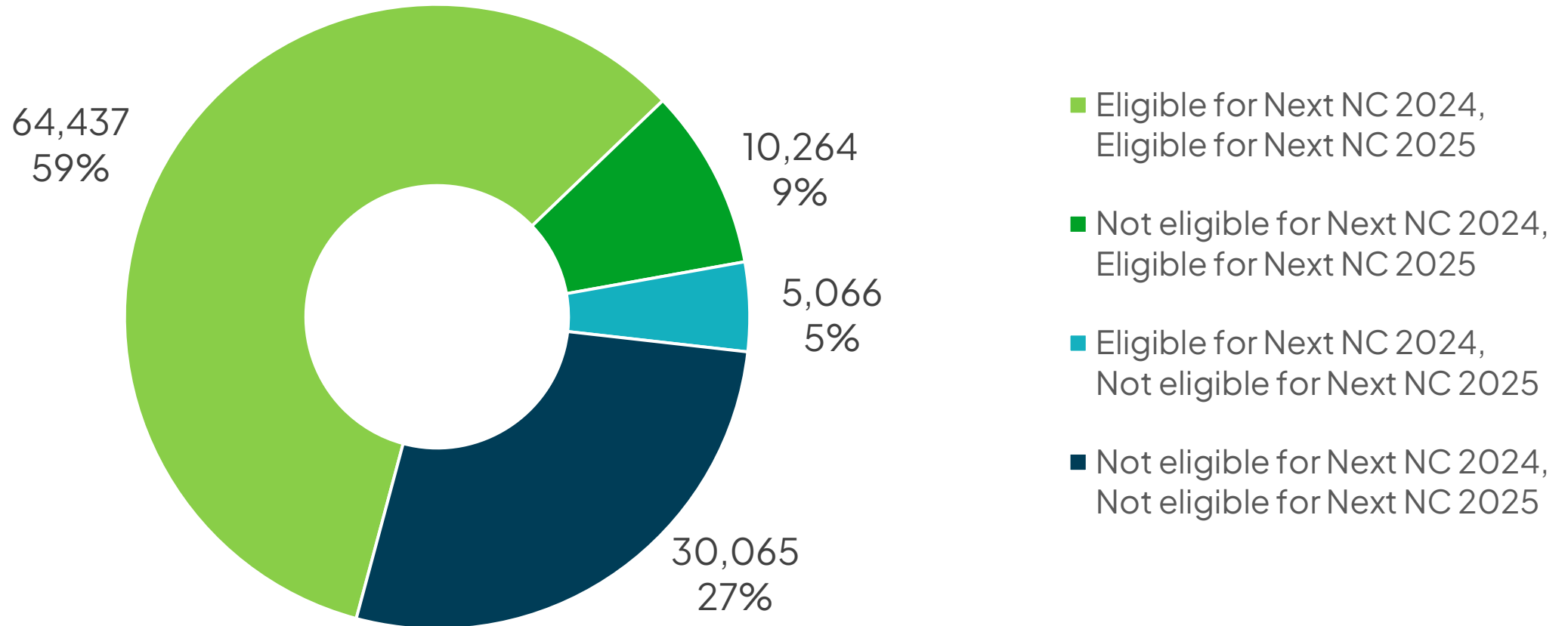
NextNCScholarship.org

NEXT NC SCHOLARSHIP | Know what you're getting. Know where you're going.

NCSEAA

Next NC Formula for 2025–56

Next NC Awards

Legend:
- NCSU, UNC-CH, UNCSA Supplement (Cat. 1)
- ASU, ECU, UNCA, UNCC, UNCG, UNCW Supplement (Cat. 2)
- NCA&T, NCCU, WSSU Supplement (Cat. 3)
- WCU Supplement (Cat. 4)
- UNC Base Amount (NC Promise/Cat. 5)
- NCCCS Base Amount
- Pell

Y-axis: Scholarship Amount (Pell + State)
X-axis: Student Aid Index

EFC to SAI Analysis: Change in Next NC Eligibility

NC FAFSAs Received as of 9/30
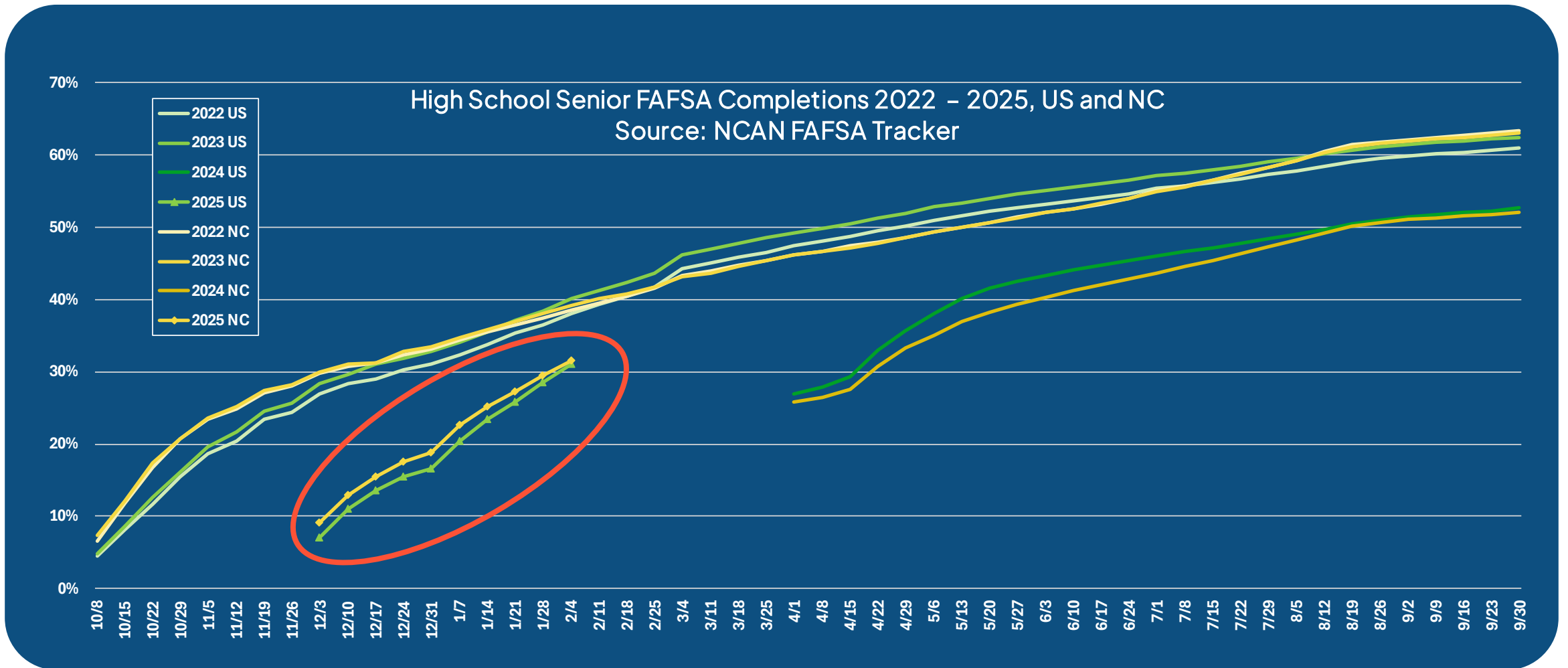## Filed in 2023–24 and 2024–25, UNC listed in at least 1 year

64,437
59%

10,264
9%

5,066
5%

30,065
27%

- Eligible for Next NC 2024, Eligible for Next NC 2025
- Not eligible for Next NC 2024, Eligible for Next NC 2025
- Eligible for Next NC 2024, Not eligible for Next NC 2025
- Not eligible for Next NC 2024, Not eligible for Next NC 2025

NCSEAA

2025–26 FAFSA

> 2025–26 FAFSA opened in November

> So far, it is a much smoother process than last year

> NC outpacing the nation in high school student completions so far, **however we have ground to make up compared to a typical year**
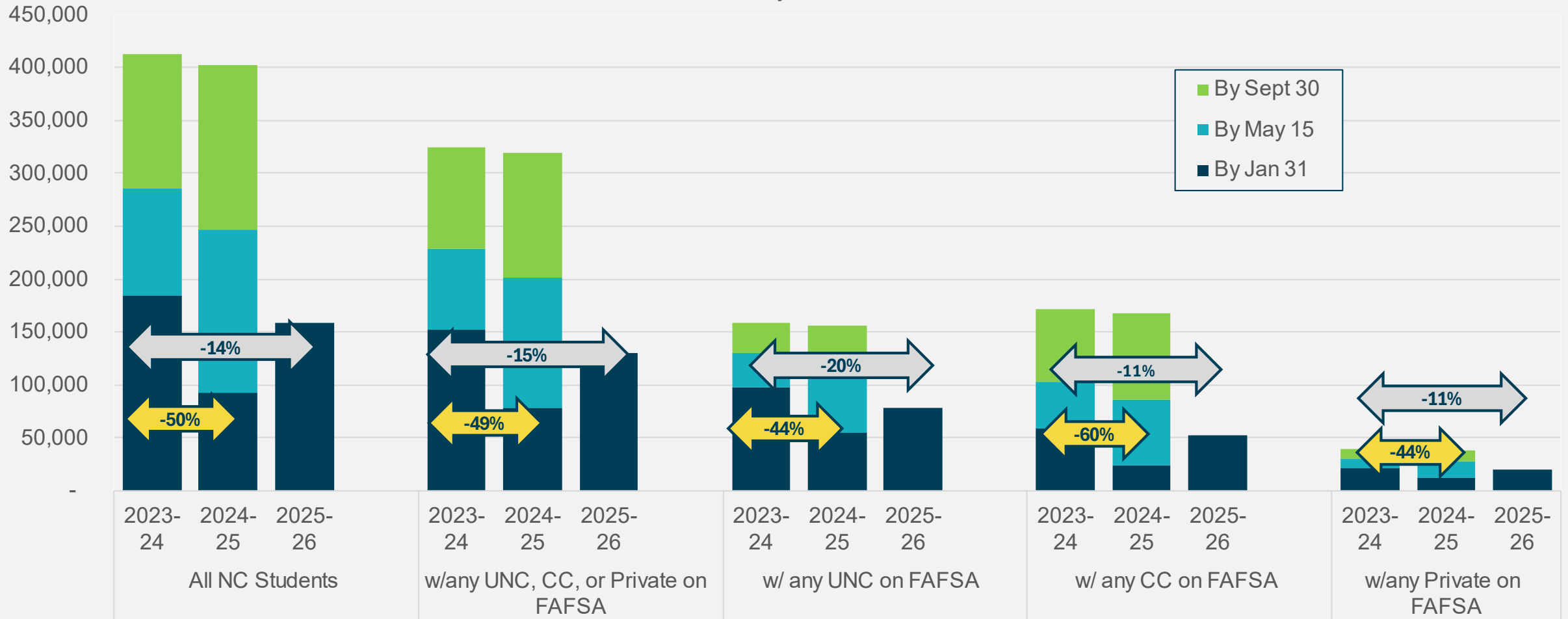

cfnc.org/fafsatracker
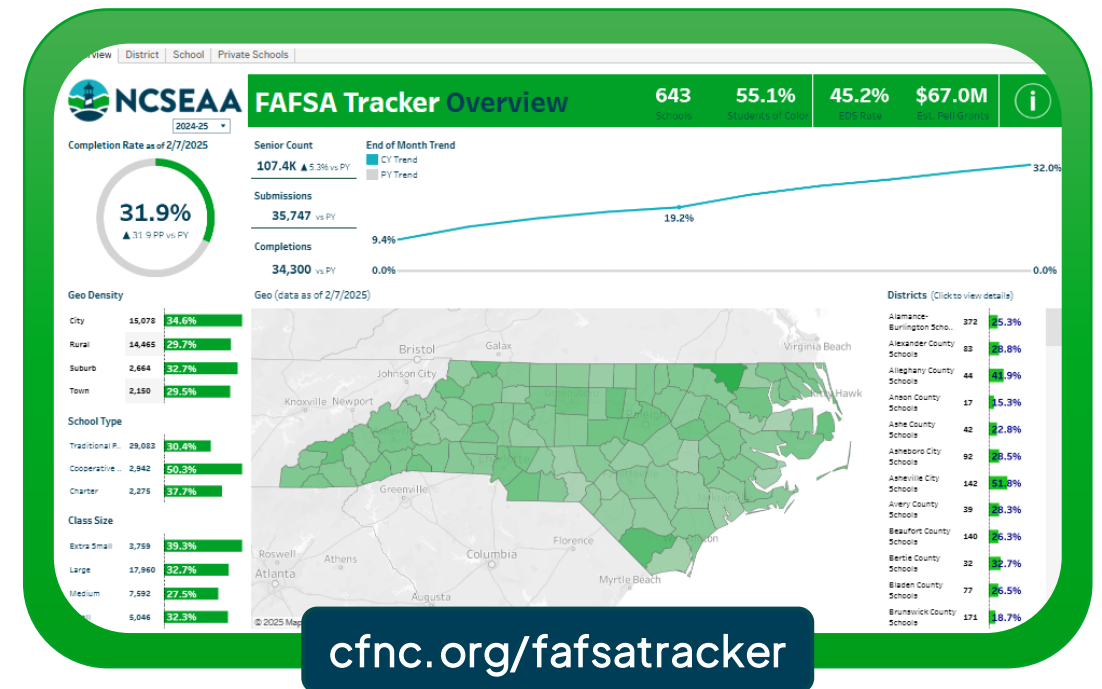
2025–26 FAFSA: High School Seniors

High School Senior FAFSA Completions 2022 – 2025, US and NC
Source: NCAN FAFSA Tracker

FAFSA: New and Returning Students

FAFSAs Filed by NC Students

Legend:
- By Sept 30 (green)
- By May 15 (teal)
- By Jan 31 (dark blue)

All NC Students
- 2023-24, 2024-25, 2025-26
- -14% (By Sept 30 comparison)
- -50% (By Jan 31 comparison)

w/any UNC, CC, or Private on FAFSA
- 2023-24, 2024-25, 2025-26
- -15%
- -49%

w/ any UNC on FAFSA
- 2023-24, 2024-25, 2025-26
- -20%
- -44%

w/ any CC on FAFSA
- 2023-24, 2024-25, 2025-26
- -11%
- -60%

w/any Private on FAFSA
- 2023-24, 2024-25, 2025-26
- -11%
- -44%

Note: Includes ISIRs received as of Jan 31, May 15 and Sept 30 for 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26. FAFSA for students with an NC address and no prior bachelor's degree. Sector-specific categories include students that listed any institution in those sectors in their first three schools selected on the FAFSA. A student may be in more than one sector category.

