

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs

September 16, 2026

15 minutes after the adjournment of the Committee on Budget and Finance

Via Videoconference and PBS North Carolina Livestream

UNC System Office

223 S. West Street, Board Room

Raleigh, North Carolina

AGENDA

- A-1. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of July 23, 2026 Lee Barnes
- A-2. 2025-26 Annual Report of the Committee on Educational
Planning, Policies, and Programs David English
- A-3. Academic Affairs Update David English
- A-4. University of North Carolina Asheville Update Kimberly van Noort
- A-5. North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics –
Morganton Expansion..... David English and Todd Roberts
- A-6. UNC System Degree Program Actions Michael McKenzie
- A-7. Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) Annual Report..... Katie O'Connor
- A-8. Proposed Section 700.11.1 of the UNC Policy
Manual, *Policy on Student Well-Being Resources* Katie O'Connor
- A-9. Licensure Overview..... Jana Walser-Smith
- A-10. Adjourn

Additional Information Available

- Early College Graduate Report
- AHEC Annual Report on Medical School Outcomes

DRAFT MINUTES

July 23, 2026 at 9:50 a.m.

5 minutes after the adjournment of the Committee on Budget and Finance

Via Videoconference and PBS North Carolina Livestream

This meeting of the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs was presided over by Chair Lee Barnes. The following committee members, constituting a quorum, were also present via videoconference and PBS North Carolina Livestream: Wendy Murphy, Gene Davis, Kathryn Greeley, Mark Holton, Woody White, and Rushil Sachania

Chancellors participating were Kevin Howell, Heather Norris, and Aswani Volety

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

1. Call to Order and Approval of OPEN Session Minutes of May 20, 2026 (Item A-1)

The chair called the meeting to order at 10:50 a.m. on Thursday, July 23, 2026. The open session minutes from the May 20, 2026, meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

2. UNC System Academic Degree Program Action (Item A-2)

Dr. English recommended action on the academic degree programs across the system.

The following program was recommended for program establishment:

- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
 - Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) (CIP 44.0701)

MOTION: Resolved, that the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs approve the one new request for program establishment and recommend it to the full Board of Governors for a vote through the consent agenda.

Motion: Gene Davis

Motion carried

3. Adjourn (Item A-3)

There being no further business and without objection, the meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Gene Davis, Secretary

AGENDA ITEM

A-2. 2025-26 Annual Report of the Committee on Educational
Planning, Policies, and Programs..... David English

Situation: Each standing committee submits an annual report of its activities to the Board of Governors.

Background: Pursuant to Section 302 E of *The Code*, "Each standing committee shall make a written report to the Board of Governors at least annually, reviewing the work of the committee during the preceding year."

Assessment: The annual report on the activities of the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs for fiscal year 2025-26 is ready for review and submission.

Action: This item requires a vote by the committee to accept the report for submission to the Board of Governors.

DUTIES AND MEMBERSHIP

The Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs is one of four standing committees established by the University of North Carolina Board of Governors on September 15, 1973. There are now six standing committees. The committee consists of no fewer than six voting members as designated by the chair of the Board of Governors for one-year terms, starting at the first meeting after July 1 of the year and continuing until their successors are appointed. As a matter of practice, the chair may also appoint additional members, and chancellors further staff the committee as *ex officio* members. It is the duty of the committee to receive advice and recommendations of the president and, in turn, make recommendations to the Board in all areas pertaining to the development of a coordinated system of higher education in North Carolina, including:

- (a) the definition of mission and assignment of functions of each constituent institution;
- (b) the review of requests for the initiation of new degree programs and recommendations for the termination of existing programs; and
- (c) the provision of supportive services, facilities, and other resources for the instructional, research, and public service programs of the constituent institutions.

The committee shall also advise and assist the president and the Board by maintaining close liaison with the State Board of Education, the State Board of Community Colleges, and private colleges and universities. It shall further recommend to the Board procedures and guidelines for the licensing of nonpublic educational institutions. [Section 301 C, *The Code*]

From July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, the following persons were appointed or reappointed to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs: Mr. Terry Hutchens, Ms. Kathryn Greeley, Mr. R. Gene Davis Jr., Mr. Mark Holton and Mrs. Sonja Nichols. The Board chair subsequently appointed Mr. Hutchens as committee chair, Mr. Davis as vice chair, and Mrs. Nichols as secretary. The *ex officio* members on the committee are Chancellor Kevin Howell (North Carolina State University), Chancellor James R. Martin II (North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University), Mr. Javier Limon (UNC Association of Student Governments), Chancellor Kimberly van Noort (University of North Carolina Asheville) and Mr. Wade Maki (chair of the UNC Faculty Assembly).

ACTIONS

Between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, the committee met in six full meetings and two subcommittee meetings. The major actions of the committee are summarized as follows:

Academic Program Development

The committee recommended and the Board of Governors subsequently approved the establishment of the following new baccalaureate, master, and doctorate degree programs on the dates indicated:

	Institution	Degree Level	Program Title	CIP#	Committee Approved	Board Approved
1.	UNC-Chapel Hill	MS	Global Medicines Development	51.2006	9/17/2025	9/18/2025
2.	UNC Charlotte	MS	Artificial Intelligence	11.0201	9/17/2025	9/18/2025
3.	UNC Charlotte	BS	Artificial Intelligence	11.0201	9/17/2025	9/18/2025
4.	UNC Charlotte	BS	Construction Engineering	14.3301	9/17/2025	9/18/2025
5.	NCSU	MS	Wide Bandgap Semiconductors	14.1001	11/19/2025	11/20/2025
6.	NCSU	MR	Agricultural Business Management	1.0102	11/19/2025	11/20/2025
7.	UNC- Chapel Hill	MS	Data Science	11.0701	11/19/2025	11/20/2025
8.	UNC-Chapel Hill	Ph.D.	Data Science	11.0701	11/19/2025	11/20/2025
9.	UNC Charlotte	MS	Entrepreneurship	52.0701	11/19/2025	11/20/2025
10.	UNC Pembroke	BS	Agriculture	01.0000	11/19/2025	11/20/2025
11.	WCU	BFA	Design and Visual Communications	50.0401	11/19/2025	11/20/2025
12.	WCU	MS	Engineering	14.0101	2/25/2026	2/26/2026
13.	ECSU	BS	Data Science	37.7001	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
14.	N.C. A&T	Ph.D.	Bioengineering	14.0501	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
15.	UNC-Chapel Hill	BS	Geospatial Data Science	30.4401	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
16.	UNC Greensboro	BA	Health, Medicine, and Society	51.2212	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
17.	UNC Wilmington	BS	Data Science	30.7001	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
18.	WSSU	BSPH	Public Health	51.2201	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
19.	WSSU	MPH	Public Health	51.2201	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
20.	UNC-Chapel Hill	BSW	Social Work	44.0701	7/23/2026	7/23/2026

The committee recommended and the Board of Governors subsequently approved the discontinuation/consolidations of the following baccalaureate and master's degree programs on the dates indicated:

	Institution	Degree Level	Program Title	CIP#	Committee Approved	Board Approved
1.	ECU	MA	International Studies	30.2001	9/17/2025	9/18/2025
2.	ECU	MAEd	Physical Education	13.1314	9/17/2025	9/18/2025
3.	UNC Wilmington	BA	Environmental Science	3.0104	9/17/2025	9/18/2025
4.	NCCU	MS	Chemistry	40.0501	11/19/2025	11/20/2025
5.	WCU	M	Innovation Leadership and Entrepreneurship	52.1499	2/25/2026	2/26/2026
6.	APP State	BA	Mathematics	27.0101	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
7.	APP State	MA	Student Affairs Administration	13.1102	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
8.	ECU	BA	African and African American Studies	5.0201	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
9.	ECU	BA	Economics	45.0601	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
10.	ECU	BA	Multidisciplinary Studies	30.0000	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
11.	ECU	BA	Theatre Arts	50.0501	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
12.	ECU	BS	Applied Atmospheric Science	40.0401	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
13.	ECU	BS	English, Secondary Education	13.1305	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
14.	ECU	BS	Geographic Information Science and Technology	11.0401	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
15.	ECU	BS	History, Secondary Education	13.1318	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
16.	ECU	BS	Mathematics, Secondary Education	13.1311	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
17.	ECU	MA	Hispanic Studies	16.0905	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
18.	ECU	MS	Molecular Biology and Biotechnology	26.0204	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
19.	FSU	BA	Spanish	16.0905	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
20.	FSU	BA	Spanish Teaching	13.1330	5/20/2026	5/21/2026

Reports and Recommendations, Received and Adopted

The committee and the Board of Governors approved the following reports and recommendations:

	Reports	Committee Approved	Board Approved
1.	Comprehensive Articulation Agreement Annual Report	9/17/2025	9/18/2025
2.	Revisions to the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement	9/17/2025	9/18/2025
3.	2024-2025 Committee on EPPP Annual Report	9/17/2025	9/18/2025
4.	Winston-Salem State University Mission Statement	1/28/2026	1/29/2026
5.	Resolution UNC Wilmington Healthcare Planning Approval	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
6.	Authorization Related to the Commission for Public Higher Education (CPHE)	5/20/2026	5/21/2026

The committee also received and discussed the following reports/topics:

	Reports/Topics	Presented to Committee
1.	Early High School Graduates Report	9/17/2025
2.	UNC System Fall Enrollment Report and Actions Taken Pursuant to Section 700.1.3 of the UNC Policy Manual, <i>Policy on Nonresident Undergraduate Enrollment</i>	11/19/2025
3.	Laboratory Schools Evaluation Report	11/19/2025
4.	Commission for Public Higher Education Update	11/19/2025
5.	Distinguished Professors Endowment Trust Fund	11/19/2025
6.	Faculty Report – Faculty Workload and Post Tenure Review	1/27/2026
7.	N. C. Teaching Fellows Program – Annual Report	1/27/2026
8.	Comprehensive Transition Postsecondary (CTO) Programs Report	2/25/2026
9.	Civil Discourse Initiatives in the UNC System	2/25/2026
10.	Southeastern North Carolina Health Care Needs	4/15/2026
11.	UNC System Rural Residency Medical Education and Training Fund	4/15/2026
12.	UNC System Workforce Alignment	4/15/2026
13.	2024-25 UNC System Intercollegiate Athletics and Financial Transparency Report	5/20/2026

	Reports/Topics	Presented to Committee
14.	UNC System Workforce Alignment System Response and Next Steps	5/20/2026
15.	UNC System AI Foundational Skills and Literacy Initiative	5/20/2026

Policy Revision Approvals

The committee and the Board of Governors approved the following revisions to the UNC Policy Manual:

	Subject	Committee Approved	Board Approved
1.	Revisions to Section 700.7.1 of UNC Policy Manual, <i>Policy on Military Student Success</i>	9/17/2025	9/18/2025
2.	Revisions to Section 400.1.6 of the UNC Policy Manual, <i>Policy on The University of North Carolina Academic Calendar and Credit Requirements</i>	9/17/2025	9/18/2025
3.	Proposed Actions Taken Pursuant to Section 700.1.3 of the UNC Policy Manual, <i>Policy on Nonresident Undergraduate Enrollment</i>	11/19/2025	11/20/2025

Other Committee and Board Actions

The committee and the Board of Governors took action on the following faculty awards:

	Subject	Committee Approved	Board Approved
1.	2025 Governor James E. Holshouser Jr. Award for Excellence in Public Service (subcommittee approved October 31, 2025)	11/18/2025	11/19/2025
2.	2026 Oliver Max Gardner Award (subcommittee approved February 16, 2026)	2/25/2026	2/26/2026
3.	2025 Board of Governors Awards for Excellence in Teaching	1/28/2026	1/29/2026

Licensure of Nonpublic and Out of State Educational Institutions

The committee recommended and the Board of Governors subsequently approved the licensure of degrees from the following institutions on the dates indicated:

	Institution	Committee Approved	Board Approved
1.	Harrisburg University of Science and Technology	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
2.	Jessup University	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
3.	Ohio Dominican University	5/20/2026	5/21/2026

4.	University of the Pacific	5/20/2026	5/21/2026
5.	St. Thomas University (administrative campus)	5/20/2026	5/21/2026

AGENDA ITEM

A-3. Academic Affairs Update David English

Situation:	The committee will hear an update on recent activities involving academic affairs.
Background:	The Division of Academic Affairs advances the University's core academic mission. Academic Affairs supports students and faculty as they engage in teaching, research, and outreach. This division evaluates curricular options to ensure they are both rigorous and strategically distributed to avoid unnecessary duplication across constituent institutions. More generally, Academic Affairs designs and coordinates statewide initiatives to improve student retention and success.
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.

