THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs

November 18, 2026
10 minutes after the adjournment of the Committee on Budget and Finance
Via Videoconference and PBS North Carolina Livestream
Fayetteville State University
Rudolph Jones Student Center, Ballroom 242
692 W T Brown Drive
Fayetteville, NC 28301-4298

AGENDA

OPEN SESSION

A-1. Approval of the Open Session Minutes ..... Lee Barnes
   a. Minutes for September 16, 2026
   b. Minutes for October 28, 2026

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

A-3. Civil Discourse Discussion ..... David English
Jed Atkins, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, SCiLL
Scott Krawczyk and Rob Taber, Fayetteville State University

A-4. UNC System Academic Degree Program Actions ..... Michael McKenzie

A-5. Laboratory School Approvals ..... Ashton Clemmons
   a. Laboratory Schools Evaluation Report
   b. Laboratory School Renewals

A-6. UNC System Fall Enrollment Report and Actions Taken Pursuant to Section 700.1.3 of the UNC Policy Manual, *Policy on Nonresident Undergraduate Enrollment* ..... Katie O'Connor

CLOSED SESSION

A-7. Approval of the Closed Session Minutes ..... Lee Barnes
   a. February 25, 2026
   b. October 28, 2026

A-8. 2026 Governor James E. Holshouser, Jr. Award for Excellence in Public Service ..... Woody White

OPEN SESSION

A-9. Adjourn

Additional Information Available:

- NCSSM Expansion Update Presentation and Executive Summary
- Distinguished Professorship Report
- UNC System Civil Discourse Task Force Report
- Laboratory School Approvals

Closed Session Motion

Motion to go into closed session to:

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

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

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

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

DRAFT MINUTES

September 16, 2026 at 10:33 a.m.
Via Videoconference and PBS North Carolina Livestream
UNC System Office
223 S. West Street, Board Room
Raleigh, North Carolina

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 in person: Wendy Murphy, Gene Davis, Kathryn Crisp Greeley, Mark Holton, Rushil Sachania, and Woody White.

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

Also participating was Toby King, chair of the Faculty Assembly.

Staff members present included David English, Brad Trahan, Katie O'Connor, Michael McKenzie, and others from the UNC System Office.

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

The chair called the meeting to order at 10:33 a.m. on Wednesday, September 16, 2026. The chair reminded committee members of their duty under the State Government Ethics Act to avoid conflicts of interests. The chair asked members if there were any conflicts or appearances of conflict of interest with respect to any matter coming before the committee; no members identified any conflicts.

The open session minutes from the July 23, 2026, meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

2. 2025-26 Annual Report of the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs (Item A-2)

Dr. David English, senior vice president for academic affairs and chief academic officer, provided a review of items covered by the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs during meetings held in the previous year. The committee met in six full meetings and two subcommittee meetings between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026.

MOTION: Resolved, that the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs approve the committee's annual report for submission to the full Board of Governors.

Motion: Mark Holton
Motion carried

3. Academic Affairs Update (Item A-3)

Dr. English provided an update on several items. He gave an overview of the annual report on Early College Graduate admissions and the annual report on medical school graduate outcomes. Finally, he briefed the committee with a preliminary overview of fall enrollment in the UNC System, noting that our total enrollment was up 1.4% over last year, allowing us to break 260,000 students for the first time.

4. University of North Carolina Asheville Update (Item A-4)

Chancellor Kimberly van Noort from the University of North Carolina Asheville provided an update including ongoing efforts to recover from the devastating impacts of Hurricane Helene, efforts to stabilize and grow enrollment, and move forward through Asheville 2030: Rising to the Challenge. For more details on the Asheville 2030; Rising to the Challenge plan, see the attached appendix.

5. North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics — Morganton Expansion (Item A-5)

Dr. English and Chancellor Todd Roberts from the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics provided the committee with an update on the legislatively mandated study of what it would take to double enrollment of the NCSSM-Morganton campus. A working group composed of individuals from NCSSM and the UNC System Office is conducting the study and will provide that information to the committee and full Board in January 2027 and then to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by February 15, 2027.