NCSEAA

17

Summer 2025

> With additional support from GEAR UP, we will be able to expand the number of high school counselors stationed in college and university financial aid offices over the summer to help with FAFSA completion.

> Actively planning now, will focus on recruiting counselors with Finish the FAFSA experience.

> Will build on successes from last summer.
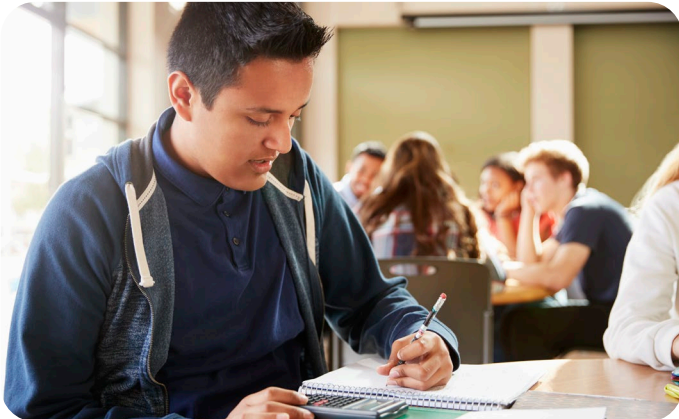
Celebrating 25 Years of CFNC!

Since 2000, we have helped students with…

9.6M
Accounts
9,589,671 total accounts
through October 2024

7.7M
Applications
7,717,948 total applications
through October 2024

5.1M
Transcripts
5,130,946 total transcripts
through October 2024

NCSEAA

19

Thank you!

AGENDA ITEM

A-4.   NCInnovation ....Michelle Bolas, NCInnovation

Situation: University applied research portfolios are natural engines of economic growth and have underpinned American technological dominance for decades. If matured properly and with commercialization as an end goal, the applied research underway in UNC System institutions can create jobs and economic growth in every corner of the state.

NCInnovation bridges the gap between academia and industry to advance more North Carolina public university research from proof of concept to the point where it is commercially investible.

Background: North Carolina's world-class public universities are national leaders in research and development (R&D) dollars, but lag in turning research breakthroughs into commercial success. North Carolina receives almost $13 billion annually in academic and industry R&D funding, but ranks 20th in total innovation, below the national average in commercializing research, and competitor states are investing in their innovation ecosystems and successfully targeting North Carolina's emerging tech companies.

NCInnovation was created with a $500 million endowment from the General Assembly, and the authorities to utilize endowment revenue for two purposes: to provide grant funding and support services to public university applied researchers working on discoveries that have commercial promise; and to establish innovation hubs at regional institutions for the purpose of building strong regional ecosystems. NCInnovation helps inventions advance toward commercialization — accelerating the transition from academia to industry — by supporting university applied research through the critical R&D phase between proof of concept and readiness for the private market.

NCInnovation's grant program supports public university applied research that has the highest potential for commercialization. Applied researchers at all 16 UNC System universities are eligible for grants.

Regional directors in NCInnovation's regional innovation networks connect public university researchers with industry partners, private sector knowledge, and support services to accelerate effective commercialization strategies across the state. NCInnovation operates four regional innovation networks anchored by seven "hub" UNC System universities: Appalachian State University, East Carolina University, Fayetteville State University, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University,

University of North Carolina at Charlotte, University of North Carolina Wilmington, and Western Carolina University.

NCInnovation provides the necessary investment and support to transform research breakthroughs into thriving businesses that improve economic opportunities in all regions of North Carolina.

Assessment: Michelle Bolas, executive vice president and chief innovation officer at NCInnovation, will share updates on current initiatives and impact. This presentation aims to inform and engage committee members on the current pipeline of university research to commercialization and its critical importance for the UNC System and for North Carolina.

Action: This item is for discussion only.

NCINNOVATION

OPTIMIZING INNOVATION FOR NORTH CAROLINA

February 2025

Unlocking Research, Fueling Innovation: Bridging Academia to Industry

www.ncinnovation.org

Our Mission

▶ NCInnovation unlocks the innovative potential of North Carolina's worldclass universities to address market needs and **create long-term economic benefits for all regions of the state**.

▶ We do this by supporting researchers with **grant funding**, **mentorship**, and **partnership development** to commercialize research breakthroughs and accelerate the transition from academia to industry.

◆NCINNOVATION

1

An innovation race has broken out in the U.S.

States are increasingly recognizing new products and companies generated from applied research create deep downstream multiplier effects *(Enrico Moretti, MIT Sloan Management Review).*

Competitors are <u>directly</u> funding new investments and establishing new innovation clusters:

Massachusetts

- **$1.6 B** in biotech/life sciences
- **$250 M** manufacturing tech

Ohio

- **$2.3 B** in Third Frontier
- **$125 M** in aerospace

Texas

- **$1 B** in applied research and commercialization
- **$1.1 B** for semiconductor R+D
- **$900 M** endowment to commercialize applied research

Georgia

- **$694 M** to fund university research and innovation commercialization

NCINNOVATION

TEConomy Partners identified & RTI validated NC challenges

Uneven Success

▶ Researchers and entrepreneurs **outside of major cities** are struggling for resources and mentors

Underdeveloped Capital Landscape

▶ **Insufficient commercialization funding** for university innovation

Lack of Applied Research

▶ Few partnerships across universities to solve **marketplace problems**

Lack of Regional Networks

▶ **Little regional collaboration** between academic, industrial and capital formation networks

NCINNOVATION

3

These findings have real implications for commercialization

Federal Funding
2nd in our national peer group

"Valley of Death"
2022 impact at NCI's 4 regional hubs
- 88 invention disclosures
- 20 patents
- Only 7 start-ups (4 in CLT)

Commercial Funding (VC)
15th nationally (Pitchbook)

NCInnovation's Role in Commercialization

▶ NCInnovation offers grants to university researchers so they can advance their research breakthroughs **to the point of commercial viability.**

▶ These grants focus intensely on a critical phase of the university R&D sequence known as the **"valley of death."**

  ▶ This phase begins after a concept has been shown to work in a lab, but before the private sector will engage.

  ▶ Securing funding is challenging in this phase and is **where many promising ideas die on the vine or flee to other states** with stronger innovation ecosystems.

STATE & FEDERAL

"VALLEY OF DEATH"

NCInnovation Funding

PRIVATE SECTOR

Funding

Research Phase

NCINNOVATION

5
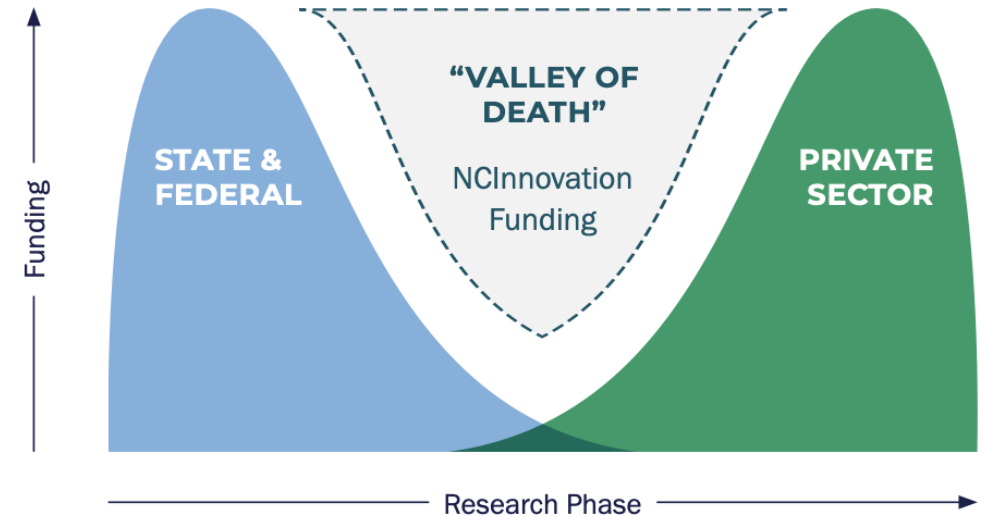
A Public-Private Partnership

▸ The initial State of North Carolina appropriation **used reserve funds** to create a **$500 million NCInnovation endowment.**

▸ **Interest and investment income** from the endowment fund NCInnovation's programs, thus negating the need for annual taxpayer investments.

▸ The endowment is guarded by **numerous taxpayer protections and oversight provisions** to ensure direct benefit to State of North Carolina.

▸ **Private funding supports NCI's administrative and overhead expenses** so that state funding goes to support public university researchers.

NCINNOVATION

6

The Approach

Regional Innovation Networks and Applied Research Support

▶ Develop and optimize **regional innovation networks** to connect industry, academia, and entrepreneurs across the state

▶ **Provide grant funding** to support emerging applied research technologies

▶ Enable **support services** to commercialize our research successes and create economic development across North Carolina
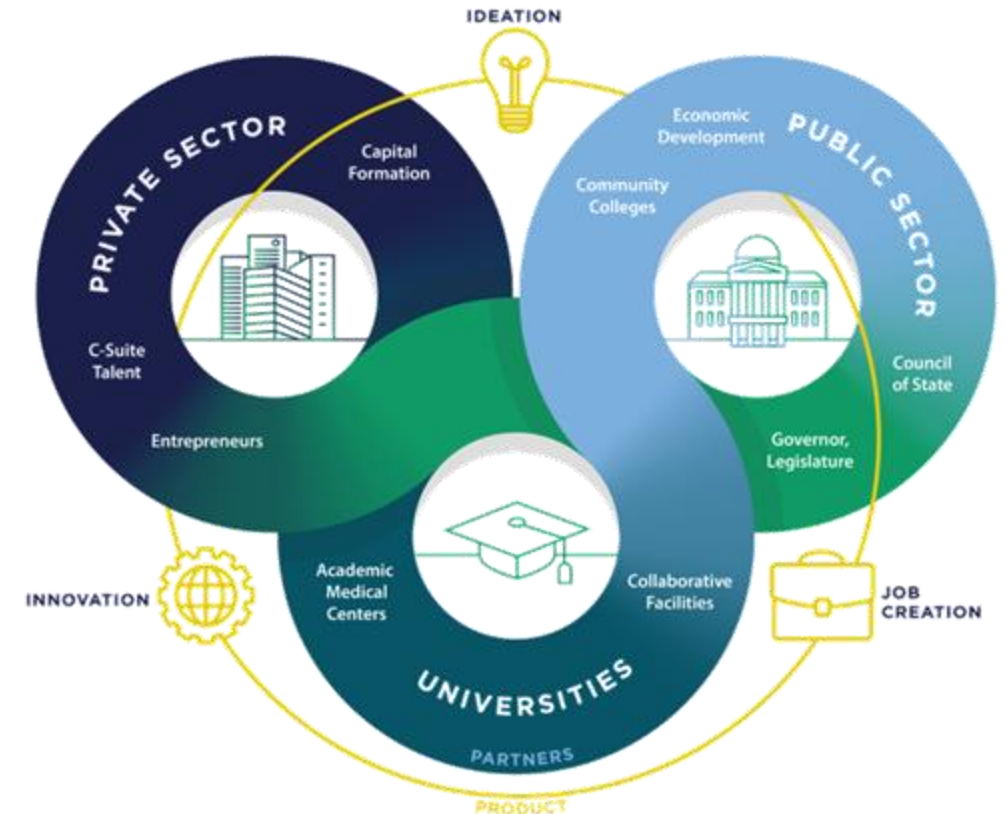
NCInnovation's Regional Footprint

"It is recommended that North Carolina foster regional innovation networks, especially in underserved regions, to connect academia, industry, and capital in every region of the state."