AGENDA ITEM

A-4. University of North Carolina Asheville Update Kimberly van Noort

Situation: Chancellor Kimberly van Noort will provide an update on the University of North Carolina Asheville, including current enrollment at the institution, the status of ongoing recovery and recruitment efforts, and the institution's efforts to move forward through Asheville 2030: Rising to the Challenge.

Background: UNC Asheville occupies a distinctive role within the UNC System as North Carolina's public liberal arts and sciences university. Its undergraduate teaching mission, close faculty-student engagement, and emphasis on formative classroom experiences remain central to the institution's value proposition, particularly at a time when employers increasingly need graduates with judgment, creativity, ethical reasoning, communication skills, and the ability to use technology responsibly.

The last several years have presented significant challenges for UNC Asheville. Like many liberal arts institutions nationally, UNC Asheville has faced enrollment pressure. The impact of Hurricane Helene and the broader regional recovery also affected recruitment and interrupted institutional momentum. Through Asheville 2030: Rising to the Challenge, Chancellor van Noort and her staff have identified an approach that honors the institution's unique history and mission within the UNC System, while charting a path for future excellence and stability.

Assessment: Chancellor van Noort's update will provide the committee with information on UNC Asheville's current enrollment position and the strategies underway to strengthen recruitment, retention, student success, academic programs, and institutional sustainability. These efforts are grounded in the university's public liberal arts and sciences mission while recognizing the need for innovation in response to changing student interests, workforce needs, and regional opportunities.

Action: This item is for information only.

AGENDA ITEM

A-5. North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics —
Morganton ExpansionDavid English and Todd Roberts

Situation: Section 8.13 of NC Session Law 2026-41, 2026 Appropriations Act (S.B. 257) directs the Board of Governors, in consultation with the Chancellor of the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics (NCSSM), to study expansion of the Morganton campus and submit the resulting plans to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by February 15, 2027.

Background: Initial efforts to establish a second NCSSM campus in Western North Carolina culminated in approval of the Connect NC bond referendum in 2016, followed by groundbreaking in Morganton in 2019. NCSSM-Morganton opened in 2022, welcoming its first residential class of 150 juniors and expanding the school's residential capacity by up to 300 students.

The legislative directive requires two related studies and plans: (1) assess the feasibility of accommodating at least twice as many students enrolled for in-person instruction at NCSSM-Morganton; and (2) assess and plan for increasing synchronous or asynchronous remote instruction at NCSSM-Morganton. The report charges the Board of Governors with identifying the resources needed to accommodate additional in person students and associated costs, including at least the following: (1) improvements to physical spaces, including residence halls; (2) additional faculty and staff; (3) instructional materials; and (4) other costs, as determined by the Board of Governors.

Assessment: During the 2026-27 academic year, NCSSM and UNC System Office staff will analyze the number of students with excellent academic records who apply but are not accepted because of limited physical space or other resources; identify needed improvements to physical spaces, including residence halls; determine the additional faculty, staff, instructional materials, other resources, and associated costs needed to expand in-person enrollment; and evaluate options for expanded remote instruction.

The Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs will receive an update in November 2026. The committee and full Board will vote on the final plans in January 2027 and submit the plans to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by February 15, 2027.

Action: This item is for information only.



North Carolina
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Board of Governors EPPP Committee Meeting - NCSSM- Morganton Expansion Feasibility Study Update

September 16, 2026



SB 257 - NCSSM-Morganton Expansion Studies



SECTION 8.13.(a)

The Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina, in consultation with the Chancellor of the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, shall do the following:

- (1)** Study the feasibility of increasing the size of the Morganton campus of the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics (NCSSM-Morganton) and develop a plan to accommodate at least twice as many students enrolled for in-person instruction at NCSSM-Morganton. At a minimum, the plan shall include the following information:
 - a.** An analysis of the number of students with excellent academic records who apply to the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics but are not accepted because of lack of physical space or other Resources.
 - b.** Resources needed to accommodate additional in-person students and associated costs, including at least the following:
 - 1.** Improvements to physical spaces, including residence halls.
 - 2.** Additional faculty and staff.
 - 3.** Instructional materials.
 - 4.** Other costs, as determined by the Board of Governors.
- (2)** Study increasing the number of students enrolled for remote instruction at NCSSM-Morganton, whether synchronously or asynchronously, and develop a plan to achieve that purpose.

SECTION 8.13.(b) No later than February 15, 2027, the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina shall report the plans developed pursuant to subdivisions (1) and (2) of subsection (a) of this section to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

SECTION 8.13.(c) This section is effective when it becomes law.

Information and Decisions Required to Complete the Study



North Carolina
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- Analyze application and enrollment data for recent classes to determine increased enrollment for residential and virtual programs
- Additional facilities needed to accommodate increased enrollment and projected capital funding needs
- Personnel needs based on increased enrollment and projected operating funding needed for personnel
- Non-personnel operating funding needed to support increased enrollment
- Projected timeline for increasing enrollment based on when the project is authorized by NCGA

Key Milestones for Completing the Study



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- **Key Milestones:**

- **August 20: Update NCSSM Board of Trustees Executive Committee on the planning process**
- **September 16: Update the UNC Board of Governors on the feasibility study and planning process**
- **September 25: Update the NCSSM Board of Trustees on the study**
- **November 5: Provide an interim report on the study to the NCSSM Board of Trustees Executive Committee**
- **November 18: Provide an interim report on the study to the UNC Board of Governors**
- **December 11: Provide the draft final report to the NCSSM Board of Trustees**
- **January 8: Submit the draft final report to the UNC System**
- **January 27: Present the final report to the UNC Board of Governors**
- **February 15: Submit the final report to NCGA**

Primary Components of the Study and Key Contributors to the Work



- **Determining increased student enrollment target**
 - NCSSM Leadership (Being led by Chancellor Roberts and Dr. Dennis Gilfillan)
 - UNC System Team (Being led by Senior VP for Academic Affairs, Dr. David English)
- **Identifying personnel and additional non-personnel operating funding projections:**
 - NCSSM Divisional Leadership
 - UNC System Finance Team
- **Identifying Facility needs and associated cost projections:**
 - NCSSM Leadership (Chancellor Roberts, Vice Chancellor Baxter, Executive Director of Capital Projects, Chad Barrow)
 - UNC System Capital Projects Team (Being led by VP for Capital Projects, Katherine Lynn)
- **The NCSSM and UNC System leadership teams are meeting every two weeks**



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Questions



Appendix



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- **Appendix 1: Specific tasks Related to Each Milestone Date**
Deliverables to the Board of Governors are highlighted in orange text.



Appendix 1

- August 20: Update the NCSSM Board of Trustees Executive Committee
 - **Planning process/design and participants**
- September 16: Provide and update to the Board of Governors EPPP Committee
 - **Planning process/design and participants**
- September 25: Update the NCSSM Board of Trustees
 - **Planning process/design and participants**
 - **Review qualified student data information**
 - **Establish the target for increased enrollment for residential and distance education students**
- November 5: Provide an interim report to the NCSSM Board of Trustees Executive Committee
 - **Initial projections for additional personnel costs and operating funding needed**
 - **Initial projections for additional facilities needed and associated capital costs**



Appendix 1 (cont'd)

- November 18: Provide an interim report to Board of Governors EPPP Committee
 - **Initial projections for additional personnel costs and operating funding needed**
 - **Initial projections for additional facilities needed and associated capital costs**
- December 11: Provide draft final report to the NCSSM Board of Trustees
 - **Final number for increased enrollment for residential students and distance education students**
 - **Projected for personnel and non personnel operating costs**
 - **Projection for additional facilities needed to accommodate growth and projected capital costs**
 - **Rationale for all projections**
- January 8: Submit draft final report to UNC System
 - **Draft report with all of the above information**



Appendix 1 (cont'd)

- January 27: Present draft report to the Board of Governors EPPP Committee
 - **Final number for increased enrollment for residential students and distance education students**
 - **Projected for personnel and non personnel operating costs**
 - **Projection for additional facilities needed to accommodate growth and projected capital costs**
 - **Rationale for all projections**
- January 28: Board of Governors considers the report for submission to the NCGA
- February 15: Submit the final report to the NCGA

AGENDA ITEM

A-6. UNC System Academic Degree Program Actions Michael McKenzie

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

Fayetteville State University
Master of Science (MS) in Interdisciplinary Data Science CIP 30.7001

University of North Carolina Asheville
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Data Science CIP 30.7001
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Biochemistry CIP 26.0202

University of North Carolina Wilmington
Master of Science (MS) in Evaluation and Organizational Learning CIP 13.0601

Program Discontinuations and Consolidations

North Carolina State University
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Professional Golf Management CIP 31.0301

Background: Per Section 400.1 of the UNC Policy Manual, *Policy on Academic Program Planning*, 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 is 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
Master of Science (MS) In Interdisciplinary Data Science
CIP 30.7001
FAYETTEVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY**

I. Program Highlights

- Fayetteville State University proposes the establishment of a Master of Science (MS) in Interdisciplinary Data Science.
- The proposed 30-credit, fully online program prepares graduates and working professionals for careers in data science. Enrollment is projected to reach 28 full-time students by year five.
- The proposed program is important because data science is one of the fastest-growing fields across academia, government, industry, healthcare, and nonprofits. The strengths of the proposed program include 100% online delivery format, flexibility of scheduling, and increased access for prospective students. The 30-credit-hour graduate coursework includes six core courses (18 credits) covering programming, statistics, data wrangling, data visualization, data analytics, machine learning, communication, and data ethics. It will also use three elective (interdisciplinary) courses (nine credits) based on students' interests. Additionally, students will acquire hands-on experience in solving real-world problems via a required capstone project-based course.
- The proposed program aligns with FSU's mission by expanding access to high-quality graduate education, preparing students for leadership in high-demand professions, and supporting the economic and workforce needs of North Carolina. The fully online program would increase educational access for working professionals, military-affiliated students, rural learners, and first-generation graduate students by extending the opportunity to pursue an advanced STEM degree.
- According to a report from Lightcast, a labor market research company, graduates could seek employment as data scientists, business intelligence analysts, data management analysts, and other related careers. The report noted that employers in North Carolina posted 9,282 jobs for data scientists between April 2025 and April 2026, with a median salary of \$125,000. Job postings were offered by Bank of America, Infosys, and Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group, among others. Given that Lightcast estimated annual job postings exceeding 9,700 a year, with a total of 121,094 jobs identified in North Carolina (17% above the national average), graduates' anticipated success rates in five years are projected to be robust, at 80% job placement.

II. Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The proposed program expands Fayetteville State University's graduate STEM portfolio in a high-demand field while building on existing interdisciplinary faculty expertise. It supports the University's mission by increasing access to career-focused graduate education and preparing graduates for leadership in data-driven professions. The program also advances the UNC System Strategic Plan by improving educational access, supporting workforce development, and contributing to North Carolina's economic competitiveness.

2. **Student Demand.** Nationally, reporting under CIP 30.7001 is limited, suggesting that master's programs classified under this CIP are still in the early stages of enrollment and implementation or that institutions continue to report similar programs under alternative CIP codes (e.g., data analytics or related computing/statistics classifications). As noted in Table 3, an analysis of the NCES/IPEDS Completions data files for 2022-23 and 2023-24 found one peer institution with a comparable master's program, but no master's degree completions reported under CIP 30.7001 (Data Science, General) among Fayetteville State University's 10 IPEDS peer institutions.

Table 1. Other UNC System Enrolled for CIP 30.7001 — [Data Science, General], [Master's]

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
East Carolina University				4	15	27
UNC-Chapel Hill					31	92

Table 2. Other UNC System Completions for CIP 30.7001 — [Data Science, General], [Master's]

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
East Carolina University				9	12	17
UNC-Chapel Hill						8

Table 3. IPEDS Peer Institutions Completions for CIP 30.7001 — [Data Science, General], [Master's]

Institution	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24
Virginia State University				0

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** Data suggests that graduates from the proposed program would have competitive employment opportunities. Market analysis reveals that data scientists are employed across a wide range of industries, with 13% in computer systems design and others distributed across healthcare, finance, retail, government, and academia (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023).

Regarding industry growth projections, Bureau of Labor Statistics data suggests that employment for data scientists is projected to grow by 36% from 2023 to 2033, far exceeding the average growth rate for all occupations (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023). In addition, Fort Bragg shared information about immediate military market demand. Current data shows 162 active data science military jobs with salaries ranging from \$52,000 to \$165,000 (Recruit Military, 2024). Over 4,900 military data science positions are available nationally (Indeed Military Jobs, 2024). The average salary for a data scientist at Fort Bragg is \$106,358 per year (ZipRecruiter, 2024). Military installations like Fort Bragg are driving a 22% expected increase in tech job demand by 2024 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024).

Table 4. Estimated Employment in North Carolina for Standard Occupational Classification Codes (SOC) Cross-walked to CIP Code: 30.7001 with a Matching Education Level Requirement

Education Level Requirement	Count of SOC Codes	Current Employment	Estimated Future Employment	Net Change	Percent Change
Bachelor's Degree	15-1252	52,937	69,127	16,190	31
Bachelor's Degree	11-3021	16,504	20,063	3,599	22
Bachelor's Degree	15-2051	5,138	7,233	2,095	41
Bachelor's Degree	11-9121	3,783	4,328	545	14
Bachelor's Degree	15-1243	2,048	2,300	252	12
Master's Degree	15-1221	200	348	148	42
Master's Degree	15-2041	1,631	2,322	691	42

Table 5. Median Wage for SOC Codes Cross-walked to CIP 30.7001 — [Data Science, General]

Educational Level Requirement	SOC Code Count	Median Wage
Bachelor's Degree	5	119,090
Master's Degree	2	104,670

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** The proposed program is expected to improve both student access and affordability. Delivered entirely online, it would expand access for working professionals, military-affiliated students, veterans, rural learners, and other place-bound students who may be unable to participate in traditional on-campus graduate programs. Because the proposed program would use existing faculty and institutional resources, FSU is not requesting program-specific tuition or fees beyond the university's approved graduate tuition and mandatory fees.

Student debt is anticipated to be affordable for graduates. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the average loan debt for graduate completers is approximately \$48,318 (based on spring 2026 graduate student loan debt). Employment projections for expected occupations indicate median annual wages ranging from \$115,690 (operations research analysts) to \$173,870 (computer and information systems managers), with data scientists earning a median wage of \$119,090. Based on FSU students' median debt, the estimated debt-to-earnings ratio ranges from approximately 13% to 20%, depending on occupation. Assuming a standard 10-year federal student loan repayment schedule, estimated annual loan payments would be approximately 2% to 3% of annual earnings for graduates entering these occupations.

5. **Program Specific Fees or Tuition.** Fayetteville State University is not requesting any program-specific fees or tuition differential for this program.

Table 6. Full-Time 2026-2027 Master's Degree Tuition and Fees per Year (In Dollars)

Category	Resident	Nonresident
Tuition	\$3,688.00	\$15,403.00
Tuition Differential	--	--
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)	\$494.00	\$494.00
Special Fees	--	--

6. **Expected Quality.** The proposed 30-credit curriculum combines six core courses, three interdisciplinary electives, and a capstone project emphasizing applied problem solving. Students will develop competencies in programming, statistics, machine learning, analytics, visualization, communication, and data ethics. Faculty expertise from multiple academic disciplines supports the interdisciplinary curriculum. Existing institutional strengths, including the ABET-accredited computer science program and the Intelligent Systems Laboratory, provide a strong academic and research foundation.
7. **Faculty Quality and Number.** The proposed program would be taught by qualified graduate faculty drawn from participating academic departments. Tenured, tenure-track, and clinical faculty members with at least three years of curriculum vitae are reviewed by the Graduate School Council. Existing faculty possess expertise in data science, computer science, mathematics, statistics, and related disciplines. Instructional responsibilities will be accommodated through existing faculty resources and normal workload planning without reducing the quality of current academic programs.
8. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** The proposed program builds upon existing undergraduate and graduate offerings in mathematics, computer science, data science, business intelligence, and geospatial analytics. These programs provide students with foundational knowledge while supporting interdisciplinary collaboration among participating departments.
9. **Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Facilities, etc.).** Existing library collections, electronic resources, instructional technology, and faculty support services are sufficient to support the proposed program.
10. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** See data in Table 7.

Table 7. Other UNC System Applied/Admitted /Enrolled for CIP 30.7001 — Data Science, General

Institution	Degree Level	Counts	AY 2024-25	AY 2025-26
East Carolina University	Master's	Applied	50	40
East Carolina University	Master's	Admitted	47	40
East Carolina University	Master's	Enrolled	27	22

UNC-Chapel Hill	Master's	Applied	220	207
UNC-Chapel Hill	Master's	Admitted	180	164
UNC-Chapel Hill	Master's	Enrolled	92	79

11. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** Two existing degree programs in the UNC System at East Carolina University and UNC-Chapel Hill have the same CIP code (30.7001) as the proposed program. FSU's proposed program is distinct from these programs because it would expand graduate educational opportunities for working professionals, military-affiliated students and veterans, adult learners seeking career advancement, and graduates from multiple undergraduate disciplines.

In addition, the proposed program would address workforce shortages documented in reports from Lightcast. The company's analysis for the period between April 2025 and April 2026 indicated strong demand for data science professionals in North Carolina. It identified 9,282 unique job postings for data scientists, 1,808 employers recruiting for these positions, a median advertised salary of \$125,300, approximately 714 new job postings per month, and approximately 510 hires per month.

12. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program.** Collaborations are planned with four partners or groups: first, UNC-Charlotte's School of Data Science, which offers two master's degrees in data science; second, NC State's Data Science and AI Academy through the Renaissance Computing Institute (RENCI) committee framework that connects data science academics across North Carolina institutions; third, Fayetteville Technical Community College and its established military transition programs (Army Career Skills Program and DoD SkillBridge); and fourth, FSU's participation in North Carolina's broader community college partnership framework to provide pathways for associate degree holders seeking graduate-level data science education.
13. **Other Considerations.** The proposed MS in Interdisciplinary Data Science is expected to strengthen the university's long-term research and graduate education capacity by providing a foundational master's pathway that supports initiatives in applied artificial intelligence and related fields. The program also complements the university's strategic efforts to expand research partnerships and enhance opportunities for military-connected students and the regional workforce.

III. Summary of Review Processes

1. **Institution Review Process and Feedback.** The academic proposal was reviewed and approved by the following: The Department of Mathematics and Computer Science Curriculum Committee; the College of Health, Science, and Technology Academic Affairs Committee; the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee; the Faculty Senate; the SACSCOC liaison; and the provost and vice chancellor for Academic Affairs.
2. **UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback.** Throughout the review process, Fayetteville State University provided relevant information pertaining to program requirements and resources. The institution submitted appropriate documentation and research to support the statements made.

IV. Recommendation

Staff recommends that the UNC Board of Governors approve Fayetteville State University's request to establish the Master of Science (MS) in Interdisciplinary Data Science (CIP 30.7001) effective fall 2026.



**Request for Authorization to Establish
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Data Science
CIP 30.7001
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE**

I. Program Highlights

- The University of North Carolina Asheville proposes the establishment of a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Data Science.
- The purpose of the Data Science program is to equip students with strong analytical, computational, and statistical skills; to provide proficiency in programming languages such as Python and R; and to develop expertise in data visualization, statistical inference, and machine learning. Projected enrollment in year five is estimated to be 30 students.
- This program directly supports UNC Asheville's mission of integrative, inquiry-based education by preparing students to apply data-driven approaches to real-world challenges. As the first stand-alone BS in Data Science west of Charlotte, the program would broaden regional access and create a clear educational pathway for students to enter North Carolina's data science workforce.
- This program directly supports UNC Asheville's mission by leveraging an arts and sciences context where students learn to broadly contextualize and promote scientific practice within society.
- Graduates will be prepared for roles as data scientists, data analysts, data engineers, programmers, business intelligence analysts, machine learning engineers, and statisticians.

II. Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** Grounded in national curriculum guidelines and UNC Asheville's arts and sciences foundation, the program emphasizes applied learning, ethical reasoning, and communication alongside technical training. These are highly sought-after skills across nearly every sector. Through project-based coursework and a capstone experience, the program prepares graduates for advanced study or entry into one of the fastest-growing fields and high-earning potential.

The proposed program also advances the UNC System's strategic goals by expanding access to high-demand STEM education in western North Carolina and increasing the number of STEM graduates statewide. Locally and regionally, it expands access to data science education for students in western North Carolina and supports employers seeking data-literate professionals. At the state level and national level, the program increases the number of data scientists to meet growing employer demand and provides a clear pathway to graduate study in data science and analytics within the UNC System.

2. **Student Demand.** Student demand at UNC Asheville is supported by the DATASCI Scholars Program, funded by a \$1,999,399 S-STEM (Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) grant from the National Science Foundation. This grant provides scholarships of up to \$15,000 per year to cover unmet need for approximately 31 students, strengthening

recruitment of first-year and transfer students. In addition, early indicators of interest in data science are evident. UNC Asheville’s data science minor, launched in fall 2024, currently has 18 declared minors, and data science-related courses have high enrollment. These trends, along with strong interest at peer institutions, indicate strong potential demand for a data science major at UNC Asheville. Enrollment projections remain conservative, anticipating six new students per year.