6. UNC System Academic Degree Program Actions (Item A-6)

Dr. Mike McKenzie presented recommended actions on academic degree programs across the System.
The following programs were recommended for program establishment:

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 at Wilmington
Master of Science (MS) in Evaluation and Organizational Learning CIP 13.0601

The following programs were recommended for discontinuation and consolidation:

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

Chair Barnes called for a motion to approve the four requests for program establishment and one request for discontinuation and consolidation, as discussed, and to submit them to the Board through the consent agenda.

MOTION: Resolved, that the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs approve four requests

for program establishment and one request for discontinuation and consolidation, as discussed, for submission to the Board through the consent agenda.

Motion: Wendy Murphy
Motion carried

7. Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) Annual Report (Item A-7)

Dr. Katie O'Connor presented the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement Annual Report. This report documents the increases in the North Carolina community college to UNC System transfers and confirms that students who complete the AA/AS before transfer perform comparably to native juniors at the institution. The report outlines continued work on transfer efficiency, technology for credit mobility, and governance alignment.

Chair Barnes called for a motion to approve the CAA report and submit it to the Board through the consent agenda.

MOTION: Resolved, that the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs approve the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement Annual report and recommend it to the full Board of Governors for a vote through the consent agenda.

Motion: Gene Davis
Motion carried

8. Proposed Section 700.11.1, of the UNC Policy Manual, *Policy on Student Well-Being Resources* (Item A-8)

Dr. O'Connor presented the proposed new policy Section 700.11.1 of the UNC Policy Manual, *Policy on Student Well-Being Resources*, which comports with requirements established by the General Assembly in their most recent session. The proposed policy was approved by the committee and will be considered by the full Board on the consent agenda at their next meeting.

MOTION: Resolved, that the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs approve the new proposed policy Section 700.11.1 of the UNC Policy Manual, *Policy on Student Well-Being Resources*, and recommend it to the full Board of Governors for a vote through the consent agenda at their meeting next month.

Motion: Gene Davis
Motion carried

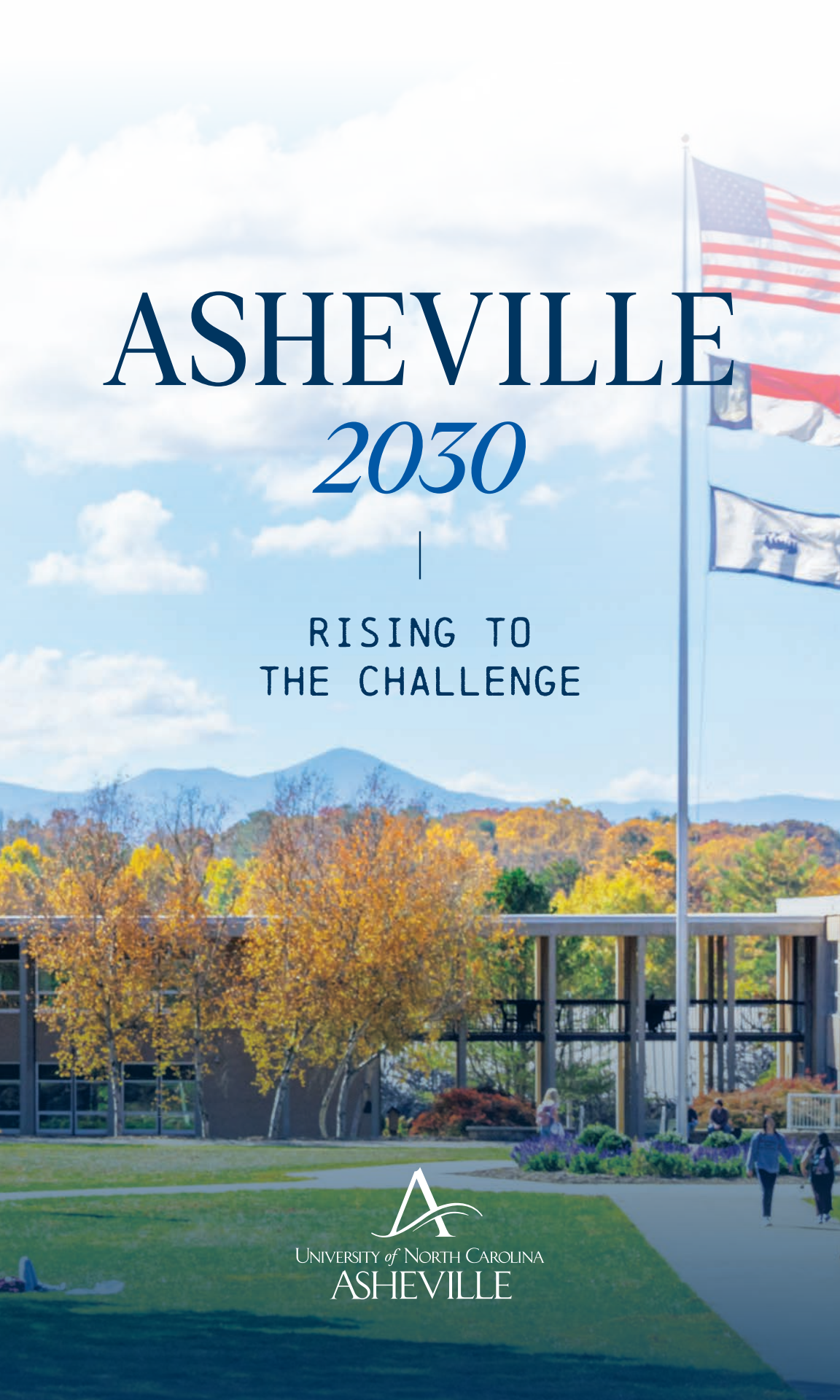
9. Licensure Overview (Item A-9)