Optimizing North Carolina's Innovation Ecosystem
TEConomy Partners, LLC | October 2022
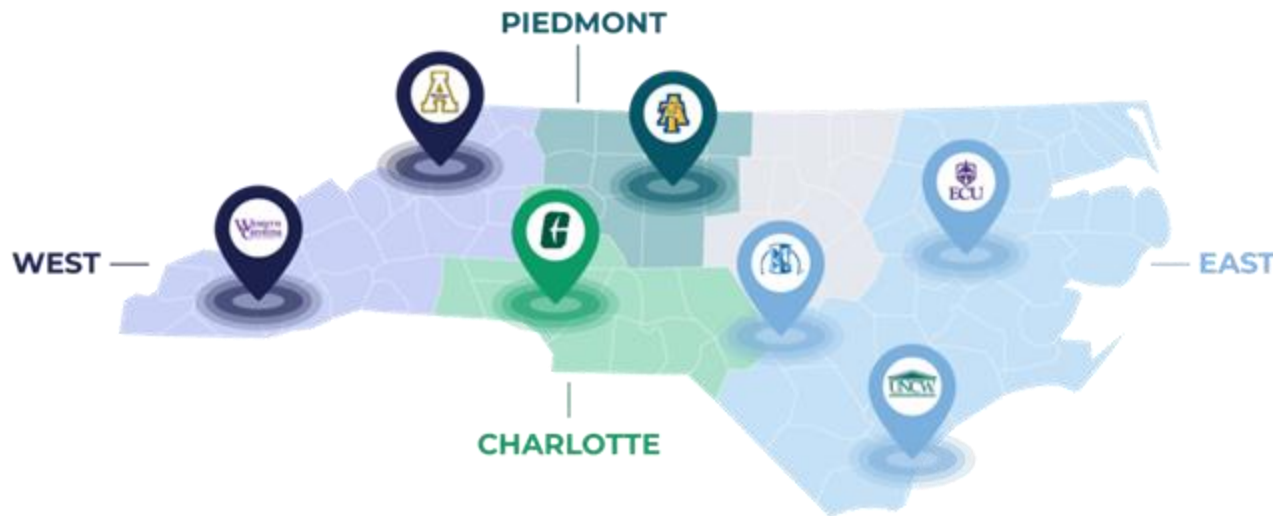
PIEDMONT

WEST

EAST

CHARLOTTE

Universities can serve as regional innovation engines, but strategic investment is needed to enable universities to create intellectual property (IP) and bolster the infrastructure required to transform IP for economic growth.

NCI investment in university technology development and commercialization infrastructure leads to...

University Technology Development
Driving applied research, IP generation, and talent development.

Industry Engagement and Recruitment
Attracting industry investment in IP licenses, sponsored research, student projects, and recruitment.

Startup Creation and Small/Medium Company Growth
Inspiring entrepreneurs and business owners to transform IP into products that go to global markets.

Regional Tech-Based Economic Growth
Enabling regional technology-based economic growth through job creation from increased innovation activity from universities, industry, and startups.

Regions
- Charlotte
- Eastern
- Piedmont
- Triangle
- Western

RTI Innovation Advisors

NCI worked with RTI to identify areas of potential focus in technology development across the state.

Advanced Manufacturing
- Additive Manufacturing
- Automation & Robotics Adoption
- Integration of Data Analytics
- Internet of Things

AgTech
- Climate Resilience/ Sustainability
- Crop Protection
- Precision Agriculture
- Robotics and Automation

Biohealth
- Biomaterials & Other Biologics
- Digital Technology & Analytics
- Platform Technologies
- Specialty & Personalized Medicine

Computing & Informatics
- Artificial Intelligence
- Cybersecurity
- Edge Computing

Defense Innovation
- Advanced Materials
- Energy Generation & Storage
- Manufacturing & Supply Chain
- Microelectronics
- Trusted AI & Autonomy

Energy Transition & Electrification
- Decarbonization
- Distributed Power Sources Management
- Energy Storage & Deployment
- Power Electronics Integration

RTI Innovation Advisors

Fiscally Responsible Research Support

While providing funding to university researchers, NCInnovation is growing the endowment:

- The $500 million NCInnovation endowment has earned ~5% in interest since inception, or about **$68,000 per day**.

- Since January 2024, the endowment has generated **more than $16 million in interest** that NCI can deploy for applied research grants at NC public universities.

  - $4.1 million has been distributed to UNC System researchers and institutions

  - The endowment balance is **almost $515 million** (net of the above distributions)

- The interest earned on the endowment will **fund future research grants**.

- Following a competitive RFP process, **WellsFargo** will manage the endowment.

NCINNOVATION

NCI's Pilot Grants

Principal Investigator	Area of Research	Region	University	Year 1	Year 2	Total
Rukiyah Van Dross-Anderson	Oncology – Melanoma	East	ECU	$442,000	$532,00	$974,000
Ying Wang	Vaccine Development	East	UNCW	$550,049	$532,647	$1,082,696
Brian Byrd	Mosquito-borne Infectious Disease	West	WCU	$587,412	$412,551	$999,963
Rahman Tashakkori	Beehive Improvement and Monitoring System	West	App State	$300,460	$341,491	$641,951
Kristen Dellinger	Drug Delivery Mechanism	Piedmont	NC A&T	$184,512	$184,512	$359,024
Hemali Rathnayake	Lithium Purification	Piedmont	UNCG	$404,999	N/A	$404,999
Jordan Poler	Drinking Water Purification	Charlotte	UNC Charlotte	$400,971	N/A	$400,971
Sukumar Kamalasadan	Power-grid Efficiency	Charlotte	UNC Charlotte	$354,607	N/A	$354,607
Total				$3,225,010	$2,003,201	$5,228,211

Impact: Novel treatment for Melanoma

Why It Matters For NC

- Dare, Carteret, Onslow, Brunswick, and Columbus Counties have **highest incidence rates** in NC.
- No treatments currently increase survivability and reduce recurrence in non-responding, stage III and IV, and metastatic melanoma.

Beyond NC:
With this potential lifesaving drug, over 100,000 lives could be improved and extended annually.

Advancing Research

Rukiyah T. Van Dross-Anderson, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Pharmacology

Developing a **first-of-its kind** cancer immunotherapy for melanoma patients to eliminate the cancer cell and prompt the immune system to seek out and destroy other cancer cells.

Technology aligns with **biotech strengths at ECU**, the Eastern NC region, and NC more broadly.

$974,000 awarded over two years.

Commercial Potential

Stella Vnook, Project EIR | Likarda Biotech
Distinguished pharmaceutical executive, serial entrepreneur, highly respected CEO and founder of multiple biotech companies.

The **NC life science industry employs over 75,000 people, generates $88B** in annual economic impact and brings in $2.4B in state and local government tax revenue annually.

NC cancer centers serve as clinical sites for early-stage trials and further help to support job retention and growth.

Regional Impact

Sterling

ECU

CLARADELE PHARMACEUTICALS

NCBIOTECH

eurofins

BALLENTINE LifeScience Partners

NCINNOVATION

Impact: Preventing Hive Die-off in Western NC

Why it matters for NC

- Beemon is an effective monitoring tool that predicts swarm events and other key activities correlated with hive health.
- A recent study found honeybee colonies, which are **vital to agriculture and the food supply**, have been dying at staggering rates.

Beyond NC:
If this system is successful, it can improve production worldwide and drastically improve the trajectory for honeybee survival

Advancing Research

Rahman Tashakkori, Ph.D.
Distinguished Professor of Computer Science

The Beemon system presents a tool for decreasing honeybee hive die-off and increasing honey beehive yield. This project aims to produce turnkey products for commercial and amateur beekeepers to monitor hives while providing data that can be used to preserve the health of honeybees more efficiently and accurately.

Technology **aligns with the NCI AgTech** focus and NC as a state has a significant expertise in this area.

$641,951 awarded over two years.

Commercial Potential

Sarah Plasky-Sachdev, Project EIR | Aquavation®
Pioneered the first webinar platform, a precursor to today's Zoom, named a top 50 "Eco Innovator" by USA TODAY and honored as an "Earth Power Player."

Platform has **potential for mass production and commercialization within 6 months** to one year. These can be used widely by beekeepers across the world.

Agriculture is NC's #1 industry, contributing over $100 billion to the state's economy. NC startups have benefited from at least $48M in recent private investment and venture deals, as well as attracted SBIR awards from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Beez Needz
Beekeeping Supplies

I Know Bob LLC

Regional Impact

Strong regional community engagement with local test sites secured.

NCINNOVATION

Impact: Breakthrough Lithium Technology

Why it matters for NC

- Slow lithium extraction and purification hinders the industry - **currently all domestic lithium purification is outsourced to China.**
- NC has a large and growing lithium and battery industry. The Piedmont region has seen an influx of large companies moving to the region, including Boom Supersonic and Toyota Battery.
- Existing facilities can incorporate the device without rebuilds.

Advancing Research

Hemali Rathnayake, Ph.D. Professor of Nanoscience

Development of a cost-effective and efficient lithium refining process for **converting unrefined lithium sources into battery-grade lithium carbonate**. The global demand for lithium is experiencing substantial growth for its primary role in energy storage, electronic bikes, electrification of tools, and other battery-intense applications.

Technology **aligns with the technical focuses of the Piedmont** region and state with battery producers and players in the Li-ion battery value chain located near Greensboro and Charlotte.

$404,999 awarded over one year.

Beyond NC:
By operating domestically, the technology could enhance economic competitiveness and reduce environmental impacts, addressing critical challenges in the lithium supply chain.

Commercial Potential

Brian Worfolk, Project EIR | Lukera Energy
Founder and CEO of two ventures and seasoned innovator who has driven advancements in battery and solar technologies.

Universities and companies across NC are **investing in the development of technologies related to Energy Transition & Electrification**. Startups in NC have received more than $200M in private venture funding to support their technology development. The lithium-ion battery market itself is projected to reach US$ 76.5 billion by 2025.

Holds the potential to build a sustainable domestic supply chain.

Potential to create 100 NC jobs and impact the state industry.

Regional Impact

NCINNOVATION

Impact: PFAs Removal AND Remediation

Why it matters for NC

- Novel nanoscale ion-exchange resin materials remove compounds more effectively than those currently available in the marketplace.
- **Advanced manufacturing is a critical sector in North Carolina** due to its significant role in driving economic growth and innovation across multiple industries.

Beyond NC:
If compounds can be more effectively removed, low-cost water purification can be brought to all households, schools, and the workplace.

Advancing Research

Jordan Poler, Ph.D.
Professor of Chemistry

Developed **patented materials that remove PFAS and other compounds prohibited by the U.S. EPA from drinking water** at consumer point. Partnered with NC based manufacturing partner, Goulston Technologies in Monroe.

Active national market for sustainable technologies specific to PFAS removal. Dr. Poler's nanostructured materials outperform GAC and IX resin beads.

Solution reflects strengths at UNC Charlotte in nanoscience, and statewide interests in PFAS removal.

$400,971 awarded over one year.

Commercial Potential

Dipak Mahato, Project EIR | SeaChange Technologies
Global Change pioneer for sustainable solutions in textile manufacturing.

Existing patents are already licensed to naneXPure, and **MOU is in place to validate and manufacture developed materials**.
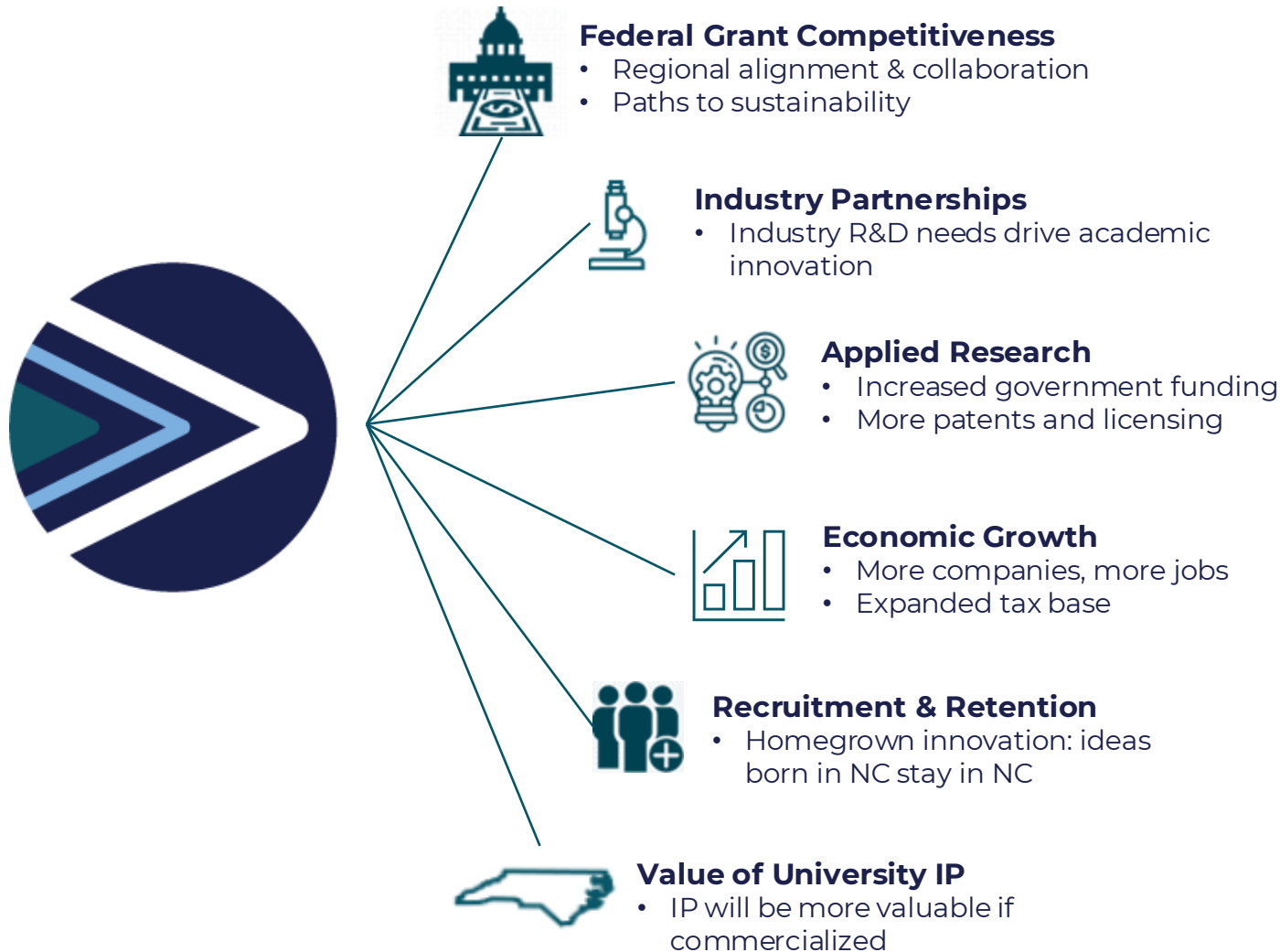
This innovation could transform the POU purification market, bring safe and clean water into underserved communities and disrupt the bottled water industry.