Table 1. Other UNC System Enrolled for CIP 30.7001 — Data Science, General, Bachelor’s

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
UNC-Chapel Hill	0	0	0	0	23	117
UNC Charlotte	0	0	0	0	133	369

Table 2. Other UNC System Completions for CIP 30.7001 — Data Science, General, Bachelor’s

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
UNC-Chapel Hill	0	0	0	0	0	0
UNC Charlotte	0	0	0	0	0	44

Table 3. IPEDS Peer Institutions Completions for CIP 30.7001 — Data Science, General, Bachelor’s

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23
College of Charleston	0	10	0	6
Winthrop University	0	0	0	1

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** The proposed Bachelor of Science in Data Science at UNC Asheville responds to accelerating demand for data-driven skills across sectors. Data science is among the fastest-growing fields in the nation, with projected employment growth of 34% from 2024 to 2034 and a median annual salary exceeding \$112,000. With an influx of new data science jobs nationally and regionally, additional undergraduate programs are needed to meet the rising workforce demand.

Table 4. Estimated Employment in North Carolina for Standard Occupational Classification Codes (SOC) Cross-walked to CIP Code: 30.7001 with a Matching Education Level Requirement

Educational Level Requirement	Count of SOC Codes	2022	2032 Estimate	Net Change	Percent Change
Bachelor’s	8	89,021	115,131	29,110	29.3

Table 5. Median Wage for SOC Codes Cross-walked to CIP Code: 30.7001 Data Science, General

Educational Level Requirement	SOC Count	Median Wage
Some College or Associate Degree	N/A	N/A
Bachelor's Degree	5	\$139,746
Doctoral or Professional Degree	2	\$122,992

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** The proposed program at UNC Asheville would be the only dedicated undergraduate data science degree in western North Carolina, expanding access to workforce-aligned degrees within the UNC system. The proposed program is also very affordable: the average student debt of a UNC Asheville graduate is \$21,600, so a graduate’s debt-to-earnings

ratio is 15.4%, and the earnings used to service debt is 1.4%.

5. **Program Specific Fees or Tuition.** UNC Asheville is not requesting any program-specific fees or tuition differential for this program.

Table 6. Full-Time 2026-27 Undergraduate Tuition and Fees per Year (In Dollars)

Category	Resident	Nonresident
Tuition	\$4,184.00	\$21,470.00
Tuition Differential	--	--
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)	\$3,276.00	\$3,276.00
Special Fees	--	--

6. **Expected Quality.** The proposed major leverages existing faculty expertise across mathematics, statistics, computer science, and other fields to launch a high-quality, interdisciplinary program. UNC Asheville requires that all degree candidates complete a faculty-determined demonstration of competency in their major or concentration that integrates writing and information literacy. For the data science major, this competency will be demonstrated in STAT 428, which must be completed with a grade of C or higher to graduate.
7. **Faculty Quality and Number.** The current faculty of UNC Asheville are sufficient and qualified to deliver the program. All faculty members in the departments of Mathematics and Statistics and Computer Science teach courses that are part of the Data Science curriculum and will be consulted on any proposed changes to the program. No new faculty lines are required during the first three years of the proposed program. The initial teaching responsibilities will be absorbed by existing faculty without weakening current programs. Specifically, Data Science I will replace two existing courses (Multivariate Analysis and Big Data Analytics) by combining core content from both.

Rank	Name	Home Department
Greg Boudreaux	Associate Professor	Mathematics and Statistics
Kedai Cheng	Associate Professor	Mathematics and Statistics
Sam Kaplan	Professor	Mathematics and Statistics
Jimin Lee	Professor	Mathematics and Statistics
Bryan Martin	Lecturer	Mathematics and Statistics
Mark McClure	Professor	Mathematics and Statistics
Megan Powell	Associate Professor	Mathematics and Statistics
Becky Sanft	Chair and Associate Professor	Mathematics and Statistics
Julia Webster	Senior Lecturer	Mathematics and Statistics
Cathy Whitlock	Senior Lecturer	Mathematics and Statistics
Kitty Yang	Assistant Professor	Mathematics and Statistics
Kenneth Bogert	Associate Professor	Computer Science
Marietta Cameron	Professor	Computer Science

Farzana Rashid	Assistant Professor	Computer Science
Zubayr Rashid	Lecturer	Computer Science
Kevin Sanft	Chair and Associate Professor	Computer Science
Michael Sarris	Lecturer	Computer Science
Sarah Van Wart	Assistant Professor	Computer Science
Adam Whitley	Assistant Professor	Computer Science

8. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** The proposed program builds on existing expertise and faculty specializations in math, statistics, computer science, and new media.
9. **Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Facilities, etc.).** Existing campus physical spaces and infrastructure are sufficient to support the proposed program. No new space or renovations are proposed.
10. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** Two UNC System institutions offer on-campus bachelor's programs: UNC-Chapel Hill and UNC Charlotte. Collectively, enrollment increased from 156 students in AY 2023-24 to 486 in AY 2024-25, indicating strong and growing student demand.

Table 7. Other UNC System Applied/Admitted /Enrolled for CIP 30.7001 — Data Science, General

Institution	Degree Level	Counts	AY 23-24	AY 24-25
UNC-Chapel Hill (on-campus)	Bachelor's	Admitted	N/A	N/A
		Enrolled	23	117
UNC Charlotte (on-campus)	Bachelor's	Admitted	N/A	N/A
		Enrolled	133	369

11. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** The proposed program does not create unnecessary duplication within the UNC System. Only UNC Charlotte and UNC-Chapel Hill currently offer stand-alone bachelor's degrees in data science with enrolled students. UNC Wilmington and Elizabeth City State University had proposals for a BS in Data Science approved by the Board of Governors on May 21, 2026. The workforce demand for data science professionals shown in the table above justifies having multiple data science programs across the UNC System. Discussions with UNC Charlotte indicate that employers value graduates with a broad skill set, including programming, statistics, data management, communication, and project experience, and early outcomes suggest their program is successfully aligning with workforce needs. UNC Asheville's proposed program also emphasizes these skills, positioning graduates to meet evolving labor market demands.
12. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program.** UNC Asheville has identified several opportunities for collaboration with institutions offering related programs and resources in data science. UNC Asheville faculty met with the National Consortium for Data Science (NCDS), a project of the Renaissance Computing Institute (RENCI) at UNC-Chapel Hill, to explore partnerships that would expand student access to data science short courses and the potential use of EduHeLx, a cloud-based computing platform, with follow-up meetings planned. The Department of Mathematics and

Statistics at UNC Asheville connected with UNC Charlotte to discuss potential student participation in conferences at UNC Charlotte and collaborative projects with industry partnerships. UNC Asheville students have also participated in American Statistical Association (ASA) DataFest competitions hosted by peer institutions, and UNC Asheville is exploring hosting a regional DataFest to further promote collaboration, experiential learning, and visibility in data science education across western North Carolina. This program will also serve the UNC System by preparing graduates for continued study in one of several graduate data science programs within the UNC System, thereby developing a larger, data-literate workforce.

13. **Other Considerations.** None.

III. Summary of Review Processes

1. **Institution Review Process and Feedback.** This request to establish a BS degree in Data Science was approved by the chancellor, the provost, the Institutional Development Committee, the Academic Policies Committee, and the full Faculty Senate.
2. **UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback.** Throughout the review process, the University of North Carolina 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 recommends that the UNC Board of Governors approve the University of North Carolina Asheville's request to establish the Bachelor of Science (BS) in Data Science (CIP 30.7001) effective fall 2027.



**Request for Authorization to Establish
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Biochemistry
CIP 26.0202
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE**

I. Program Highlights

- The University of North Carolina Asheville proposes the establishment of a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Biochemistry.
- The purpose of the BS Biochemistry program is to prepare graduates for careers and advanced degrees in healthcare or molecular biosciences, as well as to formalize a popular, existing course of study at the intersection of chemistry and biology. Projected enrollment in year five is estimated to be 20 students.
- The BS Biochemistry program at UNC Asheville will be the only option for a biochemistry degree in western North Carolina, increasing access to students from underserved counties in the western part of the state. Many UNC Asheville biology and chemistry majors already pursue careers in healthcare or biosciences after taking electives in chemistry, biology, and physics; this proposal creates a specific interdisciplinary degree option for those students. Students in the program will closely interact with faculty who have a track record of student support and success and will participate in a nationally recognized undergraduate research program.
- This program directly supports UNC Asheville's mission by leveraging an arts and sciences context where students learn to broadly contextualize and promote scientific practice within society.
- Graduates will be prepared for entry-level roles as laboratory technicians, clinical research associates, and analytical chemists, and the program will create an important steppingstone for students interested in pursuing advanced degrees or research in medicine, dentistry, and pharmaceuticals.

II. Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** Grounded in national curriculum guidelines and UNC Asheville's arts and sciences foundation, the program emphasizes applied learning, research, and communication alongside technical training. The embedded research requirement will leverage the existing research program in the Chemistry and Biochemistry Department, which is unusually strong for a small undergraduate institution. The proposed program also advances the UNC System's strategic goals by expanding access to high-demand STEM education in western North Carolina and increasing the number of STEM graduates statewide.
2. **Student Demand.** The BS Biochemistry program will build on the success of current majors (BS Chemistry, BA Chemistry) within the department. Currently, UNC Asheville has twice as many chemistry majors per FTE as any other system institution already offering a biochemistry degree. And at other UNC system institutions offering a BS Biochemistry, student enrollment in biochemistry exceeds that of the BS Chemistry degree. If the student demand for biochemistry at UNC Asheville is similar to that observed at UNC Greensboro and other institutions, then demand should be high or moderately high. Enrollment projections remain conservative, anticipating just

four new students per year, but the anticipation is that the addition of the biochemistry degree will contribute to UNC Asheville's important enrollment growth goals.

Table 1. Other UNC System Enrolled for CIP 26.0202 — Biochemistry, Bachelor's

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
ECU	N/A	N/A	116	96	86	125
UNC Greensboro	N/A	N/A	206	183	197	137
NC State	N/A	N/A	230	208	235	228

Table 2. Other UNC System Completions for CIP 26.0202 — Biochemistry, Bachelor's

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
ECU	N/A	N/A	40	33	29	N/A
UNC Greensboro	N/A	N/A	24	32	23	N/A
NC State	N/A	N/A	66	59	53	N/A

Table 3. IPEDS Peer Institutions Completions for CIP 26.0202 — Biochemistry, Bachelor's

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23
SUNY Geneseo	28	22	23	11
SUNY Purchase	1	4	6	3
St. Mary's College of Maryland	17	13	5	10

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** Graduates will be prepared for entry-level roles as laboratory technicians, clinical research associates, and analytical chemists, and the industries that hire these positions are growing in North Carolina and nationally. From 2019 to 2023, the North Carolina life sciences and biotechnology sector saw a 23% increase in job growth, with 100,000 jobs across the state. In addition, this program will create an important steppingstone for students interested in pursuing advanced degrees in medicine, dentistry, and pharmaceuticals, degrees that they often complete at a UNC System research institution.

