

AGENDA ITEM

A-4. Resolution UNC Wilmington Healthcare Planning AuthorizationDavid English

Situation: The University of North Carolina Wilmington requests authorization to initiate the planning process required to seek accreditation from the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) for a Doctor of Medicine program. The authorization would allow UNC Wilmington to begin LCME-required planning activities, including submission of a letter of intent requesting Applicant status and completion of the planning self-study and other required accreditation documentation.

Background: North Carolina continues to face physician workforce shortages, particularly in rural and southeastern regions of the state. A proposed medical school at UNC Wilmington is intended to support the state's physician workforce needs and expand access to medical education aligned with regional and statewide health priorities.

The UNC Board of Governors has statutory responsibility to authorize the establishment of new degree programs, and Section 400.1.1[R] of the UNC Policy Manual, *Regulation for Academic Program Planning and Evaluation*, governs approval processes for new baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degree programs in the UNC System. The regulation provides that requests for planning authorization must include the required financial worksheet signed by the institution's chief financial officer, and new degree program proposals must address considerations including student demand, workforce demand, education premium, student return on investment, and the program's contribution to professions critical to the health, educational attainment, and quality of life of North Carolinians.

LCME accreditation is required before students may be recruited, admitted, or enrolled in a Doctor of Medicine program. The proposed resolution would authorize UNC Wilmington to undertake planning and accreditation-preparation activities only; it would not authorize enrollment of students or final establishment of the Doctor of Medicine program.

Assessment: Authorization to initiate planning is recommended. This action would allow UNC Wilmington to proceed with the preliminary steps necessary to seek LCME accreditation, while UNC Wilmington would remain subject to UNC System academic program planning requirements, and would provide required documentation for any subsequent doctoral degree program proposal.



MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and
Programs
May 20, 2026

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



**RESOLUTION OF
THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
May 21, 2026**

**Resolution to Authorize the University of North Carolina Wilmington
to Initiate Planning for a Medical School and Doctor of Medicine Degree Program**

The duly acting and appointed Board of Governors of University of North Carolina (the "Board of Governors") at a meeting held pursuant to notice requirements and a quorum being present, do hereby make the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Board of Governors is a body politic and corporate, responsible for the general determination, control, supervision, management and governance of all the affairs of the constituent institutions...and may adopt such policies and regulations as it deems wise; N.C.G.S. § 116-11(2);

WHEREAS, the Board of Governors shall determine the functions, educational activities and academic programs of the constituent institutions and shall also determine the types of degrees to be awarded; N.C.G.S. § 116-11(3);

WHEREAS, the Board of Governors may delegate any part of its authority over the affairs of any institution to the board of trustees or, through the President, to the chancellor of the institution in any case where such delegation appears necessary or prudent to enable the institution to function in a proper and expeditious manner; N.C.G.S. § 116-11(13);

WHEREAS, the Board of Governors has adopted a robust Policy framework on academic program planning and authorized the President to implement such policies through regulations as may be adopted from time to time by the President; UNC Policy Manual Chapter 400;

WHEREAS, the Board of Governors requires the identification of academic program needs, to include without limitation, the contribution of the program to professions which are critical to the health, education attainment, and quality of life of North Carolinians; Section 400.1 of the UNC Policy Manual, *Policy on Academic Program Planning*; Section 400.1.1[R] of the UNC Policy Manual, *Regulation for Academic Program Planning and Evaluation*;

WHEREAS, new degree program applications shall include, at a minimum, a student demand analysis, workforce demand analysis, education premium analysis and student return-on-investment analysis; Section 400.1.1[R] of the UNC Policy Manual;

WHEREAS, North Carolina faces ongoing physician workforce shortages, particularly in rural and southeastern regions of North Carolina;

WHEREAS, the University of North Carolina Wilmington is uniquely situated to begin advance planning and study on the feasibility of helping remediate the ongoing physician workforce shortages in rural and southeastern regions of North Carolina, to include establishing a medical school and offering new degree programs; and

WHEREAS, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) establishes the national accreditation process for Doctor of Medicine programs, which requires institutions to complete a multi-stage planning and review process prior to admitting students;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the University of North Carolina Wilmington, through its chancellor or designee, is authorized to initiate the planning process required to seek LCME accreditation for a Doctor of Medicine degree program, including submission of a letter of intent requesting Applicant status and completion of the planning self-study and other required accreditation documentation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of North Carolina Wilmington, through its chancellor or designee, is authorized to recruit and hire the leadership and administrative personnel required by the LCME and necessary to support planning activities and preparation for preliminary accreditation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of North Carolina Wilmington, through its chancellor or designee, is authorized to take such other actions as may be prudent or necessary to continue advance planning for the establishment of a medical school and the offering a new Doctor of Medicine degree program

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of North Carolina Wilmington, through its chancellor or designee, shall provide all necessary documentation to the UNC Board of Governors, through the UNC System Office in a manner as prescribed by the President, required of new Doctoral Degree Program Proposals, including Student Demand Analysis; Workforce Demand Analysis; Education Premium Analysis; Student Return-on-Investment Analysis; and without limitation the contribution of the program to professions which are critical to the health, educational attainment, and quality of life of North Carolinians.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that no students may be recruited, admitted, or enrolled until the Doctor of Medicine degree program has received LCME preliminary accreditation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of North Carolina Wilmington shall report periodically to the President and the Board of Governors regarding progress in the planning and accreditation process.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Governors supports and accepts the Authorization for UNC Wilmington to Initiate Planning for a Medical School.

This the _____ day of _____ 2026

Wendy F. Murphy, Chair

Meredith R. McCullen, Secretary