Dr. Jana Walser-Smith provided an informational update on the licensure approval process. This concerns the Board of Governors' statutory responsibility to review and approve licensure matters in a way that supports quality, accountability, and appropriate oversight across North Carolina's higher education landscape.

There being no further business and without objection, the meeting adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

_____

Gene Davis, Secretary



ASHEVILLE 2030

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA
ASHEVILLE



ASHEVILLE *2030*

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

ESTD 1927



UNC Asheville is pursuing a bold new model calibrated to the rapidly changing demands of today's and tomorrow's economies and information platforms. Built upon a strong applied liberal arts and sciences foundation, our programs prepare students to understand, master, and shape the technologies that increasingly define and inform every discipline and career path. We prepare them not just for today's careers, but for those that are yet to come.

At UNC Asheville, students develop deep traditional skills in critical analysis, communication, historical understanding, and teamwork that are then applied directly to the issues, problems, and opportunities of the 21st-century. They cultivate the curiosity and flexibility that will enable them to flourish across the entire span of their careers.

All UNC Asheville students participate in hands-on experiences shaped by challenges and opportunities in Western North Carolina and beyond that provide a critical advantage in their career choices. Each one has close mentoring relationships with faculty, peers, alumni, and community leaders. Relationships are key, and students have an exceptional opportunity to develop and learn from them, whether competing as student-athletes on one of our 16 Division I teams or pursuing the many academic, leadership, and service opportunities available across campus. Our close-knit community offers a unique value proposition for students and employers in the region and across the state.

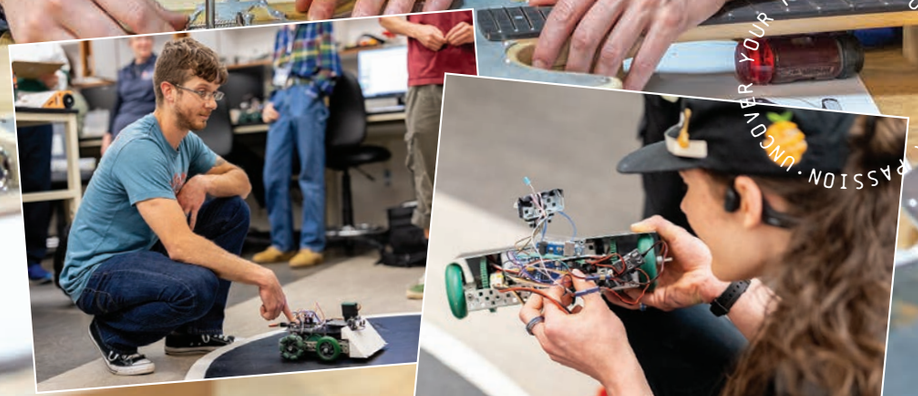
While institutions of higher education are not designed for rapid change, we are committed to boldly embrace and engage with the future and its continually changing expectations and demands. Here in the Land of the Sky, the mountain peaks and deep fertile valleys inspire us to be innovative, creative, edgy, and future-facing. We are a community of strong, resilient leaders prepared to rise to the challenges that lie ahead. We are UNC Asheville.