Regional Impact

Local manufacturing partners identified in Monroe located in Union County.

NCINNOVATION

Anticipated Benefits to North Carolina

Federal Grant Competitiveness
- Regional alignment & collaboration
- Paths to sustainability

Industry Partnerships
- Industry R&D needs drive academic innovation

Applied Research
- Increased government funding
- More patents and licensing

Economic Growth
- More companies, more jobs
- Expanded tax base

Recruitment & Retention
- Homegrown innovation: ideas born in NC stay in NC

Value of University IP
- IP will be more valuable if commercialized

Business and public-sector investment in R&D realize economic and social spillover gains of up to 33x.

Innovation creates 3x more jobs than the manufacturing sector. *(Enrico Moretti, MIT Sloan Management Review)*

Each high-tech job leads to 5 additional jobs spanning skilled and unskilled laborers. *(Moretti)*

NCINNOVATION

Connect With Us

Learn more at ncinnovation.org
Follow NCInnovation on LinkedIn

Michelle Bolas

Executive Vice President and Chief Innovation Officer

NCInnovation

Michelle Bolas joins NCI after serving as chief innovation officer at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and executive director of Innovate Carolina, where she led the institution's innovation strategy. She brings 25 years of experience working with higher education, business and industry, and government leaders to design and develop comprehensive environments for creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship to thrive. For the past 10 years she also led UNC-Chapel Hill's Innovation Roadmap, working closely with leaders, faculty, and students to imagine and implement new programs and initiatives that have significantly increased the impact of the institution's innovations. At NCI, Michelle is responsible for developing and enhancing university partnerships and research commercialization activities. She works with partner universities in four regions of the state to optimize their applied research portfolios and to support NCI's work to commercialize research outputs.

AGENDA ITEM

A-5.   UNC System Academic Degree Program Actions ....Daniel Harrison

Situation: Section 400.1.1[R] of the UNC Policy Manual, *Regulation for Academic Program Planning and Evaluation*, defines the academic program actions that require approval from the University of North Carolina Board of Governors and those actions that are delegated to staff at the University of North Carolina System Office. This report presents those program actions that require Board approval.

Program Establishments

East Carolina University
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Environmental Studies CIP 03.0103
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Neuroscience CIP 26.1501
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Security Studies CIP 45.0902

North Carolina State University
Master of Science (MS) in Cybersecurity CIP 11.1003

University of North Carolina Asheville
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Astronomy CIP 40.0201
Master of Science (MS) in Environmental Resilience CIP 03.0103

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Master of Science (MSM) in Management CIP 52.1301

Program Discontinuations and Consolidations

University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Consumer, Apparel, and Retail Studies CIP 19.0901

University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Economics CIP 45.0603

University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Information Systems CIP 11.0103

THE **UNIVERSITY** OF
NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and
Programs
February 26, 2025

Background: Per Section 400.1 of the UNC Policy Manual, the constituent institutions and the UNC System Office review academic degree program offerings and bring periodic requests for program establishment, discontinuation, and consolidation recommendations to the Board. Items such as change of delivery mode, change of program title or Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) codes, change of off-site locations, and change of specialty codes are delegated to UNC System Office staff.

Assessment: Approval of the requested program actions are recommended.

Action: This item requires a vote by the committee, with a vote by the full Board of Governors through the consent agenda.

Request for Authorization to Establish
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Environmental Studies
CIP 03.0103
East Carolina University

I.   Program Highlights

- East Carolina University proposes the establishment of a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Studies.
- The primary objective of the program is to equip students with a multidisciplinary understanding of environmental processes and challenges, and a broad skill set that will prepare them for a wide range of careers. The curriculum provides students with the ability to analyze environmental issues from multiple perspectives — scientific, cultural, ethical, and technical. Students also gain practical experience through internships and research opportunities, preparing them for the workforce with hands-on experience and the ability to apply classroom knowledge in real-world settings.
- The degree program will support ECU's mission in a number of ways. The flexibility of the program, with a wide range of course options, maximizes access for students with different academic interests and career goals. The curriculum integrates innovative learning strategies such as experiential learning, internships, and fieldwork, and as such the degree cultivates leadership skills by engaging students in projects that require problem-solving, ethical decision-making, and collaborative work. Students in the program will learn to develop and implement strategies that promote sustainable development and community resilience and can address pressing environmental issues in eastern North Carolina and beyond. The degree coursework emphasizes the role of the environment in cultural and community well-being, aligning with ECU's mission to improve quality of life through academic and cultural enrichment.
- The degree will support a growing need for environmental experts who can analyze and communicate complex issues across different domains. The skills and knowledge acquired by students can aid in informed decision-making and innovative approaches to issues related to sustainability, resource management, disaster resilience, and other challenges.
- The BS in Environmental Studies provides students a solid grounding for understanding complex relationships between humans and their environment and equips them with the skills and knowledge necessary to pursue a variety of in-demand careers or graduate school. Graduates will gain interdisciplinary knowledge that can bridge the gap between different sectors — science, policy, and community — allowing for more holistic and effective environmental solutions in a wide range of public and private sector settings.
- The projections for year five add 10 students per year, moving the enrollment from 49 in the current concentration to 100 students.

II.   Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** A multidisciplinary program in Environmental Studies has been established at ECU since 2021 as a structured concentration within the BS in Multidisciplinary Studies. The development of the concentration was intended to leverage ECU's existing research expertise and coursework across multiple departments to provide students with an integrated and multidisciplinary program of study. The program is distinctive for its focus on teaching, research, and outreach activities in coastal environments. The core departments in the

program have strong ties to the Coastal Studies Institute, and a number of courses in the curriculum are taught by coastal researchers with links to ECU's integrated coastal programs and the resources and facilities of the ECU Outer Banks Campus. Students in the program have the option to incorporate a "Semester at the Coast" experience and/or to add a popular minor in Coastal and Marine Studies.

2. **Student Demand.** The structured concentration in Environmental Studies enrolled its first students in the fall of 2021, and enrollment has grown steadily from two students in fall 2021 to 49 currently. The initial success of the program and growing student demand convince us that a stand-alone BS degree in Environmental Studies will be a significant asset for ECU in support of its mission of student success, public service, and regional transformation.

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** The program's multidisciplinary character and emphasis on hands-on learning will set up graduates for success in a range of career paths as environmental scientists, managers, consultants, and policymakers. Graduates will be well qualified for public sector careers in state and federal agencies as well as careers in the private sector with environmental consulting or engineering firms. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a seven percent growth in environmental scientist and specialist jobs over the next decade (faster than the U.S. average) with a median pay of nearly $79,000 per year.

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** ECU is not requesting any program-specific fees or tuition differential for this program. The student return on investment for existing environmental studies programs within the UNC System (CIP code 03.0103) is positive, with a lifetime ROI of $156,682.

   Tuition and fees for the AY2025-2026 full-time (12+/9+ credit hour) rates are as follows:
   Full-Time Undergraduate Tuition and Fees per Year (In Dollars)

Category	Resident	Nonresident
Tuition	4,452.00	20,729.04
Tuition Differential	--	--
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)	2,908.00	2,908.00
Special Fees	--	--

5. **Expected Quality.** The curriculum emphasizes multidisciplinary learning and the flexibility of students to tailor coursework to their individual interests. Students select a concentration in either environmental science or societal dimensions of environmental issues, and all are required to take a course in research methodology and complete an internship or capstone experience. The degree requires 45 credit hours, leaving students with ample opportunity to complete the required minor or a second major. The program is characterized by an active regime of academic advising, which ensures that students develop a coherent program of study and finish successfully in a timely fashion. The degree is overseen by a multidisciplinary faculty advisory committee, which meets regularly to ensure program quality and currency.

6. **Faculty Quality and Number.** The administrative home for the degree will be the Department of Earth, Environment and Planning (DEEP) within the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences.

DEEP will be a new department formed by a merger of the current departments of Geography, Planning and Environment and Geological Sciences. The new unit will have 23 full-time faculty spanning across academic fields of atmospheric science, geography, geology, and planning. Courses offered by the combined department constitute 64 percent of the classes taken by current students in the Environmental Studies concentration. Unit faculty are highly research-active, and grant-funded projects provide ample opportunity for Environmental Studies students to engage in environmentally focused research, particularly on issues relevant to ECU's coastal setting. Cohorted student research opportunities also are available through department-affiliated research centers, including the water scholars program in the Water Resources Center and the semester experience at the coast within the Coastal Studies Institute.

7. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** Environmental Studies is a multidisciplinary program, and the degree leverages significant environmental expertise that already exists across multiple academic disciplines. The curriculum builds upon a selection of lower-level courses that also serve other programs. Depending on student interest, some of these courses may be prerequisites for advanced study.

8. **Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Space, etc.)** As an interdisciplinary program, Environmental Studies will be able to rely upon services and resources that already exist to support the constituent academic areas. The program will make use of existing library holdings, space, IT services, staff, and other infrastructure, and will not require new campus resources.

9. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** There are four existing programs within the UNC System, all offered on campus. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, BA in Environmental Studies; Appalachian State University, BA/BS in Sustainable Development; University of North Carolina at Greensboro, BA in Environment & Sustainability; University of North Carolina at Pembroke, BS in Geo-Environmental Studies.

10. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** ECU's degree would be only the second BS degree in the eastern half of the state, joining UNC Pembroke. UNC-Chapel Hill offers only the BA and represents a somewhat distinct student market from ECU. ECU is also distinctive for its focus on teaching, research, and outreach activities in coastal environments, particularly when compared with the two larger programs in the western part of the state (App State and UNC Greensboro).

11. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program**. Environmental Studies is an inherently multidisciplinary field and the core faculty in the program are comfortable working collaboratively across disciplinary boundaries. ECU envisions good opportunities to share ideas and perspectives with colleagues at sister institutions through shared conference participation, guest lectures, invited colloquium talks, and the like. Given the flexibility of the degree program, students should be able to find relevant coursework at other UNC System institutions. ECU will welcome transfer credit and will encourage students to take advantage of such opportunities where applicable.

III.   **Summary of Review Processes**

1. **Campus Review Process and Feedback.** This degree received approval at each level of the following: Departmental Curriculum Committee; department chair; College Curriculum

Committee; college dean; Educational Policies and Planning Committee (Faculty Senate Subcommittee); Faculty Senate; provost; chief financial officer; and chancellor.

2. **UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback.** Throughout the review process, ECU provided relevant information pertaining to program requirements and resources. The institution submitted appropriate documentation and research to support the statements made.

IV.   Recommendation

Staff recommend that the Board approve East Carolina University's request to establish the Bachelor of Science (BS) in Environmental Studies (CIP 03.0103) effective fall 2025.

Request for Authorization to <u>Establish</u>
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Neuroscience
CIP 26.1501
East Carolina University

I. Program Highlights

- East Carolina University proposes the establishment of a Bachelor of Science in Neuroscience. It is designed to elevate the existing neuroscience structured concentration in multidisciplinary studies (the "neuroscience concentration") to a stand-alone degree program in the Department of Psychology at ECU. The course infrastructure of the neuroscience BS program will be inherited from the course infrastructure of the neuroscience concentration.
- The neuroscience BS degree will prepare undergraduates for graduate training, medical school training, and careers in medicine and biomedical health sciences fields. The unique aspect of this degree will be its focus on the cognitive and behavioral correlates to brain changes. Students will be trained to understand scientific methodology, clinical perspectives, and the interplay between these approaches to knowledge about neurocognitive phenomena such as learning and memory, drug addiction, neurotoxicology and teratology, neurodevelopmental disorders, traumatic brain injury, and neurocognitive disorders. The curriculum allows students to acquire foundational knowledge in STEM areas and to meet minimum admission requirements to medical schools, dental schools, graduate schools, and other advanced programs of study within the biomedical and health sciences umbrella.
- The neuroscience BS degree aligns with the ECU mission of "transformative experiences for all students during their time at ECU and beyond," and the related sub-mission of "expand access to and participation in transformative experiences and experiential learning."
- Students in the neuroscience BS degree program will be trained in analytical and communication methods and strategies through coursework and experiential learning opportunities, which allow them to have guided conversations that inform others about a variety of phenomena involving brain-behavior correlates.
- Employment opportunities for students with a neuroscience BS degree, as they explore the overall biomedical science job market, are expected to increase over the next 10 years.
- The conservative estimate for projected enrollment by year five is 123 students.

II. Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The neuroscience BS degree program aligns with the ECU mission and vision priority of "transformative experiences for all students during their time at ECU and beyond" and the related sub-mission of "expand access to and participation in transformative experiences and experiential learning." To this end, students in the neuroscience BS program will have access to mentored-research experiences, mentored-clinical experiences, internship opportunities with partners from the biomedical sciences, sponsored-research training programs, and professional development opportunities such as ECU-sponsored symposia and conferences that are vertically integrated with the program. Additionally, students will have the opportunity to participate in study-abroad courses and research experiences in neuroscience. The neuroscience BS program inherits many existing mechanisms for students from the neuroscience concentration. This includes a two-year curricular requirement to complete a combination of research and thesis courses with faculty mentors, participating in the annual Neuroscience Symposium at ECU (in its 27th year), a

monthly Neuroscience Seminar Series (in its sixth year), a weekly Neuroscience Journal Café seminar (in its 20th year), and other campus-sponsored symposia (Research and Creative Achievement Week, Summer Undergraduate Research Symposium) that altogether allow students to explore, extrapolate, and synthesize new knowledge through high-impact opportunities. Because research and thesis courses are required for graduation, 100 percent of students will have these forms of experiential learning. For research and thesis courses, ECU faculty mentors specialize in behavioral neuroscience, cellular/molecular neuroscience, health psychology, neuropsychology, pharmacology, and physiology. This wide array of faculty specialization allows for developing the next generation of scientists and thinkers who can make substantial impacts in the state and beyond.

2. **Student Demand.** The neuroscience BS program has its foundations in the neuroscience structured concentration in multidisciplinary studies at ECU. Enrollment data for the neuroscience concentration from fall 2019 to fall 2023 (ECU IPAR Business Intelligence) indicates high student demand for a neuroscience major. Since its inception, the neuroscience concentration has experienced significant growth (from three majors in fall 2009 to 94 in fall 2023) and its enrollment is stable with a five-year (2019-23) average of 85 majors. Over this five-year span, the neuroscience concentration constituted an average of 49 percent of the majors across the three structured concentrations within multidisciplinary studies.

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** According to data from the University of North Carolina System Evaluation of University Programs, undergraduate programs in neurosciences have a median lifetime return on investment of $1,163,339. Neuroscience is in the top 42 of 242 undergraduate programs where the median lifetime ROI earned is greater than $1 million. The study also indicated that the median incremental lifetime ROI for an undergraduate student who completes a degree is $494,091. This number nearly doubles to $930,515 if undergraduates complete a graduate training program. According to *Lightcast* analysis of state and national trends, employment opportunities should increase from 2023 to 2028, exceeding the national trend in 2023, and continue to do so through 2033. Furthermore, recent trends in occupational endpoints stemming from undergraduate instruction show that basic research scientist, clinical laboratory technician/ scientist, and medical laboratory scientist positions are in high demand. The data may include positions within academic, government, and private sector settings. Common job titles for undergraduates earning a BS degree in neuroscience and subsequently completing advanced training programs are biotechnician, dentist, neuroengineer, neuropsychologist, optometrist, pharmacologist, professor (with specialization in molecular neuroscience, behavioral neuroscience, neurobiology, neurotoxicology, and physiology, for example), physician, research scientist, and research technician.

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** The average annual cost for an undergraduate education at ECU is $17,000, which is $2,555 less than the midpoint ($19,555) for four-year universities (U.S. Department of Education College Scorecard). The scorecard provides statistics regarding average earnings (five years after graduation) for undergraduate student borrowers of federal loans and their median debt (federal loans only). Neither neuroscience nor a related field (neurobiology, neuropsychology, multidisciplinary studies) could be filtered for the scorecard, but data for biology, chemistry, and psychology majors at ECU are available. Based on these majors, which are the foundations of neuroscience, and the median earning for neuroscientists in North Carolina at $73,530 (*Zippia*), the earnings-to-debt ratio is likely to fall well within the average (or better) of the aforementioned majors with a mean of 5.3 percent, as a conservative

estimate. This estimate is lower than the average for UNC System schools (5.5 percent). The neuroscience BS program thus offers a cost-effective means for students to be competitive in the job market and advance their careers. In addition, this program will be in a strategic position to capture the interest of student populations that are emphasized in the UNC System's Strategic Plan — adult learners, military personnel, and students from underserved counties, particularly throughout eastern North Carolina.

5. **East Carolina University is not requesting any program-specific fees or tuition differential for this program.**

Full-Time Undergraduate Tuition and Fees per Year (In Dollars)

Category	Resident	Nonresident
Tuition	$4,452	$20,729
Tuition Differential	--	--
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)	$2,718	$2,718
Special Fees	--	--

6. **Expected Quality.** The neuroscience BS program will continue established practices of the neuroscience concentration that prepare students to be competitive for advanced training programs in medicine and the biomedical health sciences. The program's objectives are: (1) students will be able to interpret and apply current and major concepts in neuroscience; (2) students will engage in experiential learning experiences through research and thesis courses; (3) students will demonstrate proficiency in design and application of methodology in neuroscience; (4) students will demonstrate proficiency in applying and interpreting statistical analysis of neuroscientific data; (5) at minimum, students will share, communicate, and articulate the language of their research and theses experiences through program and campus-sponsored symposia (Annual Neuroscience Symposium at ECU, Summer Biomedical Research Symposium at ECU, SNCURCS), conferences (ECU Research and Creative Achievement Week), and seminars (Neuroscience Seminar Series, Journal Café).

7. **Faculty Quality and Number.** Three core faculty members from the Department of Psychology contribute their teaching efforts toward core courses (Introduction to Neuroscience, Neuropsychopharmacology, Neuropsychology, Neuroscience Capstones) in the neuroscience concentration. At the inception of the neuroscience BS program, they will continue to teach these courses, providing seamless continuity in instruction and student learning objectives. Additional faculty members in the Department of Psychology contribute to the teaching of select core courses (Research Methods, Statistics, Abnormal Psychology, Psychology of Learning, Cognitive Psychology). Approved electives are taught by various faculty in the departments of Biology, Chemistry, Philosophy, and Physics. Lastly, required research and thesis courses allow students to be mentored by 42 contributing faculty across 14 departments at ECU. Faculty mentors have expertise in anatomy and cell biology, biochemistry and molecular biology, biology, communication sciences and disorders, chemistry, engineering, internal medicine, kinesiology, microbiology and immunology, pharmacology and toxicology, physical therapy, and physiology.

8. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** The neuroscience BS program inherits the course infrastructure of the neuroscience structured concentration multidisciplinary studies program,

which consists of core courses with multidisciplinary studies (NEUR) and psychology (PSYC) prefixes. These courses are housed in the Department of Psychology, affording a wide range of topics that represent a neurocognitive core. The 18 hours of approved electives allow students to prepare for advanced study in graduate, medical, and biomedical health sciences training programs, as they involve fundamental and upper-level specialized courses in biology, chemistry, philosophy, and physics. These courses are housed in their respective departments within the College of Arts and Sciences. Altogether, the coursework in the neuroscience BS program emphasizes student preparation in becoming educators, scientists, thinkers, practitioners, and physicians.

9. **Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Space, etc.).** Existing building infrastructure and campus library resources are sufficient to support the new program. The library provides the ECU community access to communication workshops, research tools, databases, and training workshops that enrich the creative activity and scholarship of the university community.

10. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** There is one other undergraduate degree in neuroscience within the UNC System. It is located at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and offered on campus only.

11. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** ECU is the only school within the UNC System east of Interstate 95 that offers an interdisciplinary major with a concentration in neuroscience. The neuroscience BS program rides on the strengths of the neuroscience concentration, namely delivering unique content that focuses on the link between brain changes (cellular, molecular, and anatomical) and behavioral-cognitive changes in humans and lower animals, where life and natural science courses (biology, chemistry, neuroscience, physics) are balanced with social science courses (psychology). The neuroscience program at UNC-Chapel Hill also offers interdisciplinary training in understanding the nervous system. However, its curriculum leans more toward the life and natural sciences, particularly with computer science and physics as they relate to biotechnology and human-machine interactions.

12. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program**. The neuroscience BS degree program serves as a pipeline for enrollment in a variety of pertinent graduate programs at ECU. ECU has six doctorate programs (anatomy and cell biology, clinical health psychology, interdisciplinary doctoral program in biology, biomedicine, and chemistry, pharmacology and toxicology, physical therapy, and physiology) and one biomedical science MS with a concentration in neuroscience program. There are also four doctorate programs and three master's programs in neuroscience or biomedical sciences in other universities within North Carolina.

13. **Other Considerations.** After the neuroscience BS degree program is approved, ECU will discontinue the neuroscience structured concentration multidisciplinary studies program. Current students in the neuroscience concentration (N = 101, fall 2024) will be given the opportunity to switch their major course of study to the neuroscience BS program.

III.   **Summary of Review Processes**

1. **Campus Review Process and Feedback.** The proposal was reviewed by the Departmental Curriculum Committee, psychology department chair, College Curriculum Committee, college dean, Educational Policies and Planning Committee (Faculty Senate Subcommittee), Faculty

Senate, provost, chief financial officer, and chancellor.

2. **UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback.** Throughout the review process, ECU provided relevant information pertaining to program requirements and resources. The institution submitted appropriate documentation and research to support the statements made.

IV.   Recommendation

Staff recommend that the Board approve East Carolina University's request to establish the Bachelor of Science (BS) in Neuroscience (CIP 26.1501) effective fall 2025.

Request for Authorization to <u>Establish</u>
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Security Studies
CIP 45.0902
East Carolina University

I.   **Program Highlights**

- East Carolina University proposes the establishment of a Bachelor of Science in Security Studies. The purpose of the Security Studies program is to provide undergraduate students with theoretical and practical knowledge related to international and homeland security issues and prepare them to compete in academic and career fields where security awareness, global understanding, and analytical and writing skills are in high demand (Program Mission Statement from Assessment Plan).
- This program takes a unique approach to the study of national security-related threats, policies, institutions, and practices in the United States. The security challenges the country faces and the actions necessary to defend against and respond to them are incredibly complex. The program addresses this complexity with an interdisciplinary approach, in which students take classes in their major from as many as six different departments (eight programs). In addition to being interdisciplinary, the program also explores security at all levels of government (local, state, federal, and international). This interdisciplinary and multilevel approach sets the program apart from other programs that tend to focus more narrowly.
- Through ECU's partnership with Project Kitty Hawk, the entire degree program will be available online in addition to a face-to-face instructional format.
- Given the significant number of military bases and personnel in North Carolina, there is a lot of interest in security-related issues among prospective students. Related career fields include emergency management, law enforcement, military service, intelligence, and nonprofit and private sector research analysts. This program prepares students to meet the challenges of these careers, regardless of where they are employed.
- The program provides students with a strong return on investment, as demonstrated by the UNC-System Office ROI study. The new CIP code (45.0902) is not found at other universities within the UNC System, but student ROI data in similar fields with this two-digit CIP code (45) showed positive student ROI, as did those with the current 30 CIP.
- Projected enrollment in year five is 222 full-time students.

II.   **Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)**

1. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The BS in Security Studies closely aligns with ECU's student success and regional transformation missions; it responds to the demands of a dynamic, innovative economy and evolving workforce. The program has a strong record of student completion in a timely manner. It aligns with ECU's public service mission, as many students in the program are already employed in public sector agencies (military and law enforcement) and most intend to enter or advance their careers in state and local government, the military, or the U.S. intelligence community. The public service ethic is strong among ECU students, and this will continue and strengthen as more students can engage in the program through our Project Kitty Hawk (PKH) offerings.

2. **Student Demand.** The program has been run as a multidisciplinary studies concentration since 2014, with strong enrollments.

Enrollments in the BS in Multidisciplinary Studies: Security Studies, 2019-23

Year	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023
Concentration Enrollment	44	38	35	30	31
Parent Program Enrollment	187	174	149	174	188

Online: According to research provided by Project Kitty Hawk, there are about 60,000 adult learners in North Carolina who choose to get their online education outside of the state. It estimates an additional one million adults in the state have some college-level education but no degree. Project Kitty Hawk has projected that 162 students will be enrolled in the online program by year five.

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** According to a *Lightcast* analysis of state and national trends, employment opportunities will increase from 2023 to 2028 from 35,872 at the regional level and continue to rise through 2033.

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** The BS in Security Studies will increase access to student populations that have been emphasized in the UNC System's Strategic Plan, including adult learners, military personnel, and students from underserved counties. This will particularly be the case for the online component of the program, which will provide a 100 percent online undergraduate degree option that is specifically targeted at adult learners who are interested in security-related careers. The program will also contribute to the UNC System Strategic Plan's education affordability goals. According to the U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard, ECU's average annual cost is $17,000, which is less than the reported midpoint for four-year schools, $19,555. According to the same source, the median debt for undergraduate borrowers who completed their degrees in political science and government (CIP 45.1001) was $23,250. Median earnings for students who received financial aid 10 years after entering ECU was calculated to be $57,537, which exceeds the Scorecard's reported midpoint earnings of $53,617. Their estimated monthly earnings were $4,795, and the monthly payment on the debt was $246. This results in an estimated earnings-to-debt ratio of 5.13 percent, lower than the 5.5 percent average for UNC System schools. A table of these data is provided on the last page of this summary.

5. East Carolina University is not requesting any program-specific fees or tuition differential for this program. Undergraduate tuition and fees for the (2024-25) full-time (12+ credit hour) rates are as follows.