Table 4. Estimated Employment in North Carolina for Standard Occupational Classification Codes (SOC) Cross-walked to CIP Code: 26.0202 with a Matching Education Level Requirement

Educational Level Requirement	Count of SOC Codes	2022	2032 Estimate	Net Change	Percent Change
Bachelor's	2	7,169	8,225	1,056	14.7

Table 5. Median Wage for SOC Codes Cross-walked to CIP Code: 26.0202 Biochemistry

Educational Level Requirement	SOC Count	Median Wage
Some College or Associate Degree	N/A	N/A
Bachelor's Degree	2	\$121,902
Doctoral or Professional Degree	3	\$86,863

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** The proposed program increases degree efficiency by removing the need to complete less-relevant major requirements and reduces costs for students pursuing advanced degrees in healthcare by including prerequisites for professional school in the

federal Course Program of Study (CPOS) requirement. The BS Biochemistry program at UNC Asheville would be the only option for a biochemistry degree in western North Carolina, increasing access to students from underserved counties in the western part of the state. The proposed program is also very affordable: the average student debt of a UNC Asheville graduate is \$21,600, so a graduate's debt-to-earnings ratio is 17.7%, and the earnings used to service debt is 1.6%.

5. **Program Specific Fees or Tuition.** UNC Asheville is not requesting any program-specific fees or tuition differential for this program.

Table 6. Full-Time 2026-27 Undergraduate Tuition and Fees per Year (In Dollars)

Category	Resident	Nonresident
Tuition	\$4,184.00	\$21,470.00
Tuition Differential	--	--
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)	\$3,276.00	\$3,276.00
Special Fees	--	--

6. **Expected Quality.** The proposed major leverages existing faculty expertise across chemistry, biology, math, physics, and other fields to launch a high-quality, interdisciplinary program. UNC Asheville requires that all degree candidates complete a faculty-determined demonstration of competency in their major or concentration that integrates writing and information literacy. For biochemistry majors, this requirement will include an undergraduate research thesis completed as part of the proposed 6-hour research course sequence: BCHM 395, BCHM416, BCHM417, BCHM418. This requirement is embedded in the curriculum and is not an additional requirement beyond the 68 hours of the major.
7. **Faculty Quality and Number.** The current faculty of UNC Asheville is sufficient and qualified to deliver the program. The proposed program is constructed from existing courses that can absorb the projected increase in enrollment in the early years of the program. Biochemistry courses will be taught by the faculty below, who teach at the 400-level on a rotation basis. No new faculty lines are anticipated during the first four years of the proposed program. The initial teaching responsibilities will be absorbed by existing faculty without weakening current programs.

Name	Rank	Home Department
Ryan Steed	Professor	Chemistry & Biochemistry
Saman Majeed	Assistant Professor	Chemistry & Biochemistry
Caitlin McMahon	Associate Professor	Chemistry & Biochemistry
Amanda Wolfe	Professor	Chemistry & Biochemistry
Ted Meigs	Professor	Biology
Melinda Grosser	Associate Professor	Biology

Angel Kaur	Associate Professor	Neuroscience
Pin Lyu	Assistant Professor	Chemistry & Biochemistry
Oksana Love	Assistant Professor	Chemistry & Biochemistry
Jeromy Rech	Assistant Professor	Chemistry & Biochemistry
Jason Schmeltzer	Senior Lecturer	Chemistry & Biochemistry
Phil Shivokevich	Lecturer	Chemistry & Biochemistry
Matthew Greene	Laboratory Manager	Biology

8. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** The proposed program will be supported by lower-level courses offered by the Department of Mathematics and Statistics and the Department of Physics. Existing course offerings from these departments provide excellent training and reinforcement in quantitative tools and physical understanding necessary for biochemistry. The proposed program requires the same cognate courses as the existing degree programs in chemistry.
9. **Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Facilities, etc.).** Existing campus physical spaces and infrastructure are sufficient to support the proposed program. No new space or renovations are proposed.
10. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** Three UNC System institutions offer on-campus bachelor's programs in biochemistry (CIP 26.0202): East Carolina University, UNC Greensboro, and NC State University. Collectively, these programs enrolled 490 students in the most recent year reported, indicating strong student demand for biochemistry programs across the System.

Table 7. Other UNC System Applied/Admitted /Enrolled for CIP 26.0202 Biochemistry

Institution	Degree Level	Counts	AY (e.g., 22-23)	AY (e.g., 23-24)
ECU (on-campus)	Bachelor's	Admitted	N/A	N/A
		Enrolled	86	125
UNC Greensboro (on-campus)	Bachelor's	Admitted	N/A	N/A
		Enrolled	197	137
NC State (on-campus)	Bachelor's	Admitted	N/A	N/A
		Enrolled	235	228

11. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** The proposed program does not create unnecessary duplication within the UNC System and will not conflict with existing programs in the System. This program would be the only opportunity to earn a biochemistry degree in western North Carolina. With our focus on undergraduate education, student success, student/faculty collaboration, and undergraduate research, UNC Asheville offers an environment for a biochemistry student that is very different from other programs. Students choose this environment as much as they choose a major, and we expect that students looking for a small arts and sciences experience will be more attracted to UNC Asheville if a BS in Biochemistry is a degree option.

12. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program.** Since UNC Asheville does not currently offer graduate degrees in the natural sciences, many BS Biochemistry graduates will seek advanced degrees either for research (Ph.D.) or professional practice (M.D., Pharm.D., D.V.M., etc.), at the research universities in the UNC system. UNC Asheville's existing and successful seminar program in chemistry invites Ph.D. programs, including those within the UNC System, to send faculty representatives to UNC Asheville to share research and recruit for their graduate programs while also learning about the strong program at UNC Asheville. Our objective is to make graduate and professional programs aware that UNC Asheville graduates in chemistry and biochemistry are well prepared for graduate education.

13. **Other Considerations.** None.

III. Summary of Review Processes

1. **Institution Review Process and Feedback.** This request to establish a BS degree in Biochemistry was approved by the chancellor, the provost, the Institutional Development Committee, the Academic Policies Committee, and the full Faculty Senate.
2. **UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback.** Throughout the review process, the University of North Carolina 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 recommends that the UNC Board of Governors approve the University of North Carolina Asheville's request to establish the Bachelor of Science (BS) in Biochemistry (CIP 26.0202) effective fall 2027.



**Request for Authorization to Establish
Master of Science (MS) in Evaluation and Organizational Learning
CIP 13.0601
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA WILMINGTON**

I. Program Highlights

- The University of North Carolina Wilmington proposes the establishment of a Master of Science in Evaluation and Organizational Learning.
- The proposed MS in Evaluation and Organizational Learning builds on UNCW's existing Post-baccalaureate Certificate in Evaluation and incorporates an existing pathway from the Post-baccalaureate Certificate in Evaluation, allowing students to transfer certificate coursework into the master's degree. Projected enrollment in year five is 21 students.
- The program addresses a gap in evaluator education, as few U.S. master's programs focus primarily on evaluation and none combine evaluation with an organizational learning emphasis. The curriculum is grounded in the American Evaluation Association's Evaluator Competencies and delivered fully online through a combination of synchronous videoconferencing (e.g., Zoom) sessions and asynchronous learning activities, providing flexible access for working professionals across North Carolina and the nation.
- Graduates of the proposed program will be highly trained professionals working across education, healthcare, social services, nonprofits, government, and business. Employment data analyses provided by EAB Market Pulsecheck and Lightcast examined 53,580 national and regional job postings and concluded that graduates will enter a growing labor market with strong demand across multiple industries.

II. Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The MS Evaluation and Organizational Learning directly supports UNCW's mission to "serve the needs of the state, as well as the needs of our local and global communities" by preparing working professionals to address complex challenges across education, healthcare, nonprofit, government, and business settings. Delivered fully online and aligned with nationally recognized competencies, the program also supports the UNC System mission and strategic plan by increasing access to high-quality graduate education, advancing workforce readiness, and preparing graduates for high-demand careers.
2. **Student Demand.** The following tables provide evidence of student demand for the proposed program.

Table 1. Other UNC System Enrolled for CIP 13.06 — Educational Evaluation & Research (13.0601), Educational Statistics and Research Methods (13.0603); Master's, Doctoral

Institution	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
UNC Charlotte (Ph.D.)	20	15	15	13

UNC Greensboro (MS)	15	9	11	14
UNC Greensboro (Ph.D.)	31	30	28	26

Table 2. Other UNC System Completions for CIP 13.0601-13.06 — [Educational Evaluation & Research (13.0601); Educational Statistics and Research Methods (13.0603)] [Master’s and Doctoral]

Institution	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
UNC Charlotte (Ph.D.)	5	3	4	1
UNC Greensboro (MS)	7	5	2	5
UNC Greensboro (Ph.D.)	6	4	5	6

Table 3. IPEDS Peer Institutions Completions for CIP 13.0601 — [Education Evaluation and Research], [Master’s]

Institution	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24
Ohio University	10	4	8	8
U. Missouri, Kansas City	1	0	0	0

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** According to the UNC System Insight Academic Program Planning Dashboard, employment in occupations requiring a master’s degree aligned with CIP Code 13.0601 is projected to increase 42%, resulting in 691 new jobs with a median annual wage of \$104,670. These projections indicate strong demand for evaluation professionals. Additionally, an EAB Market Pulsecheck and Lightcast analysis identified more than 53,580 national and regional job postings related to evaluation and organizational learning competencies, demonstrating substantial employer demand for these skills.

Table 4. Estimated Employment in North Carolina for Standard Occupational Classification Codes (SOC) Cross-walked to CIP Code: 13.0601 with a Matching Education Level Requirement

Education Level Requirement	Count of SOC Codes	Current Estimated Employment	Future Estimated Employment	Net Change	Percent Change
Master’s Degree	1	1,631	2,322	691	42%

Table 5. Median Wage for SOC Codes Cross-walked to CIP Code: 13.0601 [Educational Evaluation and Research]

Educational Level Requirement	SOC Count	Median Wage
Master's Degree	1	\$104,670

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** The proposed program increases access to high-quality and affordable graduate education through a flexible online format and low cost, especially for North Carolina residents. No comparable online program exists within the UNC System, indicating this program opens new opportunities for working professionals seeking career advancement. With a median income of \$104,670, graduates can expect relatively high earnings compared to a program cost of \$12,800 based on current UNCW resident tuition and fees for online education.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, among only master's graduates who had student loans for undergraduate or graduate studies, the average cumulative loan balance is \$66,000. The average loan debt for graduate completers is approximately \$34,000. Based on these estimates, the debt-to-earnings ratio is 0.325 in one year and 0.065 over five years, representing a 15-time return on investment.

5. **Program Specific Fees or Tuition.** UNCW is not requesting any program-specific fees or tuition differential for this program.

Table 6. Full-Time 2026-27 Graduate Tuition and Fees per Year (In Dollars)

Category	Resident	Nonresident
Tuition	\$5,763.00	\$23,325.00
Tuition Differential	--	--
Mandatory Fees (Educational & Technology, Campus Security, ASG)	\$624.00	\$624.00
Special Fees	--	--

6. **Expected Quality.** The proposed MS in Evaluation and Organizational Learning is a high-quality graduate program that combines rigorous preparation in evaluation with a unique emphasis on organizational learning, systems thinking, and organizational change. The 36-credit-hour curriculum is aligned with the American Evaluation Association's Evaluator Competencies and provides students with advanced knowledge and skills in evaluation theory, research methods, data analysis, communication, facilitation, and program improvement. Distinctive features include its fully online delivery, a pathway from UNCW's existing Post-baccalaureate Certificate in Evaluation, and an applied culminating project in lieu of a comprehensive examination.
7. **Faculty Quality and Number.** The proposed MS in Evaluation and Organizational Learning will be supported by a highly qualified interdisciplinary faculty team with expertise in evaluation, research methods, organizational learning, instructional design, performance improvement, and assessment. The program includes five full-time graduate faculty members with doctoral degrees in evaluation, research and statistics, educational technology, instructional systems, and related fields,

as well as a practitioner-scholar who will support applied learning experiences. Existing faculty resources are sufficient to support the program, and no new faculty hires are required.

8. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** The proposed MS in Evaluation and Organizational Learning builds coursework currently offered through the Post-baccalaureate Certificate in Evaluation and related graduate programs. The certificate program serves as a pathway into the degree, allowing students to transition seamlessly into advanced study.
9. **Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Facilities, etc.).** Existing campus resources are sufficient to support the delivery of the MS in Evaluation and Organizational Learning.
10. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).**

Table 7. Other UNC System Applied/Admitted /Enrolled for CIP 13.0601-13.0603 — [Educational Evaluation & Research (13.0601); Educational Statistics and Research Methods (13.0603)]

Institution	Degree Level	Counts	AY 22-23	AY 23/24	AY 24/25	AY 25/26
UNC Charlotte	Doctoral	Applied	3	6	9	14
UNC Charlotte	Doctoral	Admitted	2	3	5	9
UNC Charlotte	Doctoral	Enrolled	1	3	3	5
UNC Greensboro	Master's	Applied	17	9	17	12
UNC Greensboro	Master's	Admitted	16	8	11	8
UNC Greensboro	Master's	Enrolled	5	6	4	3
UNC Greensboro	Doctoral	Applied	9	11	19	17
UNC Greensboro	Doctoral	Admitted	6	10	16	6
UNC Greensboro	Doctoral	Enrolled	3	6	9	14

11. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** No other UNC System institution offers a similar degree in an online format. The most closely aligned program is UNCG's MS in Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation. The proposed program is unique in its emphasis on organizational learning, online delivery, and audience of working professionals.
12. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program.** Sponsors of the proposed program recognize meaningful opportunities exist for collaboration with institutions that offer related programs, particularly UNC Greensboro's Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation programs. Faculty already maintain professional relationships through the American Evaluation Association, participation in conferences and scholar networks, and service on graduate student committees.

Through these connections, the potential to create opportunities for collaborative research, conference participation, guest lectures, and shared professional development activities is a future option. Additionally, the proposed program may serve as a pathway for students interested in pursuing doctoral study, creating opportunities for future collaboration and student progression into related Ph.D. programs. UNCW will continue to pursue collaborative partnerships that enhance student learning, scholarship, and professional engagement in the evaluation field.

III. Summary of Review Processes

1. **Institution Review Process and Feedback.** The academic program proposal was developed by the faculty in the Watson College of Education and subsequently reviewed and approved by the Department of Educational Leadership, Watson College of Education Curriculum Committee, the UNCW Office of Space Management, Academic Affairs Resource Management, Watson College of Education Dean's Office, UNCW Graduate Council, SACSCOC accreditation liaison, and the provost.
2. **UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback.** Throughout the review process, the University of North Carolina Wilmington provided relevant information pertaining to program requirements and resources. The institution submitted appropriate documentation and research to support the statements made.

IV. Recommendation

Staff recommends that the UNC Board of Governors approve the UNC Wilmington request to establish the Master of Science (MS) in Evaluation and Organizational Learning (CIP 13.0601) effective spring 2027.

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

NC State University — Bachelor of Science (BS) in Professional Golf Management
(CIP 31.0301)

Overview: The Bachelor of Science in Professional Golf Management (31.0301) at NC State University will be discontinued and consolidated into the Bachelor of Science in Sport Management (31.0504). Professional Golf Management will continue as a concentration within the Sport Management degree. This request has been reviewed by the appropriate institutional committees and approved by the appropriate academic authority(ies).

The request is based on low enrollment in the stand-alone Professional Golf Management degree. The consolidation will allow NC State University to retain the Professional Golf Management curriculum as a concentration while eliminating a separate low-enrollment degree program. No faculty or staff positions will be affected. All students included in the teach-out have completed their program requirements. Of the 50 students enrolled in spring 2020, 47 elected to complete the Professional Golf Management degree and three moved to the Professional Golf Management concentration within Sport Management; all 50 students have graduated.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve NC State University's request to discontinue and consolidate the Bachelor of Science in Professional Golf Management (31.0301) into the Bachelor of Science in Sport Management (31.0504), effective summer 2026.

AGENDA ITEM

A-7. Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) Annual Report Katie O'Connor

Situation: The revised *Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA)* was signed by the UNC Board of Governors and the State Board of Community Colleges on February 21, 2014, and updated in October 2025. As part of that agreement, both systems are required to approve and submit an annual report on the progress and success of transfer students. This annual reporting allows the advisory committee to reflect on progress, as well as identify key areas of improvement and support needed from both systems.

Background: The CAA Transfer Advisory Committee (TAC) is committed to providing students and institutions with information and strategies to support both associate degree and baccalaureate degree completion. Information is provided in this report on North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) transfer student enrollment and academic performance, efforts to improve transfer efficiency and effectiveness, status of compliance visits, and recommendations for future actions.

Assessment: The annual report demonstrates compliance with G.S. 116-11(10c). There was an increase in the total number of NCCCS transfer students over the past year. Students who obtain the Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degree prior to transferring continue to exhibit strong academic performance following their first year at a UNC System institution. The TAC includes several recommendations such as continuing collaborations with key partners, searching for technology solutions to support credit mobility, and streamlining transfer governance across the state.

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

**REVIEW OF THE *COMPREHENSIVE ARTICULATION AGREEMENT* THAT EXISTS BETWEEN
CONSTITUENT INSTITUTIONS OF
THE NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM
AND CONSTITUENT INSTITUTIONS OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM**

A Report to
The Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee,
The Senate Appropriations Committee on Education/Higher Education, and
The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Education

Submitted by
The State Board of Community Colleges and
The Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina

November 1, 2026

As Required by
Session Law 2013-72 (HB 903)

**ANNUAL REPORT ON THE *COMPREHENSIVE ARTICULATION AGREEMENT* TO
THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 1, 2026**

S.L. 2013-72 (HB 903) North Carolina General Statute 116-11(10c) requires the University of North Carolina System and the North Carolina Community College System to conduct biannual joint reviews of the *Comprehensive Articulation Agreement* to ensure that the agreement is fair, current, and relevant for all students and institutions and to report their findings to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, including all revisions to the *Comprehensive Articulation Agreement* and reports of noncompliance by November 1 of each year. The statute also requires the University of North Carolina System and the North Carolina Community College System to jointly develop an articulation agreement advising tool for students, parents, and faculty to simplify the course transfer and admissions process.

SUMMARY

The revised *Comprehensive Articulation Agreement* (CAA) was signed by the UNC Board of Governors and the State Board of Community Colleges on February 21, 2014. The revised CAA was implemented in the fall 2014 semester and underwent significant revisions in October 2025.

The University of North Carolina (UNC) System and the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) continue to work to enhance educational opportunities for NCCCS students by improving transfer administration, utilizing data to assess transfer effectiveness, and facilitating communication between respective constituent institutions. Both public higher education systems in North Carolina continue to work together to develop and support degree-mapping tools, improve policies, and encourage professional development opportunities to facilitate informed and efficient transfer.

This report summarizes ongoing efforts to implement and fulfill the CAA. The CAA Transfer Advisory Committee (TAC) is committed to providing students and institutions with information and strategies to support both associate degree and baccalaureate degree completion.

The most recent version of the CAA, complete with appendices, is available here:
https://wordpress.nccommunitycolleges.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/2025-CAA-Final_Oct-2025.pdf

CAA PROGRESS: 2025-26

Transfer Enrollment and Performance Data

The UNC System data dashboard provides essential data on transfer students including enrollment trends, credit hours and degree transfers, graduation rates, grade point average, and performance in disciplines after transfer. Within the dashboard, data for individual community colleges and universities are available for deeper analysis. The UNC System data dashboard continues to be a vital resource in determining whether the CAA is having the desired impact on transfer student success and whether the changes in policy and practice put in place because of the CAA and the associated compliance site reviews are achieving the desired positive outcomes. This information is critical to the decision-making process for individual community colleges and universities and for the two systems. Similarly, the NCCCS provides data dashboards to report on community college transfer performance, in addition to enrollment and graduation data. Both data dashboards provide comprehensive and timely information on transfer student access, success, and transitions between institutions.

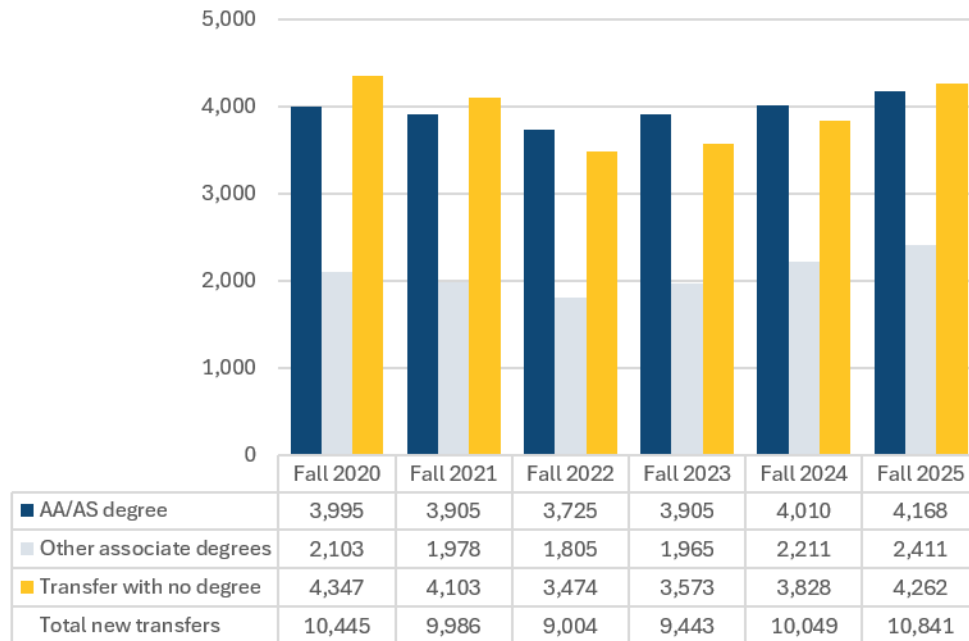
Students who entered the NCCCS in Fall 2014 and later are under the protections of the CAA, and a significant number continue to transfer to the UNC System as of the Fall 2025 semester. This large number of transfer students who possess the protections of the CAA and their successful transfer to the UNC system institutions gives a clear indication of the value of the CAA to students.

Transfer Student Enrollment

Data illustrate an increase in the number of NCCCS students transferring to the UNC System (see Table 1), up from 10,049 in the Fall 2024 semester to 10,841 in the Fall 2025 semester. This marks the largest number of total NCCCS transfer students since 2018. The number of NCCCS students transferring with a completed associate degree (of any kind) increased (see Table 2) in Fall 2025. During the Fall 2025 semester, the total number of NCCCS students transferring with a completed degree (AA/AS or any other associate degree) was 6,579 compared with 6,221 in the Fall 2024 semester.