Best regards,

KIMBERLY VAN NOORT, PH.D.
Chancellor, UNC Asheville

PRIORITY 1

Future-Facing Academic Programs



Vision

UNC Asheville will offer a dynamic curriculum that is nimble, interdisciplinary, and responsive to emerging fields and workforce needs.

Goals

Launch innovative and market-responsive degree/credential programs

Streamline administrative processes to encourage curricular agility

Increase access to a UNC Asheville degree by adding online asynchronous programs and varying term lengths that accommodate working adults

Reorganize academic departments to maximize interdisciplinarity and innovative thinking

The Work Ahead

Create a School of Business, Economics, and Professional Studies

Establish *4–8* new academic programs

Launch an online core curriculum by Fall 2027 and two online degree programs by Fall 2028

PRIORITY 2

Technology-Integrated, Human-Centered Campus





Vision

UNC Asheville will prepare graduates for a rapidly evolving workforce by cultivating a technology-integrated campus that is innovative and human-centered.

Goals

Build faculty capacity to embed technology throughout the academic experience

Align technology innovation and investment with student success and career-readiness goals

Emphasize digital literacy and the human experience as visible components of student learning

Ensure faculty and staff are well-prepared for the ethical use and workplace applications of AI

The Work Ahead

Employ technology-integrated and human-centered teaching practices in every degree program

Adopt a discipline-specific, digital literacy student learning outcome for every academic department

Establish a Liberal Arts 2.0 pathway to center the human experience in the age of AI

PRIORITY 3

Student Success & Student Experience





Vision

The UNC Asheville student experience will bolster students' sense of purpose and belonging, provide meaningful local and regional connections, respond to students' interests, and positively contribute to student recruitment, retention, and graduation.

Goals

Improve fall-to-fall persistence of all continuing students

Invest in elevated athletic spaces and the experience of the physical campus

Increase students' sense of belonging and connection to strengthen campus community and prepare them for civic contributions after graduation

Revitalize engagement with local and regional communities

The Work Ahead

Increase fall-to-fall persistence by *1* percentage point per year

Add *2–3* new partnerships with local and regional organizations and businesses each year

Establish *2–3* public-private partnerships related to Millennial Campus property development

PRIORITY 4

Career & Leadership Development



SUPPORTED. START WHERE YOU'RE

Vision

UNC Asheville's career and leadership development framework will provide a cohesive, campus-wide journey across the student life-cycle and will embed the foundations of the liberal arts —creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration—into all professional preparation.

Goals

Provide digital tools for students to showcase their durable skills

Increase the number of students completing at least one experiential learning opportunity

Embed career exploration and employer exposure into all academic programs

Increase the number of graduates who enroll in graduate/professional school or find full-time employment within *12* months of graduation

The Work Ahead

Establish e-portfolio student learning outcomes for all degree programs

Ensure at least *75%* of students are participating in the Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Program and are completing an internship

Increase the number of students finding full-time employment by *35%*

Since Our Founding in *1927*,

UNC Asheville has been shaped by the people who call it home and the community we proudly serve. As our numbers grew, so did our ambitions to reimagine what's possible in higher education. Now, we're building on that legacy.

Asheville 2030 is our vision for the future of UNC Asheville. With new academic programs, innovative technologies, expanded student support, and elevated athletic spaces, we're preparing students to not just face the future—but to shape it.

Join us to empower the next generation of UNC Asheville students with the resources, experiences, and spaces to thrive in an evolving world. With your partnership, we'll take the next step toward the next 100 years.



Rendering of the renovated Lipinsky Hall, scheduled to open in Fall 2028.



UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA
ASHEVILLE

One University Heights
Asheville, NC 28804

UNCA.EDU

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UNC Asheville Communication & Marketing, 2026. 1,000 copies of this public document were printed at a cost of $3,297.52 or $3.298 per copy.

DRAFT MINUTES

October 28, 2026 at 11 a.m.
Via Videoconference and PBS North Carolina Livestream

This meeting of the Subcommittee for 2026 Governor James E. Holshouser, Jr. Award for Excellence in Public Service was presided over by Chair Woody White. The following committee members, constituting a quorum, were also present via videoconference: Lee Barnes and Wendy Murphy.