Full-Time 2024-2025 Undergraduate Tuition and Fees per Year (in Dollars)

	On Campus Program		Online (PKH) Program	
Category	Resident	Nonresident	Resident	Nonresident
Tuition	4,452	20,729	9,264	11,112
Tuition Differential	--	--	--	--
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)	2,718	2,718	408	408
Special Fees	--	--	--	--

6. **Expected Quality.** The program will continue to provide a high-quality educational experience to its students. Its faculty are dedicated to challenging students to attain and enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities they will need to compete for security-related careers. They will continue to research, publish, and attract external funding, to assure that their own knowledge is not only up to date, but at the cutting edge in their subfield. The program will continue to bring professionals from a wide range of career fields to campus to talk to students about their areas of expertise and career paths. Students are encouraged to take advantage of life-changing opportunities, including study abroad, internships, collaborative research with faculty members, and independent studies. Top-performing students have the opportunity to enroll in the BS in Security Studies to Master of Science in Security Studies accelerated program.

7. **Faculty Quality and Number.** Faculty members from six departments contribute classes to the BS in Security Studies. The program is housed in the Department of Political Science, which has eight faculty who regularly teach classes in the program. In fall 2024 there were 16 additional faculty members in other departments whose classes are often available to students in the multidisciplinary studies security studies concentration program. The departments include Criminal Justice and Criminology; Philosophy and Religious Studies; Environmental Health and Safety; Geography, Planning and Environment; History. This approach results in our students being taught by award-winning faculty from across campus and learning across broad fields relevant to national security.

8. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** The BS in Security Studies degree has six core classes. The remaining hours in the program allow students to explore security-related interests across eight fields of study. This will help our students prepare for the complex challenges and policy solutions they will encounter in their careers. The curriculum emphasizes the importance of students developing their analytical and written communication skills, which will be vital to their success in relevant career fields. In addition, ECU and PKH provide student support opportunities outside of their classes, including updates about their performance in classes, tutoring, and assistance with developing research and writing skills.

9. **Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Space, etc.).** Existing online and campus-based library resources are sufficient to support the new program. No new space will be required. ECU's Joyner Library supports our students and faculty by providing access to research tools and digital and physical resources. Librarians are dedicated and willing and able to support the campus community in their research.

10. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** There are no other programs in the state using the same CIP as the proposed BS in Security Studies. The closest is 30.0501: Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution. There are two undergraduate degree programs offered within the UNC System (1) University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (on campus), and (2) University of North Carolina at Greensboro (on campus and online). There is also a BA in Peace and Conflict Studies offered at Guilford College. There are two graduate programs in the 30.0501 CIP: (1) Peace and Conflict Studies at UNC Greensboro and (2) Peace, War and Defense at University of North Carolina Wilmington.

11. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** The proposed ECU curriculum is unique in North Carolina in that it incorporates security-related issues and responses impacting both the homeland and international levels, while others focus on just one level (e.g., the homeland security degree offered by Campbell University; Emergency Management at Elizabeth City State University and Western Carolina University; and International Studies at NC State University, UNC Wilmington, and WCU). In addition, most programs focus on just one disciplinary perspective, such as the cybersecurity degrees and concentrations offered by Appalachian State University, Fayetteville State University, University of North Carolina at Pembroke, and UNC Wilmington.

12. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program**. One important collaborative effort over the course of the next year or two will be to reach out to community colleges in eastern North Carolina and establish bilateral agreements that will bring students who graduate from their programs in emergency management into the BS in Security Studies.

III.   Summary of Review Processes

1. **Campus Review Process and Feedback.** The proposal was reviewed by the Security Studies Committee, Department of Political Science, dean and associate deans of the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences, THCAS Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, Institutional Planning and Research, Educational Policies and Planning Committee, the Faculty Senate, Office of the Provost, and the chancellor.

2. **UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback.** Throughout the review process, ECU provided relevant information pertaining to program requirements and resources. The institution submitted appropriate documentation and research to support the statements made.

IV.   Recommendation

Staff recommend that the Board approve East Carolina University's request to establish the Bachelor of Science in Security Studies (CIP 45.0902) effective fall 2025.

Request for Authorization to <u>Establish</u>
Master of Science (MS) in Cybersecurity
CIP 11.1003
NC State University

I.   Program Highlights

- NC State University proposes the establishment of an MS in Cybersecurity.
- The educational objectives of the proposed program are to: 1) design, develop, and analyze secure and privacy-aware systems; 2) secure the critical infrastructure; and 3) enhance the security and privacy of end-user technologies which is consistent with the mission and goals of the NC State University Secure Computing Institute.
- The proposed MS in Cybersecurity supports each component of NC State's mission through its interdisciplinary design, its focus on science and technology, its inclusion of public and private industries, and its focus on real-world problems.
- The importance of the proposed program lies in its focus on hardware and device security along with security software. Additionally, it will be offered both on-campus and online to allow for maximum access and flexibility in program delivery.
- Graduates of the MS in Cybersecurity will be equipped with the latest technical knowledge and skills in cybersecurity and privacy principles as well as an understanding of the engineering aspects of software and hardware security. The proposed program will provide a pipeline of cybersecurity-trained professionals able to support technological solutions across a range of industries, government, and academia.
- In year five, the proposed MS in Cybersecurity is projected to enroll 49 students.

II.   Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The proposed MS in Cybersecurity will support each component of NC State's mission through its interdisciplinary design, its focus on science and technology, its inclusion of public and private industries, and its focus on real-world problems. More broadly, the proposed MS in Cybersecurity is aligned with the UNC System's mission to address the needs of individuals and society described in the UNC System's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan by contributing to the state's critical workforce.

2. **Student Demand.** Within the UNC System, the graduate program that is most similar to the MS in Cybersecurity proposed by NC State is the Master of Cybersecurity offered by the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Over the last four years, UNC Charlotte experienced a nearly 70 percent increase in applications for this program. Though this increase in applications has resulted in an increase in enrollment, the data suggests there is still significant unmet demand for a graduate program in cybersecurity in North Carolina. The MS in Cybersecurity proposed by NC State is poised to meet this need, offering an online delivery option for students unable to relocate to Raleigh or who need a flexible delivery method. Additionally, the proposed program will expand the current educational offering by having a different focus on hardware and device security.

   In addition to a sustained flow of inquiries from potential students seeking a cybersecurity graduate program, NC State also experienced a significant increase in enrollment in its undergraduate cybersecurity offerings. For example, enrollment in the BS in Computer Science

has roughly doubled from 625 students in fall 2014 to 1,180 students in fall 2023. Similarly, course enrollments in CSC 471 (Modern Topics in Cybersecurity) and CSC 472 (Cybersecurity Projects) had a combined enrollment of 36, 47, and 78 over the last three years.

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, careers in cybersecurity and, more generally, information security, rank among the top five fastest-growing career fields in the country. Data also suggests that North Carolina is one of the top ten states in the United States in terms of the number of cybersecurity workers required to support the needs of employers.

   Although data collected and analyzed by Cyberseek estimates the current cybersecurity workforce in North Carolina is over 35,000, there are more than 18,000 additional unfilled job openings. Graduates of the proposed MS in Cybersecurity will be trained professionals who can pursue careers in industry, government, and academia. They will be competitive in the cybersecurity job market, particularly in North Carolina, and can anticipate an annual salary of more than $136,000, according to 2022 data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** To facilitate student access to the program, the proposed MS in Cybersecurity will be offered both on-campus and online.

   Using the master's degree in computer science as an example (a field closely related to cybersecurity), the median debt level of students completing NC State's graduate program in computer science is $30,750 according to the U.S. Department of Education College Scorecard. The annual loan payment associated with this program is $4,200. Based on data from 2022, the median salary for students completing a graduate education in Computer Science at NC State is $129,000, which is the highest starting salary of any NC State degree program. This corresponds to a debt-to-earnings ratio of 3.3 percent, which is well below the value of 8 percent recommended by the U.S. Department of Education.

5. NC State is requesting tuition differential for the proposed MS in Cybersecurity.

   Full-Time 2024-2025 Graduate Tuition and Fees per Year (In Dollars)

Category	Resident	Non-Resident
Tuition	9,837.00	30,610.00
Tuition Differential	5,600.00	5,600.00
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)	2,264.00	2,264.00
Special Fees	1,500.00	1,500.00

6. **Expected Quality.**

   As part of the proposed MS in Cybersecurity, students will complete 15 credit hours of cybersecurity core courses, 12 credit hours of cybersecurity core or cybersecurity foundational electives, three credit hours of cybersecurity practicum, and one credit hour of graduate orientation to ensure that students are ready for success. Students can select either the thesis

track, the internship track, or both. As with all master's programs at NC State, a student will be given a maximum of six years to complete the program.

Among the admissions requirements are an undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or better and an undergraduate degree in computer science, computer engineering, electrical engineering, or a similar program. International students will have additional minimum requirements. Once admitted to the program, students will be required to maintain an average GPA of 3.0.

7. **Faculty Quality and Number.** Eleven faculty will support the proposed MS in Cybersecurity, including four faculty from the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and seven from the Department of Computer Science. Two senior faculty from the Department of Computer Science will co-direct the program.

   Depending on the program's popularity and growth, additional faculty may be needed within 10 years. These additional faculty would also be tenure/tenure-track faculty pursuing cybersecurity research consistent with the goals of the Departments of Computer Science and Electrical and Computer Engineering.

8. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** The proposed MS in Cybersecurity requires sufficient computer programming and mathematical preparation for the graduate computer science and electrical and computer engineering courses included in the curriculum. Courses from the Computer Science Department and the Computer and Electrical Engineering Department support the development of the proposed curriculum.

9. **Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Space, etc.).** The proposed program will make use of existing resources at NC State with minimal impact on infrastructure. The present library holdings are adequate and accessible. No additional space will be required in the first five years. Students will have access to all necessary software through NC State's site licenses.

10. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** Within the UNC System, both University of North Carolina at Charlotte and North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University currently offer an MS in Cybersecurity with the same CIP code as the proposed NC State program.

    The program offered by UNC Charlotte is approved for on-campus delivery and focuses on security software. The program offered by North Carolina A&T is approved for online delivery and focuses on security software, analysis, and policy. The latter program is designed to provide working professionals from multiple disciplines and industries with an understanding of and expertise in the core aspects of cybersecurity.

11. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** Unlike the existing programs, the proposed MS in Cybersecurity will focus on hardware and device security and include elements of security software. In addition, the program proposed by NC State will include a capstone project course or require a thesis and will be delivered both on-campus and online. These characteristics distinguish the program proposed by NC State from those offered by UNC Charlotte and North Carolina A&T. A graduate program offered by East Carolina University, the MS in Information and Cybersecurity Technology, was not used for comparison given the difference in CIP code and curricula.

12. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program**. Cybersecurity faculty at NC State, North Carolina A&T, UNC Charlotte, and ECU collaborate extensively through the North Carolina Partnership for Cybersecurity Excellence (NC-PaCE) led out of NC State. NC-PaCE is a coalition of educational, government, and industry organizations committed to accelerating the rate of growth of the state's and the nation's cybersecurity excellence in education, research, and services to counter cyber threats. Among its goals is one to address a growing cybersecurity workforce gap through targeted curriculum development, skills development, work-based learning, and certification support. NC State will continue and expand our ongoing collaboration through NC-PaCE.

III. Summary of Review Processes

1. **Campus Review Process and Feedback.** The proposal was reviewed by the NC State faculty (department and college committees), Administrative Board of the Graduate School (ABGS), Graduate Operations Council (GOC), Council of Deans, chief financial officer, provost, chancellor's cabinet, chancellor, and the NC State Board of Trustees. Approval and support were provided at all levels.

2. **UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback.** Throughout the review process, NC State provided relevant information pertaining to program requirements and resources. The institution submitted appropriate documentation and research to support the statements made.

IV. Recommendation

Staff recommend that the Board approve NC State University's request to establish the Master of Science (MS) in Cybersecurity (CIP 11.1003) effective fall 2025.

Request for Authorization to <u>Establish</u>
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Astronomy
CIP 40.0201
University of North Carolina Asheville

I.   Program Highlights

- The University of North Carolina Asheville proposes the establishment of a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Astronomy.
- The purpose of the BS in Astronomy is to provide students with a solid grounding in physics, mathematics, computing, and data analytics and to prepare them for careers in astronomy, astrophysics, and related fields such as data science, science policy, and science education.
- The BS in Astronomy supports UNC Asheville's mission and commitments to student success, accessibility, innovation, and an education emphasizing critical thinking and applied research. Astronomy is rapidly increasing in popularity, particularly among traditionally underrepresented groups in STEM, and develops a broad set of skills in data analytics and machine learning.
- Often referred to as a gateway science, astronomy enjoys broad popularity among the public, inspiring curiosity that can serve as a starting point for further interest and discovery in other scientific fields. Prior to Elon University's launch of Astronomy BA and Astrophysics BS programs in 2021, no colleges or universities in North Carolina offered an undergraduate major in astronomy. Such an offering still remains unavailable in the UNC System. The United States is seeing a nationwide increase in student interest in astronomy, with the number of students majoring in astronomy increasing by 383 percent over the last 25 years and 126 percent in the last decade, and the facilities available at UNC Asheville's Lookout Mountain Observatory position the university well to offer the first public BS in Astronomy to North Carolina residents.
- Upon completion of the BS in Astronomy, students will be equipped for a wide range of careers, in addition to those typically associated with astronomy. These include research, data science, science policy, education, and science communication. The American Institute of Physics surveyed astronomy bachelors who graduated in 2018, 2019, and 2020 one year after they graduated, and 93 percent of respondents were either employed or enrolled in graduate school. Over half of the employed astronomy bachelors worked in the private sector.
- The projected enrollment in year five is 25.