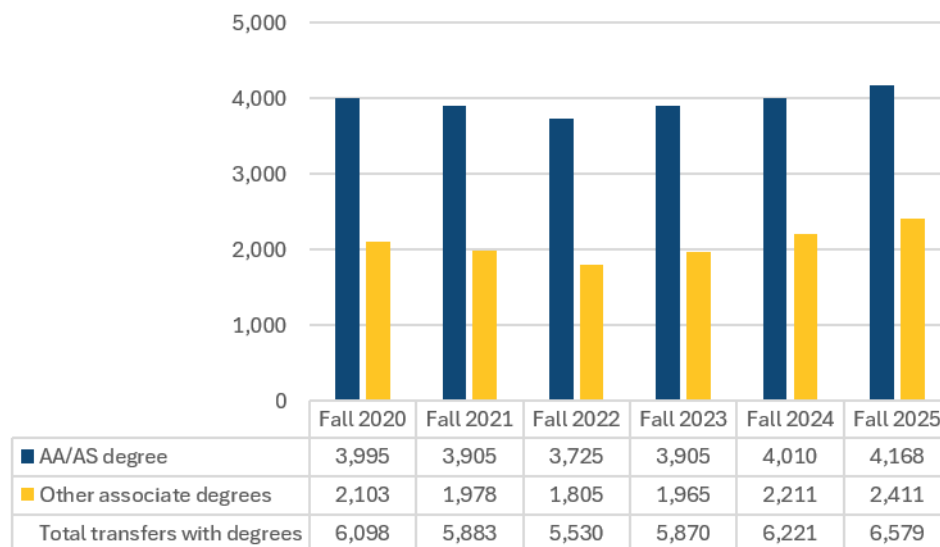
The number of NCCCS students who transfer to UNC System institutions with transfer credit, but no degree increased from Fall 2024 (3,828) to Fall 2025 (4,262). In addition to the provisions of the CAA that require the completion of an associate degree, the Transfer Guide project and increased efforts focused on transfer coordination, detailed later in this report, are opportunities to encourage community college students to complete their two-year degrees prior to transferring to UNC System institutions.

Table 1
New NCCCS Student Enrollment in UNC System Institutions



Note: Data within Table 1 include the most current information posted on the UNC public dashboards and may differ slightly from previously reported information.

Table 2
NCCCS Student Transfers with Completed Associate Degrees



Note: Data within Table 2 include the most current information posted on the UNC public dashboards and may differ slightly from previously reported information.

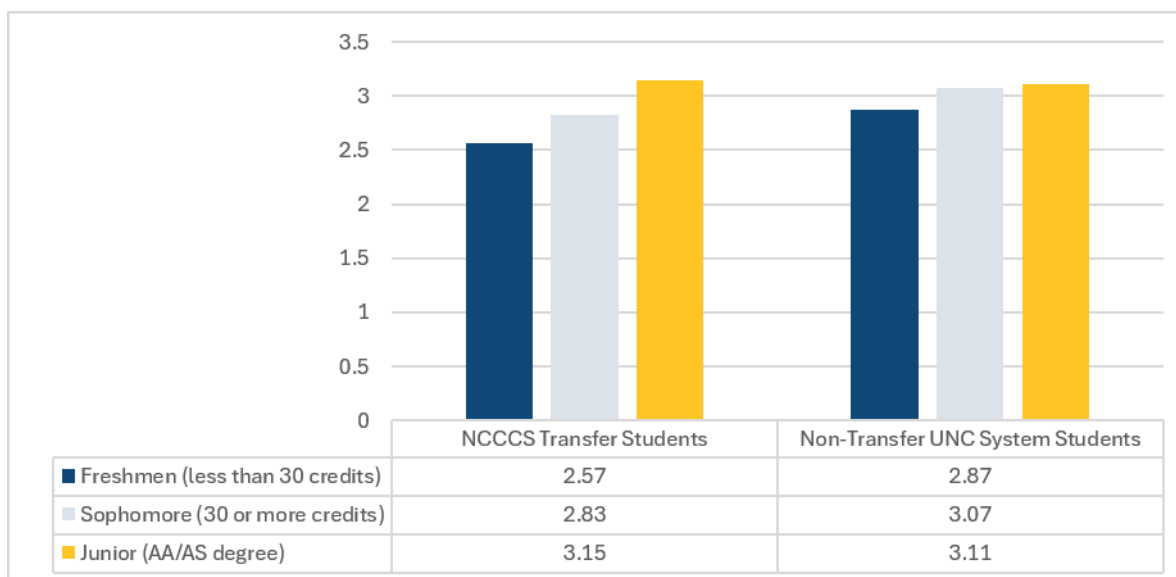
Transfer Performance Data

The most recent data on transfer student performance (2025-2026 data for students who transferred in the Fall 2024 semester) continue to indicate a strong correlation between degree and credit-hour completion prior to transfer and academic performance at the university (see Table 3). Students who transferred in the Fall 2024 semester from an NCCCS institution into a UNC System institution with fewer than 30 completed credit hours have a lower GPA than those who started at a university as freshmen. This is also true of students who transfer before completing an associate degree but have more than 30 credit hours of transferable coursework: GPA of non-degree-earning transfer students with more than 30 completed hours is lower compared to their UNC System sophomore counterparts who began at the university.

Students who completed the associate degree prior to transferring in the Fall 2024 semester, however, performed better than UNC System juniors who started at the university as freshmen (3.15 GPA vs. 3.11 GPA). These results confirm the foundational principle of the CAA that transfer students who complete the associate degree prior to transfer will perform as well as or better than students who began their higher education journeys at UNC System institutions.

Table 3

2024-25 Transfer Cohort Grade Point Average After First Year at UNC institution



Note: Data indicated are reflective of first-year performance at UNC institutions for transfer students. This measurement was taken during fall 2025 to spring 2026 for the cohort entering in fall 2024.

Campus Compliance Reviews

In January 2016, the CAA Transfer Advisory Committee (TAC) established a process for reviewing the institutional transfer credit policies and procedures of UNC System institutions

once every two years to ensure compliance with the CAA. As of the last round of compliance visits, the UNC School of the Arts has not been included because it had few transfer students. Since 2016, the CAA TAC has completed four rounds of reviews with each UNC System institution using a combination of virtual and in-person visits. With the 2025 updates to the CAA, the 2025-26 academic year was used for planning and sharing CAA revision updates with university and community college stakeholders. According to the 2025 revision to the CAA, TAC will expand CAA compliance reviews to include both UNC institutions as well as NC community colleges. Beginning in the 2026-27 academic year, the CAA TAC will conduct CAA compliance reviews of all universities (including the UNC School of the Arts) and NC community colleges over a period of four years. CAA compliance review schedule information will be publicly posted on the CAA TAC website hosted by the NCCCS. It can be accessed at <https://www.ncccommunitycolleges.edu/transfer-advisory-committees/>. During the 2026 NCCCS Conference, the CAA TAC hosted a pre-conference CAA Compliance Review self-study workshop that was open to all NC community colleges.

Transfer Guides

The CAA requires tools to support student transfer. One such requirement ensures that UNC System institutions develop and maintain transfer guides to outline community college programs with university courses that lead to timely baccalaureate degree completion for each major plan of study that the university offers.

In 2024, a centralized, student-facing resource was rebranded as Transfer Guides and made available to the public on a platform hosted by our close collaborators, College For North Carolina (CFNC). All Transfer Guides can be accessed at: www.cfnc.org/transferguides.

Transfer Guides have been so well received to support transfer students that the project has expanded. While outside the official purview of the CAA TAC, the addition of Transfer Guides for the AFA in Music, AFA in Theatre (2 tracks), AFA in Visual Arts, and AA in Teacher Prep and AS in Teacher Prep were highly supported by the CAA TAC. It is the hope of the CAA TAC that additional high-transfer community college degree programs will continue to be included in the Transfer Guide project to best support students across the state as they pursue transfer into baccalaureate programs.

Below are the summaries for Transfer Guide publication and access, by year:

2024-2025 (Year 1)

- 1,385 published
- 91,000 unique views (July 2024-May 2025)

2025-2026 (Year 2)

- 1,504 published
- 438,262 unique views
- Universities were provided data on regularly accessed guides, institutional views, etc.

- Internal efforts to review common CC course recommendations across similar majors began

2026-2027 (Year 3/Current)

- 1,516 published
- 43,789 unique views between 6/1/26 – 7/23/26
- Some Education major Transfer Guides were revised in the month of August and re-published by September to reflect legislative updates
- Two Universities are currently working with UNC System developers to embed Transfer Guide search feature on their institutional site

CAA Revisions

Following more than a year of review by the CAA Transfer Advisory Committee (TAC), the 2025 CAA was approved by the UNC Board of Governors and the State Board of Community Colleges. This is the most significant update to the agreement in a decade, focused on increasing clarity and simplicity to better help students and families understand the agreement and its protections. The revised CAA went into effect in Spring 2026.

Key updates to the CAA include:

- Clearly defined student protections such as the General Education Waiver, Acceptance of CAA coursework with grades of C- or higher, and the Transfer Assured Admissions Policy.
- New details on the creation and use of Transfer Guides
- A new online Transfer Student and Credit Appeals portal for students to submit appeals.
- Expansion of CAA compliance reviews to include both UNC institutions and NCCC institutions to ensure all participants are upholding the pillars of this important agreement.
- An emphasis on the value of the ACA 122: Transfer and Career Success course, and the benefits it affords to community college students when completed in their first semester.

Data Sharing and Student Access

The CAA TAC has approached both system offices regarding the possibility of implementing seamless data sharing between the two systems. This technology solution could interact with student records in both systems and assign university credit automatically without the need for regular human interaction and manual evaluation of transcripts. Such a system will require a substantial initial investment, but it would position colleges to repurpose personnel from data-processing to coaching transfer students, would facilitate curriculum alignment, and would maximize the common numbering systems now present within both systems.

Both system offices are supportive of this type of program, and a pilot project is currently underway. The CAA TAC supports the expansion of the pilot project to promote stronger data sharing across systems to best facilitate transfer.

Additionally, the CAA TAC supports more detailed information be included on the UNC System data dashboard, so that tracking student transfers from community college to university may be easier than ever and provide information at the programmatic and department level.

Funding for TAC

Since its inception, the CAA TAC has relied upon the home institutions of its members to fund member participation in CAA TAC meetings, compliance site visits, and presentations at professional conferences or workshops. The CAA TAC is intentionally comprised of members from across the state from both urban and rural areas and represents both large and small institutions. Unfortunately, the travel costs associated with the duties and responsibilities of membership place an additional financial obligation on institutions that have already existing significant constraints and limitations on their spending. The lack of such supporting funds may prohibit some institutions from allowing their employees to participate in this important work.

The NCCCS and the UNC System Offices both strongly advise that funding be allocated to provide for travel to TAC meetings, site visits, and professional presentations – all of which support the mission of increased transfer efficiency and effectiveness – for each of the members of the CAA TAC. An initial budget request would be approximately \$7,500 to reduce the costs for the individual CAA TAC members and their institutions.

Conclusion and TAC Recommendations

For more than a decade, NCCCS and UNC System institutions have made steady progress toward seamless transfer. They continue to improve their partnerships to provide more effective advising, clear and consistent communication, and ongoing support to transfer students. As awareness and execution of the *Comprehensive Articulation Agreement* increases in North Carolina, more students are completing associate degrees at community colleges and transferring to UNC System institutions. Upon transfer, these degree-completers are performing comparably with, if not stronger than, students who started as freshmen at those same universities. The data provided in this report demonstrate that UNC System institutions are not only meeting the expectations set out in the CAA, but they are finding creative ways to enhance the transfer process and to champion transfer student success. Considering this positive momentum, the CAA TAC recommends the following efforts to continue to provide and improve support for transfer across the state:

- Technological and operational solutions that create greater continuity, clarity, accessibility, and transparency for advising and the processing of transfer students and informing course, program, and institution selection among the NCCCS and UNC System institutions, particularly through the implementation of statewide data sharing between the two systems.
- A website and/or mobile application that allows students to see how credit earned at one institution would be counted at another – a true degree audit for transfer credit.
- Additional training for community college and university employees on the benefits and guarantees of the CAA.