No chancellors participated.

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

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1. Call to Order (Item A-1)

The chair called the meeting to order at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, October 28, 2026. Mr. White called on Dr. David English, senior vice president for academic affairs and chief academic officer, to take the roll call.

2. Closed Session

MOTION: Resolved, that the Subcommittee for 2026 Governor James E. Holshouser, Jr. Award for Excellence in Public Service move into closed session to discuss the nominations for the 2026 Governor James E. Holshouser, Jr. Award for Excellence in Public Service pursuant to Chapter 143-318.11(a)(2) of the North Carolina General Statutes.

Motion: Woody White
Motion carried

THE MEETING MOVED INTO CLOSED SESSION AT 11:01 a.m.

THE MEETING RESUMED IN OPEN SESSION AT 11:36 a.m.

There being no further business and without objection, the meeting adjourned at 11:37 a.m.

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Gene Davis, Secretary

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs
November 18, 2026

AGENDA ITEM

A-2. 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.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs
November 18, 2026

AGENDA ITEM

A-3. Civil Discourse Discussion ..... Jed Atkins, Scott Krawczyk, Robert Taber

Situation: Dean Jed Atkins, School of Civic Life and Leadership, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Provost Scott Krawczyk, Fayetteville State University; and Dr. Robert Taber, associate professor, history, Fayetteville State University will present dialogue and discourse mileposts found currently across UNC System institutions.

Background: In January 2026, the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Strategy and Policy teamed up to develop and implement a coherent program to identify and support civil discourse efforts at UNC System institutions.

- A contract was signed with the Constructive Dialogue Institute to deliver dialogue and discourse modules to students.
- The UNC System Office supported a large group (30) of Lee Barnes Faculty and Staff Fellows to attend the Braver Angels Conference in Philadelphia, PA.
- A Faculty Assembly task force researched and published a report entitled, "Civil Discourse and the University of North Carolina: Strong Civility, Culture of Collaborative Problem-Solving, and Inherent Dignity."
- Dr. Tim Ryan, Professor of Political Science American Politics, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill launched the third iteration of the Free Expression Survey.
- Faculty from all institutions attended a convening, participated in online training, and/or received stipends to redesign courses including specific dialogue and discourse pedagogy. These efforts will be reviewed by an external evaluator to provide the basis to apply for further grants to support this work.

Assessment: The UNC Common Ground Collaborative has received positive energy around the State as faculty and staff look toward a second public convening in Spring 2027 at Appalachian State University.

Action: This item is for discussion only.

The UNC School of Civic Life and Leadership

Preparing Wise Leaders for a Free Society

The University
of North Carolina
at Chapel Hill

Our Mission

At SCiLL, we are educating citizens and leaders for constitutional self-government—graduates who can think clearly, engage disagreement, and lead with purpose in a pluralistic democracy. Over time, that kind of education shapes a state and strengthens a nation.

- Jed Atkins, Dean

Our Journey

Where We Began, What's Ahead

2024-2025

10 total faculty
25 declared minors
319 students taught by SCiLL faculty

2025-2026

23 total faculty
218 declared minors
979 students taught by SCiLL faculty

2026-2027

32 total faculty
125 declared minors
613 students taught by SCiLL faculty (Fall only)

2027

Planned:
Undergraduate major

2028

Planned:

- MA in Leadership for Military Officers
- Honors Program

2029

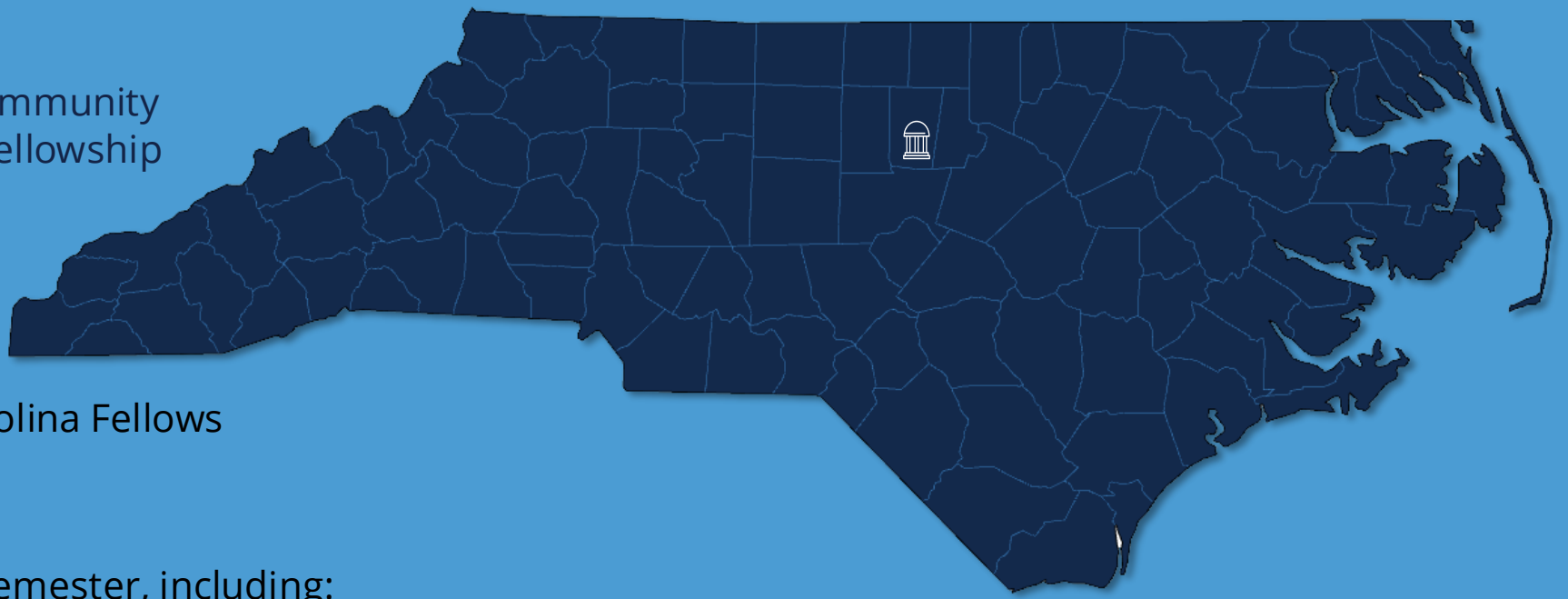
Planned:
PhD Program

School of Civic Life and Leadership

Campus Impact

Student Engagement

- Debate Club
- Libertas Scholars
- Civil Discourse Residential Community
- Peregrine Honors Research Fellowship