II.   Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The program will address the following UNC System mission goals: Goal 1: Increase Access for Students from Underserved Counties — Buncombe County, all counties adjacent to it, and all counties farther west are designated as "underserved"; Goal 6: Increase Affordability — UNC Asheville's tuition is affordable, and the Astronomy BS is designed with the flexibility to enable transfer students to graduate in four semesters; Goal 7: Improve University Productivity — the Astronomy BS will utilize existing resources, both faculty and infrastructure (Lookout Observatory, astro-computing lab, planned planetarium), requiring very little additional cost; and Goal 8: Increase Health Sciences and STEM Degrees and Certificates — astronomy has a high public profile and is proven to attract underserved groups into the physical sciences and adding the first Astronomy major in the UNC System is thus highly likely to contribute to this goal.

2. **Student Demand.** UNC Asheville's Department of Physics and Astronomy is vibrant and growing. Per capita, UNC Asheville has the largest number of physics majors in the UNC System with 0.93 percent of our undergraduates majoring in physics in 2022. UNC Asheville's astronomy minor has experienced dramatic growth, rising from seven students in 2017 to the present 33 (a 370 percent increase), owing to a combination of factors: the increased profile of Lookout Observatory built on the UNC Asheville campus in 2014, the popular restructuring of the minor curriculum in 2017, and the hiring of three new astronomy faculty (Britt Lundgren, David Wake, and Christene Lynch). The number of students participating in research in physics and astronomy has also grown by 200 percent over the past decade, bolstered by faculty success in receiving research grants. The Department of Physics and Astronomy has brought in an average of $150,000 per year over the past eight years from a variety of public and private sources, including the Space Telescope Science Institute, the National Science Foundation, NASA's North Carolina Space Grant, the Research Corporation for Science Advancement, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and the John Templeton Foundation. By expanding the department's offerings in astronomy, we will continue to attract high-quality students to the campus.

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** The American Institute of Physics surveyed astronomy bachelors who graduated in 2018, 2019, and 2020 one year after they graduated, and 93 percent of respondents were either employed or enrolled in graduate school. Graduates with astronomy degrees encounter enormous amounts of data because telescopes produce petabytes of data, and modern observational astronomy courses prepare students to code in Python to extract and analyze information from these large datasets. Those majors who pursue data science careers will find that field has moderate but consistent annual job growth within North Carolina and entry salaries between $55,000 and $75,000 per year, according to NCWorks and NC Careers.

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** The BS in Astronomy at UNC Asheville will increase student access by providing a new pathway to a STEM degree at a public institution. The program would contribute directly to the UNC System Strategic Plan goals 1 and 8. Additionally, the average annual cost of attending UNC Asheville, minus the average grants and scholarships for federal financial aid recipients, is $13,069, is well below the national four-year midpoint for four-year schools ($18,902), and less than a third of the comparable cost of Elon University ($39,437), the only other undergraduate astronomy program in the state.

   UNC Asheville is not requesting any program-specific fees or tuition differential for this program.

   Full-Time 2024-2025 Undergraduate Tuition and Fees per Year (In Dollars)

Category	Resident	Nonresident
Tuition (spring and fall)	$4,122	$21,470
Tuition Differential	--	--
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)	$3,210	$3,210
Special Fees	--	--

5. **Expected Quality.** The proposed BS in Astronomy at UNC Asheville emphasizes both foundational and interdisciplinary skills, such as problem-solving, data analysis, and technical proficiency. Key features of the program include a comprehensive curriculum of 57 credit hours in the major integrating physics, mathematics, computing, and specialized astronomy courses; innovative learning resources such as access to Lookout Observatory and the Skynet Robotic Telescope Network

(and potentially the forthcoming planetarium); and a focus on accessibility and affordability in alignment with UNC Asheville's mission. Faculty are currently active in research and public service and will continue to mentor students in scholarly and community outreach activities.

6. **Faculty Quality and Number.** There are seven faculty who will deliver the proposed program, including the director of the UNC Asheville Lookout Observatory. Six of the seven hold a doctorate. Students in this degree program will benefit from a highly skilled faculty whose expertise spans the major subfields of astronomy, including radio astronomy, with a focus on stellar magnetism and exoplanetary systems; galaxy formation and cosmic structure evolution; and galaxy evolution and intergalactic medium studies. This curriculum addresses phenomena from stars and exoplanets to galaxies and the large-scale universe.

7. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** Astronomy students will be required to take Calculus I, Calculus II, Calculus III, and one additional course from a menu including mathematics, statistics, and computer science. The mathematics and computer science cognate courses are strong and fundamental to many of our long-established degree programs.

8. **Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Space, etc.).** The Department of Physics and Astronomy has a 30-seat computer lab equipped with Windows PCs, which are used for the computational labs (ASTR 112, ASTR 113, ASTR 320, ASTR 420), and an eight-seat undergraduate research computer lab, equipped with a mixture of dual boot Windows/Linux PCs and iMacs. ASTR 112 and 113 make use of a set of twelve 10-inch Dobsonian telescopes, as well as access to robotic telescopes as part of the Skynet project. ASTR 320 uses telescopes and cameras located at our campus observatory. In the last two years, we have doubled the number of telescopes in the observatory available for this class and upgraded the cameras. All equipment is in good working order, so only general maintenance is required.

9. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** This will be the only BS in Astronomy in the UNC System.

10. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** There is no duplication at this time.

11. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program**. UNC Asheville's astronomy faculty already collaborates with University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to incorporate laboratory research experience into UNC Asheville's introductory lab courses. These labs utilize the Skynet Robotic Telescope Network (Skynet), a global network of approximately 20 fully automated or robotic telescopes operated by UNC-Chapel Hill. The faculty also partner with nearby Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute alongside UNC-Chapel Hill and Duke University. Possible future collaborations include joint lecture series, colloquia, or observing nights with nearby Appalachian State University, which has a physics program with an astronomy concentration, or with Western Carolina University, which teaches a sequence of introductory and intermediate astronomy courses.

III. Summary of Review Processes

1. **Campus Review Process and Feedback.** This proposal received approval from the UNC Asheville Institutional Development and Academic Policies Committees, Faculty Senate, the chief executive officer, the chief academic officer, and the chief financial officer.

2. **UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback.** Throughout the review process, UNC Asheville provided relevant information pertaining to program requirements and resources. The institution submitted appropriate documentation and research to support the statements made.

IV.   Recommendation

Staff recommend that the Board approve the University of North Carolina Asheville's request to establish the Bachelor of Science in Astronomy (CIP 40.0201) effective fall 2025.

Request for Authorization to Establish
Master of Science (MS) in Environmental Resilience
CIP 03.0103
University of North Carolina Asheville

I.   Program Highlights

- The University of North Carolina Asheville proposes the establishment of a Master of Science degree in Environmental Resilience (MSER).
- The proposed program aligns with UNC Asheville's mission to "prepare students for lives of leadership and service" and to deliver "undergraduate and graduate programs that address the most pressing issues of our time." The program leverages interdisciplinary faculty expertise and collaborates closely with the National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center (NEMAC), strengthening its existing connection with UNC Asheville.
- The proposed program is unique within the UNC System as it focuses explicitly on environmental resilience. It offers a one-year, in-person curriculum that emphasizes practical skills in analyzing ecological and socioeconomic data.
- Asheville has established itself as a leading environmental data center in North Carolina. The city hosts institutions like NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) which advance environmental research and data dissemination.
- Graduates will have knowledge and skills in environmental science, impact assessment, economic analysis, GIS, data science, and resilience strategies. Historical data from NC Tower show a salary premium for master's degree holders in environmental resilience, with significantly higher starting salaries than those with bachelor's degrees, and the gap widens over the course of their careers. These data indicate strong demand and financial benefits for potential MSER graduates.
- The proposed MSER program anticipates a cohort of 15 students enrolled by year five.

II.   Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission. The proposed graduate program will benefit existing undergraduate programs in environmental science, economics, and atmospheric sciences. By focusing on regional and societal needs, it will boost the university's competitiveness and align with the UNC System's mission to address individual and societal needs through knowledge application. The proposed program supports the 2022–27 UNC System Strategic Plan by enhancing graduate student success by increasing affordability with its one-year duration.

2. Student Demand. The methods used to assess potential student demand include a review of enrollment trends across the UNC System for undergraduate majors relevant to environmental resilience and application and enrollment data for the only similar graduate program in the UNC System. Enrollment in related undergraduate majors across the UNC System increased by 10 percent from 2018 to 2022, while overall undergraduate enrollment declined by one percent. Specifically, environmental science enrollment in the UNC System has grown by 25 percent since 2010. At UNC Asheville, environmental science is a popular major with over 150 declared majors and about 60 graduates each year.

3. Employment Opportunities for Graduates. The North Carolina Department of Commerce projects 1.29% yearly growth in employment among "Environmental Scientists and Specialists" in North Carolina for the next decade. This occupation is the one staff believes to be most clearly aligned with the program. For comparison, Commerce projects the overall state workforce to grow by 0.96% yearly over that period. Nationwide, according to Lightcast data, approximately 26% of job postings for Environmental Scientists and Specialists require or prefer a master's degree. The median advertised salary over the past three years in the occupation for jobs requiring a high school diploma was $57,200. For bachelor's degrees it was $77,700, and for master's it was $85,400.

4. Impact on Access and Affordability. The proposed MSER program is designed to attract students from across the region, while remaining highly accessible to UNC Asheville's undergraduate students by minimizing prerequisites and expanding the pool of potential candidates. It offers 4+1 and 3+1 options for several majors, allowing students to continue to a master's degree without relocating.

The proposed program offers a favorable debt-to-earnings ratio for graduates. Assuming a median salary of $85,400 and a 10-year loan repayment period of $10,534 at the federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan rate of eight percent interest, an in-state MSER graduate will only pay less than two percent of their monthly salary in student loans for this program.

5. UNC Asheville is not requesting any program-specific fees or tuition differential for this program.

Full-Time AY 2024 -25 Graduate Tuition and Fees per Year (In Dollars)

Category	Resident	Nonresident
Tuition	$6,552.00	$25,706.00
Tuition Differential	--	--
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)	$3,982.90	$3,982.90
Special Fees	--	--

These figures include tuition and fees for two regular terms plus six hours of summer school, sufficient to complete the program. The program does not depend on differential tuition. All instructional staff are in place other than a new administrative assistant. There are no additional personnel costs. The university's existing physical resources and infrastructure are sufficient to support this program. The cost of the proposed MSER program is $10,534.90 for North Carolina residents and $29,688.90 for out-of-state residents, which is the lowest in the state for similar programs.

6. Expected Quality. The proposed MSER program requires 30 hours and the successful completion of a capstone project with a community partner in CLIM 599. Key features include a three-credit internship with a community partner, followed by a six-credit applied research project completed for and with that partner agency. The capstone prepares graduates to meet local and state environmental planning needs. Proficiency is measured with an 80 percent pass rate, with students needing a grade of C (or equivalent) or better in their classes. The proposed MSER program will be subject to the same program review procedures and frequency as other UNC Asheville programs.

7. Faculty Quality and Number. UNC Asheville follows SACSCOC standards for credentialing faculty, which for graduate courses includes an earned doctorate or terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline. Faculty without an earned doctorate may also be justified in teaching by

documenting other qualifications, including professional expertise and prior teaching experience. Seven faculty, across the departments of Economics, Atmospheric Sciences, Statistics, Computer Science, Philosophy, and Environmental Studies, along with NEMAC's two lead scientists are lined up to deliver the curriculum. The program will not require hiring additional faculty and will utilize existing faculty. Any course releases for regular faculty to deliver these courses will be covered by either reducing total undergraduate course offerings by consolidating sections or by adjunct replacement.

8. Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs. The proposed MSER program is set to draw undergraduate students from a variety of disciplines. Key contributing programs include atmospheric sciences, economics, and environmental management and policy. In spring 2024, total majors in those three disciplines were 215 (35 ATMS, 34 ECON, and 146 ENVR). The environmental science program has the capacity and intention to grow and is expected to remain one of the largest majors at UNC Asheville, serving as the primary feeder for the proposed program.

9. Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Space, etc.). Existing resources available to students in the UNC Asheville library and through the interinstitutional Western North Carolina Library Network are sufficient to support this program. UNC Asheville does not expect the program to require any new square footage or significant renovation or retrofit. While space has not immediately been identified, the university will allocate at least two offices to the program for the program director and administrative support, perhaps as part of a suite of other graduate programs that are developed so they can be administered together.

10. Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery). While there are three programs in the UNC System with CIP 03.0103, two of them are dissimilar. As a result, the only comparable master's program in the System is offered at NC State. It is delivered both in person and online. In academic years 2022-2023 and 2023 to 2024, that program had approximately three times as many applications as enrollments. Duke University also offers a master's program which may be broadly similar to the proposed program at UNC Asheville. Duke's program has had completions rise from 19 in 2020 to 30 in 2023. Finally, among UNC Asheville's peer institutions, Christopher Newport University offers a master's degree with this CIP Code. That program has seen completions increase from one in 2020 to 13 in 2023.