- Continuing collaborations with other key partners (e.g., NCSU's Belk Center for Community College Leadership and Research, myFutureNC, North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities, etc.) in the work of transfer success.

AGENDA ITEM

A-8. Proposed Section 700.11.1 of the UNC Policy Manual,
Policy on Student Well-Being Resources..... Katie O'Connor

- Situation:** The proposed policy establishes Systemwide requirements to ensure that students receive consistent, visible, and accessible information about mental health and well-being resources. It is intended to reduce barriers to support, encourage timely use of available services and programs, and promote student retention, persistence, and academic success. This policy and the supplemental regulation advance the Board of Governors' focus on improving student mental health support by promoting greater awareness of and access to available resources. The policy also codifies state law requirements to publish suicide prevention and crisis lifeline resources.
- Background:** Constituent institutions provide a range of mental health and well-being resources, and students benefit from receiving information about those resources consistently, easily, and at key points throughout their educational journey. In addition, G.S. 116-11(3d) requires constituent institutions to publish contact information for designated student lifeline resources in specified prominent locations. Proposed Section 700.11.1 of the UNC Policy Manual incorporates these statutory requirements and provides a framework for coordinated communication of institutional resources.
- Assessment:** The policy addresses the requirements of G.S. 116-11(3d) concerning publication of Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and NC Peer Warmline contact information by UNC System constituent institutions. These requirements apply to locations and materials including newly issued student identification cards, institutional websites, institution-issued electronic devices, school agendas and calendars, suicide-awareness materials, and student registration documents. The proposed policy establishes minimum, Systemwide expectations while allowing constituent institutions to determine how best to implement them locally. It directs the president to promulgate a regulation requiring each institution to establish a centralized mental health and well-being resource hub; make the hub available through online channels, including the institution's learning management system dashboard; and provide information about or access to the hub through specified admissions, orientation, and student employee communications.
- Action:** This item requires a vote by the committee, with a vote by the full Board of Governors through the consent agenda at the next meeting.

Policy on Student Well-Being Resources

I. Purpose. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that constituent institutions promote consistent, visible, and accessible awareness of mental health and well-being resources for all students. This policy establishes minimum requirements for centralized communication, promotion, and accessibility of mental health and well-being resources in order to reduce barriers to accessing support, promote proactive student well-being, encourage timely engagement with available services and programs, and strengthen student retention, persistence, and academic success.

II. Regulation on Student Mental Health and Well-Being Resources. The president shall promulgate a regulation that is designed to ensure all students receive timely, consistent, and accessible information about available mental health and well-being resources, services, and proactive well-being programs through coordinated communication efforts across the student educational journey. The regulation shall require constituent institutions to:

- A. Establish a centralized resource hub for student mental health and well-being resources;
- B. Make the resource hub available through online channels, including on the constituent institution's learning management system dashboard; and
- C. Provide information or access to the resource hub on certain admissions, orientation, and student employee communications.

III. UNC Student Lifeline Resources. As provided in G.S. 116-11(3d), constituent institutions must publish contact information for student lifeline resources in prominent locations through the constituent institution. Unless an updated phone number exists, the content must include at least, "To reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, call 988 or text HOME to 741741" and "To reach the NC Peer Warmline, call 855-733-7762." Information must be published at least in the following locations:

- A. On any new student identification (student ID) issued. The text shall be in a conspicuous location on the student ID. The text may be printed on the ID or affixed by sticker. Nothing in this paragraph requires a school to issue a student ID.
- B. On the school website.
- C. On the home screen of any electronic device issued to students.
- D. On any school agenda or calendar, whether digital or printed.
- E. On a document during any suicide awareness activity.
- F. On a document when the student registers to attend the school.

IV. Other Matters.

A. Effective Date. The requirements of this policy shall be effective on the date of adoption by the Board of Governors.

B. Relation to Federal and State Laws and Policies. The foregoing policy as adopted by the Board of Governors is meant to supplement, and does not purport to supplant or modify, those statutory enactments which may govern or relate to the subject matter of this policy.

C. Regulations. This policy shall be implemented and applied in accordance with such regulations as may be adopted from time to time by the president.

AGENDA ITEM

A-9. License and State Authorization OverviewJana Walser-Smith

- Situation:** Under G.S. 116-15, the University of North Carolina Board of Governors is responsible for licensing nonpublic and out-of-state institutions seeking to conduct postsecondary degree activity in North Carolina.
- Background:** Staff will present an overview of the current UNC System State Authorization, Licensure, and Exemption practices, licensure standards, last updated in 2020, and procedural rules, last revised in 2022, explaining their impact on institutions operating in North Carolina. Additionally, staff will review strategies and steps designed to strengthen quality and oversight and enhance student protections.
- Assessment:** The committee will determine whether there is additional data that staff should present at a future meeting.
- Action:** This item is for discussion only.



AUTHORIZING NONPUBLIC AND OUT-OF-STATE INSTITUTIONS

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
September 16, 2026

Overview of State Authorization & Licensure

What Is State Authorization?:

- The legal process by which all states permit eligible institutions to conduct postsecondary degree activity within the state.
- Authorization protects students and consumers by ensuring institutions meet established academic, financial, and operational standards.

Why It Matters:

- Protects the integrity of academic credentials.
- Ensures educational quality and consumer protection.
- Establishes accountability for institutions operating in North Carolina.
- Supports public confidence in higher education offerings.

Legal Framework:

- Legal Requirements:
 - **State:** Authority for licensing nonpublic institutions is established in N.C. General Statute [§116-15](#) and administered by the UNC System Office under the authority of the Board of Governors.
 - UNC System Policy [400.4.1](#) (Policy on Standards for Licensure of Nonpublic Degree Granting Postsecondary Activity).
 - **Federal:** Title IV of the Higher Education Act; Federal GI Bill (provides Federal Financial Aid access).

Key Functions of the State Authorization Unit

Function	Description
Licensing	Reviews applications and issues licenses to nonpublic and out-of-state institutions.
Exemption Oversight	Religious Exemption: Granted to institutions offering postsecondary degree activity related to theology, divinity, or religious education (G.S. 116-15(d)). Military Exemption: Granted to institutions offering postsecondary degree activity on the premises of military posts or reservations located in this state (G.S. 116-15(e)).
Student Complaints	Receives, investigates, and processes student/public complaints related to postsecondary institutions operating in North Carolina.
Fee Administration	Maintains a published licensure fee structure.
Public Directories	Maintains published list of licensed and exempt institutions operating in North Carolina.
Manage Institutional Activities	Monitors all activities that create a regulatory presence in North Carolina (including online instruction, field experiences, internships, clinical placements, and other educational activities).
Student Protection	Ensures accurate institutional disclosures, verifies complaint and grievance procedures, reviews record-retention policies, protects students from misleading or fraudulent practices.

Who Must Be Licensed

- Any nonpublic or out-of-state institution offering or conducting postsecondary degree activity in North Carolina.
 - Activities include degree programs, degree credit activity, field experiences (such as clinical rotations, practicums, internships, externships).
 - The requirements exist/apply regardless of whether the underlying program includes any other North Carolina-based component.
- An exception exists for activities covered under the [State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements](#) (SARA) framework.
 - The SARA pact streamlines cross-state approval for distance education among member institutions and states.
 - All states except California are [National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements](#) (NC-SARA) members.
 - Nearly all UNC System institutions, North Carolina community colleges, and North Carolina independent colleges and universities meet NC-SARA standards and are institutional members.

Initial Application Process

Step 1: Preliminary conference

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- Succinct meeting discussing licensure standards and UNC System process.

Step 2: Application received

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- All applications are entered into the Licensure Portal

Step 3: Initial determination.

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- Determine Licensure vs. Exemption status

Step 4: Application review

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- Audit for completeness of submitted materials.
 - Review of Materials Related to [15 Standards for Review](#) (400.4.1(IV)).
 - Includes analysis of institutional mission, academic quality, learning outcomes, degree requirements, faculty credentials, financial capacity, student records, consumer protection/surety bond, and operational integrity.

Step 5: Staff review and possible site evaluation.



Step 6: Receive Board decision.

Ongoing Compliance & Renewals

Licensed Institution Requirements:

- Maintain standards for compliance
- Submit annual report
- Report substantive changes
- Renew licensure as required
- Remain subject to UNC System oversight
- Failure to comply may result in sanctions, denial, suspension, or revocation of licensure.

Exempt Institution Requirements:

- Maintain compliance
- Submit annual report
- Report substantive changes
- Remain subject to UNC System oversight
- Failure to comply may result revocation of exemption status.

Key Metrics

Total Active Institutions: 253

- 85 Licensed
- 168 Exempt

Application Pipeline/Processing: 34

- 14 Licensed
- 20 Exempt

Program Pipeline/Processing: 282

- 220 Licensed
- 62 Exempt

Institutional & Student Engagement:

- Preliminary conferences: 5-6 per week
- Institutional consultations/guidance: 3-5 per week
- Student complaint case management: 2-3 per week
- Manage substantive change reviews: weekly
- Collaborate with regulatory partners: weekly

North Carolina's State Authorization Program

Protects Students and Their Educational Investment

- Ensures institutions operating in North Carolina meet established standards for academic quality, financial stability, and ethical operations.
- Helps students avoid investing time and money in substandard or fraudulent programs.

Promotes Academic Quality and Integrity

- Requires institutions to demonstrate that their degree programs, faculty qualifications, curriculum, and learning outcomes meet acceptable standards.
- Increases confidence in the value of the credentials students earn.

Facilitates Consumer Protection and Transparency

- Requires institutions to maintain clear policies regarding tuition, refunds, student grievances, academic records, and disclosures.
- Enables students to make informed decisions and seek recourse when concerns arise.

Strengthens Institutional Accountability

- Helps ensure that institutions continue to meet North Carolina requirements after receiving licensure through ongoing compliance monitoring.
- Protects students from sudden operational, financial, or academic disruptions.

Safeguards Public Trust in Higher Education

- Helps preserve the credibility of postsecondary education in North Carolina by ensuring that institutions awarding degrees operate responsibly, maintain educational quality, and prioritize student success and protection.

What's Next: Strengthening Quality, Oversight, and Student Protections

Planned Quality Enhancement & Operational Improvements:

- Review of existing fee structure to support sustainable program oversight.
- Reevaluate North Carolina G.S. §116-15 and UNC Policy 400.4.1 to ensure alignment with current higher education models and regulatory expectations.
- Expand opportunities for recruiting subject matter experts/curriculum reviewers.
- Assess Religious Exemption application, compliance policies, and requirements to improve consistency, transparency, and accountability.
- Strengthen risk-based oversight and compliance monitoring practices.
- Enhance institutional reporting and student protection measures.

Expected Outcomes

- Improved student protection.
- Earlier identification of compliance concerns.
- Increased institutional accountability.
- More efficient use of staff and program resources.
- Enhanced regulatory oversight and transparency.
- Better alignment between oversight activities and institutional risk.