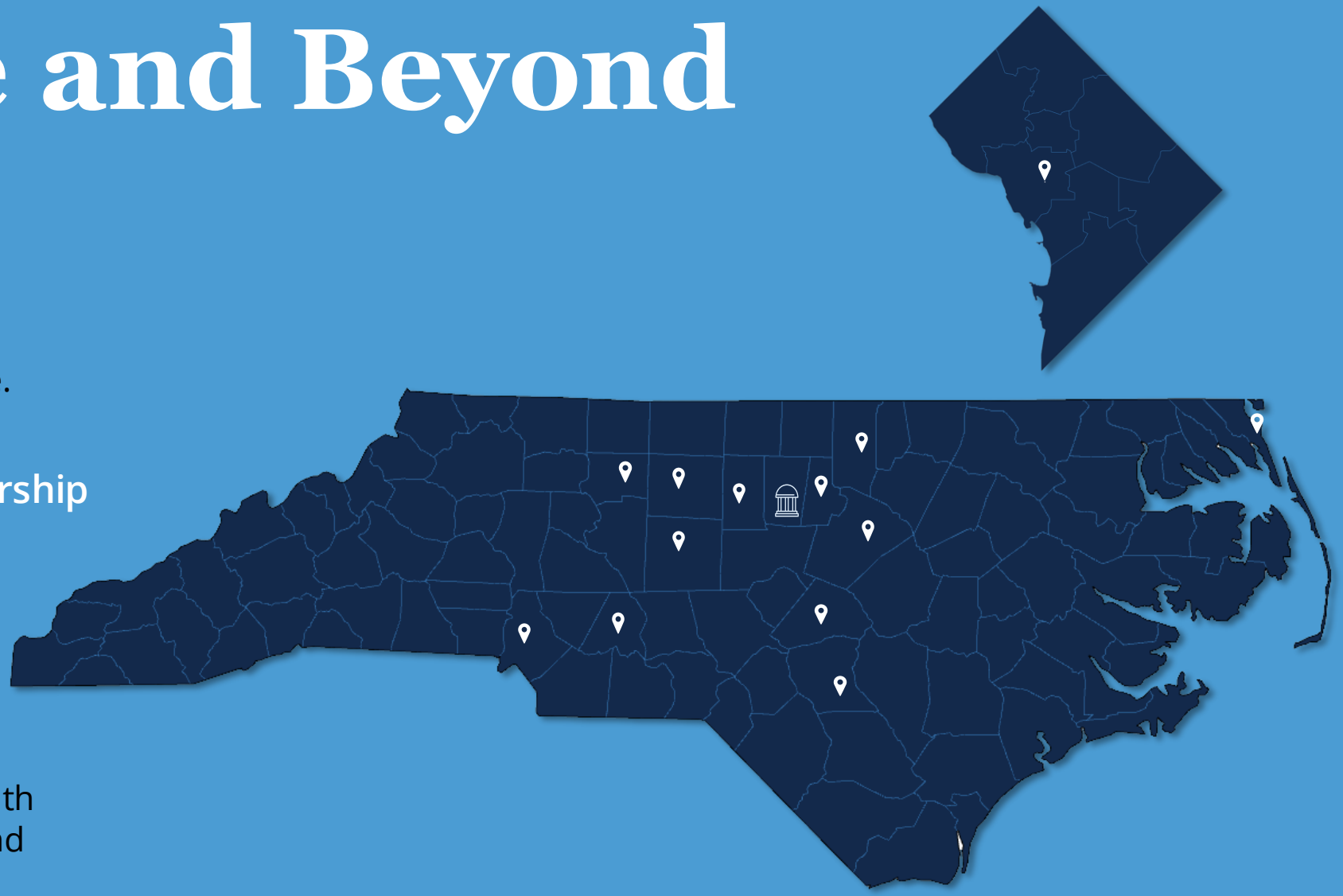
Faculty Engagement

- Carolina Health Collective
- Visiting Scholars Program
- Communications Beyond Carolina Fellows

Public Events

- 50 events last year, 25 each semester, including:
- Abbey Speaker Series
- Annual Constitution Day Event

Our State and Beyond



Summer Civics Institutes

Engaging NC educators and high school students in America's founding ideas and civil discourse.

J.F. Webb High School Partnership

Preparing Granville County students for citizenship and civil discourse.

Washington, DC Study Away

Connecting classroom learning with internships, public institutions, and civic life in the nation's capital.








Our students are learning to live and lead together. The next 250 years of our democracy depends on them.











SCiLL *by the* NUMBERS

FALL 2026

25

SCiLL COURSES TAUGHT

FALL 2025: 18
FALL 2024: 3

FALL 2026

613

STUDENTS TAUGHT BY SCILL FACULTY

SPRING 2026: 504
FALL 2025: 475

FALL 2026

125

DECLARED MINORS

FALL 2025: 52
FALL 2024: 7

FALL 2026

12

COUNTIES SERVED BY SUMMER CIVICS INSTITUTES

SCiLL equips the next generation of wise leaders for a free society.