11. Potential for Unnecessary Duplication. Concerns expressed about duplication and competition for NC State's CCS program students have been addressed. Notably, the two institutions are 200 miles apart and support different student demographics, indicating that there is enough demand from prospective students and employers to support both programs.

12. Feasibility of Collaborative Program. UNC Asheville discussed the possibility of a collaboration with NC State's CCS program in curriculum delivery. The proposed MSER program will be delivered entirely in person, while the CCS program has a significant portion of the curriculum delivered online. The proposed program allows students to use an NC State course as one of their electives. It is also possible for UNC Asheville to develop a collaborative course that taps into the institution's relationships with the local environmental community, particularly NEMAC, NCEI, and the National Climatic Data Center.

III.   Summary of Review Processes

1. Campus Review Process and Feedback. The UNC Asheville campus review process involves approval by the Institutional Development and Planning Committee (IDC), followed by approval by the Academic

Policies Committee (APC), culminating with approval by the full Faculty Senate. Other individuals who reviewed and approved the proposal include the dean of special and graduate programs, the provost, and the chancellor.

2. UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback. Throughout the review process, UNC Asheville provided relevant information pertaining to program requirements and resources. The institution submitted appropriate documentation and research to support the statements made.

IV.   Recommendation

Staff recommend that the Board approve the University of North Carolina Asheville's request to establish the Master of Science (MS) in Environmental Resilience (CIP 03.0103) effective fall 2025.

Request for Authorization to Establish
Master of Science (MS) in Management
CIP 52.1301
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

I.   Program Highlights

- The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill proposes the establishment of a Master of Science in Management (MSM).
- The proposed program is designed to provide foundational business education to recent graduates without prior business training or significant work experience and will be delivered in person. It aims to prepare students for entry-level roles in business by offering a rigorous, one-year, 30-credit curriculum.
- The proposed program aligns with UNC-Chapel Hill's mission to serve as a center for research, scholarship, and creativity and to teach a community of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students to become the next generation of leaders. Kenan-Flagler Business School at UNC-Chapel Hill has a track record of developing business leaders. The program also supports the University of North Carolina System's mission to create, transmit, and apply knowledge to address societal needs by leveraging UNC-Chapel Hill's academic expertise to prepare young professionals for contemporary careers.
- The proposed program will include: (1) specializations in finance or marketing; (2) experiential learning opportunities; (3) a cohort-based residential delivery model designed to foster collaboration and community; and (4) access to state-of-the-art facilities, including the newly constructed Bell Hall. The program's lockstep curriculum and dedicated student support model, proven effective in other Kenan-Flagler Business School graduate programs, promotes efficiency and degree completion.
- Upon graduation, graduates of the proposed program will be prepared for a wide range of business roles including consultant, project manager, health center administrator, client solutions executive, investment banking analyst, marketing professional, and digital media coordinator. Additionally, graduates can leverage Kenan-Flagler Business School's employer network and integrated career support services.
- In year five, the proposed MS in Management projects 75 enrolled students.

II.   Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.
The proposed MSM program aligns directly with the mission of UNC-Chapel Hill to educate and prepare leaders to address societal and workforce needs. The program fills a critical gap in the university's offerings by targeting recent graduates without prior business education or significant work experience. This aligns with the UNC System's Strategic Plan: Higher Expectations, which emphasizes workforce readiness and retaining talent within North Carolina.

2. Student Demand.
Lightcast data provided by the Office of Digital and Lifelong Learning at UNC-Chapel Hill provide evidence of student demand for a one-year business-focused master's program. The results of the analysis indicate a 187 percent increase in student demand for business degrees since 2017. Additionally, the recent UNC ROI Study of University Programs (2023) report identified business, management, marketing, and related

support services as the most popular field of study within the UNC System, exceeding enrollments in the second most popular field of study by nearly 10,000 students.

Institutions across the country (e.g., Emory, University of Chicago) are launching similar programs to meet market demand, while peer institutions with existing programs (e.g., Duke, Wake Forest, and UVA) have seen strong annual enrollment, including many students who are North Carolina residents. Duke University's program enrolls over 250 students annually, and Wake Forest and UVA also report steady enrollments of over 80 and 100 students, respectively.

Consultations with these institutions indicate significant unmet demand within North Carolina, particularly in the Triangle region. Surveys indicate that UNC-Chapel Hill graduates without business backgrounds often pursue similar programs out of state, demonstrating a clear opportunity to retain these students within the UNC System.

3. Employment Opportunities for Graduates.
The program's design aligns with regional and national labor market needs, as highlighted in workforce data included in the Request for Preliminary Authorization. Industries in North Carolina, including technology, financial services, and health care, have expressed growing demand for professionals with foundational business acumen and strong leadership capabilities.

MSM graduates will be prepared for a wide range of business roles. Consistent with this, graduates from peer MSM programs have secured positions such as financial analyst, portfolio asset manager, risk and compliance consultant, and digital content manager. Kenan-Flagler Business School's robust employer network, coupled with the required STAR (Student Teams Achieving Results) experiential component, ensures graduates have practical experience, enhancing their job prospects and employability.

4. Impact on Access and Affordability.
The MSM program is designed with affordability and accessibility in mind. The proposed tuition is well below the anticipated competitor programs (Duke, Wake Forest, UVA) for NC resident students and in line with competitor programs for nonresident students. Students with demonstrated need or merit will be prioritized for scholarships and financial aid options, further reducing financial barriers to entry. Debt loads for MSM students will be similar to debt loads for Master of Accounting (MAC) students, given the similarities in the student groups and overlapping recruiting strategies. The Office of Scholarships and Student Aid at UNC-Chapel Hill reports debt loads of $51,475, $49,260, and $52,560 for the three most recent academic years. In those years, 48, 37, and 52 percent of each class borrowed, respectively.

Benchmarking shows that common majors for students who enroll in MSM programs are economics, political science, health systems/administration, communications/media/journalism, history, sociology, exercise and sport science, and psychology. Based on first destination data from University Career Services at UNC-Chapel Hill, average salaries for UNC-Chapel Hill students graduating with these majors are $61,000 ($53,000 excluding economics). Benchmarking data indicate average starting salaries for MSM graduates of over $80,000. This enhanced earning potential provides a clear path to repayment and a positive return on investment.

5. UNC-Chapel Hill is requesting tuition differential for the MSM program.

Full-Time 2024-2025 Graduate Tuition and Fees per Year (In Dollars)

Category	Resident	Nonresident

Tuition	10,764	29,421
Tuition Differential	35,159	23,839
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)	1,979	1,979
Special Fees	0	0

6. Expected Quality.

The proposed MSM program will offer a rigorous 10-course, 30-credit, one-year curriculum tailored for early-career professionals without business experience. It will include foundational courses in accounting, finance, marketing, analytics, leadership, communications, operations, strategy, and organizational behavior, along with specialized tracks in finance and marketing. In addition, the hallmark of the program is the required STAR (Student Teams Achieving Results) experiential learning component — a team-based, capstone course that engages students in real-world consulting projects.

Kenan-Flagler Business School is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and therefore regularly evaluated under the continuous improvement review (CIR) process. This review process is extensive, and each program is individually assessed ensuring all are held to the highest standards of quality.

7. Faculty Quality and Number.

The proposed program will leverage existing faculty from Kenan-Flagler Business School. Many faculty have advanced degrees and extensive teaching and research experience and are recognized experts in their fields. Consistent with other Kenan-Flagler Business School programs and the UNC-Chapel Hill Policy on Qualifications of Course Instructors requirements, all MSM faculty will either: (1) have an earned doctorate or terminal degree in the same or closely related discipline as the course taught; or (2) meet alternative qualifications such as professional experience or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes of the course.

8. Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.

The proposed MSM program content is designed as a bridge from non-business undergraduate majors. It mimics Kenan-Flagler Business School's successful MAC program, which delivers high-quality graduate accounting education to students with little or no prior education or experience in accounting. MSM core curriculum is aligned with academic areas at Kenan-Flagler Business School (accounting, finance, marketing, communication, operations, organizational behavior, and strategy).

9. Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Space, etc.).

Existing resources at Kenan-Flagler Business School, including classrooms, academic support services, and library resources, are sufficient to support the proposed MSM program. The opening of Bell Hall in fall 2025 will alleviate prior space constraints and provide a state-of-the-art facility. Bell Hall's advanced classroom technology, collaborative spaces, and flexible design will support the cohort-based MSM curriculum. The university library system, including access to specialized business databases, will meet students' academic needs.

10. Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).

Within the UNC System, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte offers the only comparable MSM program. This program is delivered in a cohort-based, lockstep format and primarily serves the Charlotte region. Other UNC System institutions offer one-year specialized business master's programs, but not a general MSM.

11. Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.
Consultations with peer institutions and UNC Charlotte confirm that the two programs cater to distinct student populations, minimizing the risk of duplication. UNC Charlotte's program draws students mainly from the Charlotte area and primarily, but not exclusively, serves recent graduates from UNC Charlotte. The proposed UNC-Chapel Hill MSM program will primarily serve recent graduates from UNC-Chapel Hill and will primarily draw from the Triangle region. Lastly, demand from students currently leaving the state for similar programs underscores the necessity of offering the MSM at UNC-Chapel Hill.

12. Feasibility of Collaborative Program.
Collaborative opportunities exist with UNC Charlotte, particularly in areas such as shared career fairs and research initiatives. Current partnerships, such as joint faculty research and conferences, provide a foundation for further collaboration. These efforts ensure complementarity rather than competition between the two programs. Additionally, partnerships with other Triangle-region undergraduate institutions could create pathways into the MSM program.

13. Other Considerations.
The proposed MSM program addresses a strategic priority for UNC-Chapel Hill by expanding access to graduate business education for non-business undergraduates. It also supports regional economic growth by preparing graduates for in-demand roles across North Carolina. The program's design as a one-year intensive curriculum ensures a quick return on investment for students, enhancing its appeal and accessibility.

III. Summary of Review Processes

1. **Campus Review Process and Feedback.**
The MSM proposal was reviewed and approved by: the Kenan-Flagler Business School faculty; Kenan-Flagler Business School dean; UNC-Chapel Hill Graduate School Academic Policy Committee; UNC-Chapel Hill Graduate School Administrative Board; UNC-Chapel Hill Graduate School dean; UNC-Chapel Hill New Program Review Committee; UNC-Chapel Hill provost; UNC-Chapel Hill vice chancellor for finance and operations; UNC-Chapel Hill chancellor; and UNC System Office.

2. **UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback.**
Throughout the review process, UNC-Chapel Hill provided relevant information pertaining to program requirements and resources. The institution submitted appropriate documentation and research to support the statements made.

IV. Recommendation

Staff recommend that the Board of Governors approve the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill request to establish the Master of Science (MS) in Management (CIP 52.1301) effective fall 2025.

Request for Authorization to <u>Discontinue and/or Consolidate</u>
Academic Degree Programs

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Doctor of Philosophy in Consumer, Apparel, and Retail Studies (Ph.D.) (CIP 19.0901)

Overview: The Doctor of Philosophy in Consumer, Apparel, and Retail Studies (19.0901) at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro will be discontinued and consolidated effective fall 2025. This request to discontinue a degree program has been reviewed by the appropriate institutional committees and approved by the appropriate academic authority(ies).

The Doctor of Philosophy in Consumer, Apparel, and Retail Studies will be discontinued and consolidated into the Doctor of Philosophy in Business Administration (52.0201). The consolidation will enhance the efficiency and reach of Bryan School doctoral programs by enabling shared courses and resources across departments and concentrations. No faculty or staff members will be affected by the discontinuation of the program. Currently enrolled students will receive ongoing support and the opportunity to complete the program.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Board approve the University of North Carolina at Greensboro's request to discontinue and consolidate the delivery of the Doctor of Philosophy in Consumer, Apparel, and Retail Studies (19.0901) effective fall 2025.

Doctor of Philosophy in Economics (Ph.D.) (CIP 45.0603)

Overview: The Doctor of Philosophy in Economics (45.0603) at UNC Greensboro will be discontinued and consolidated effective fall 2025. This request to discontinue a degree program has been reviewed by the appropriate institutional committees and approved by the appropriate academic authority(ies).

The Doctor of Philosophy in Economics will be discontinued and consolidated into the Doctor of Philosophy in Business Administration (52.0201). The consolidation will enhance the efficiency and reach of Bryan School doctoral programs by enabling shared courses and resources across departments and concentrations. No faculty or staff members will be affected by the discontinuation of the program. Currently enrolled students will receive ongoing support and the opportunity to complete the program.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Board approve the University of North Carolina at Greensboro's request to discontinue and consolidate the delivery of the Doctor of Philosophy in Economics (45.0603) effective fall 2025.

Doctor of Philosophy in Information Systems (Ph.D.) (CIP 11.0103)

Overview: The Doctor of Philosophy in Information Systems (11.0103) at UNC Greensboro will be discontinued and consolidated effective fall 2025. This request to discontinue a degree program has been reviewed by the appropriate institutional committees and approved by the appropriate academic authority(ies).

The Doctor of Philosophy in Information Systems will be discontinued and consolidated into the Doctor of Philosophy in Business Administration (52.0201). The consolidation will enhance the efficiency and reach

of Bryan School doctoral programs by enabling shared courses and resources across departments and concentrations. No faculty or staff members will be affected by the discontinuation of the program. Students who remain in the program and make appropriate progress will be able to complete the program by 2028.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Board approve the University of North Carolina at Greensboro's request to discontinue and consolidate the delivery of the Doctor of Philosophy in Information Systems (11.0103) effective fall 2025.