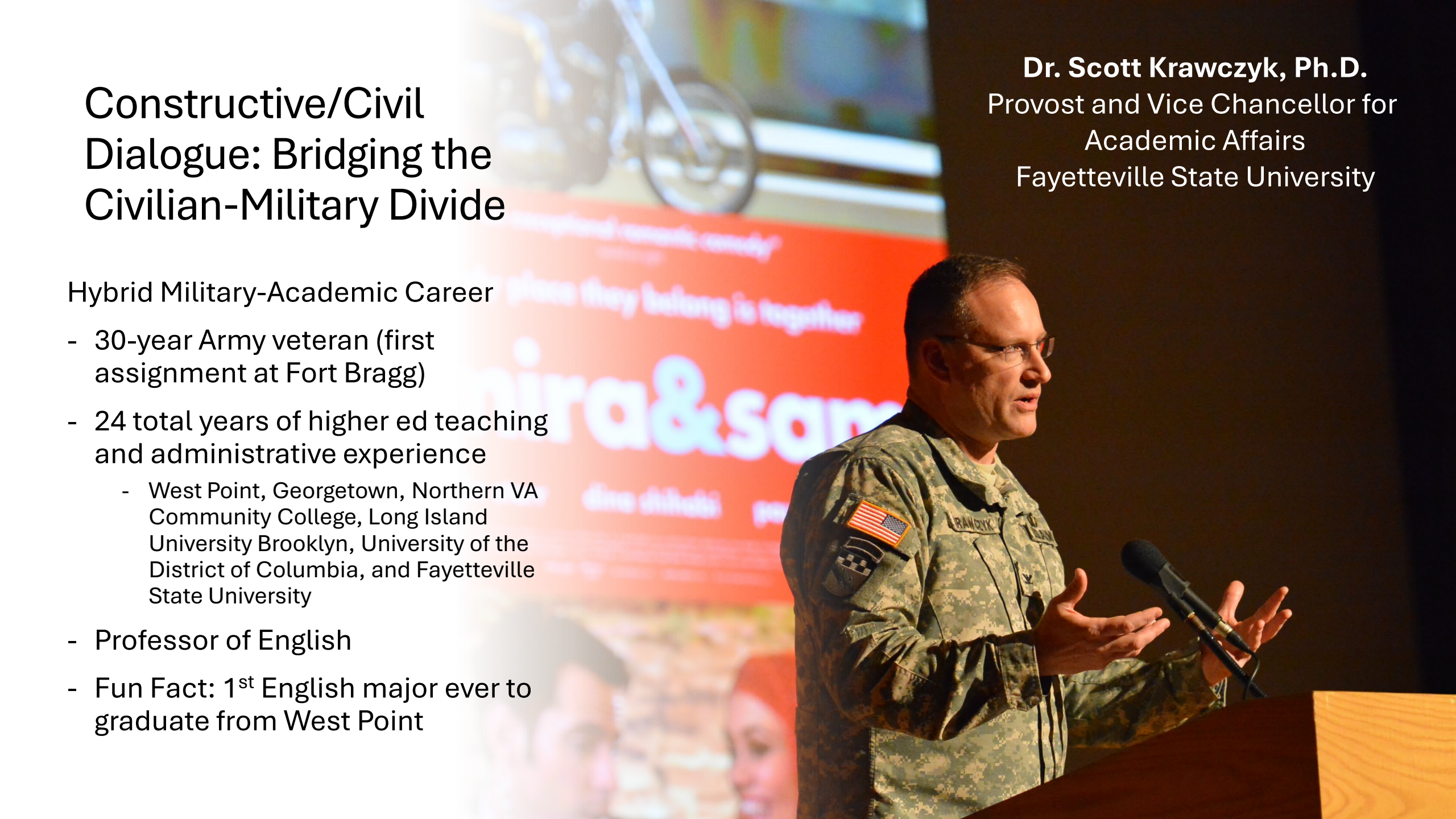
School of Civic Life and Leadership

Constructive/Civil Dialogue: Bridging the Civilian-Military Divide

Dr. Scott Krawczyk, Ph.D.
Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Fayetteville State University

Hybrid Military-Academic Career

- 30-year Army veteran (first assignment at Fort Bragg)
- 24 total years of higher ed teaching and administrative experience
  - West Point, Georgetown, Northern VA Community College, Long Island University Brooklyn, University of the District of Columbia, and Fayetteville State University
- Professor of English
- Fun Fact: 1st English major ever to graduate from West Point



Engagement Inspired by the Arts

- Creative Arts Project at West Point
- West Point-Vassar Initiative
- Veteran Art Exhibits / Arts & Healing at LIU Brooklyn









A Different Kind of Diversity on Campus

Schools that open their doors to veterans are helping to bridge the civilian-military divide

By Robert L. Caslen
and Catharine Bond Hill
August 25, 2014

The Creative Arts Project at West Point

"The overarching goal of the Creative Arts Project is to foster healing, resilience, and community through artistic expression and dialogue."





Art as a “Third Object”

“Art breaks through barriers that divide human beings, which are impermeable in ordinary association.”

— John Dewey, Art as Experience (1934)



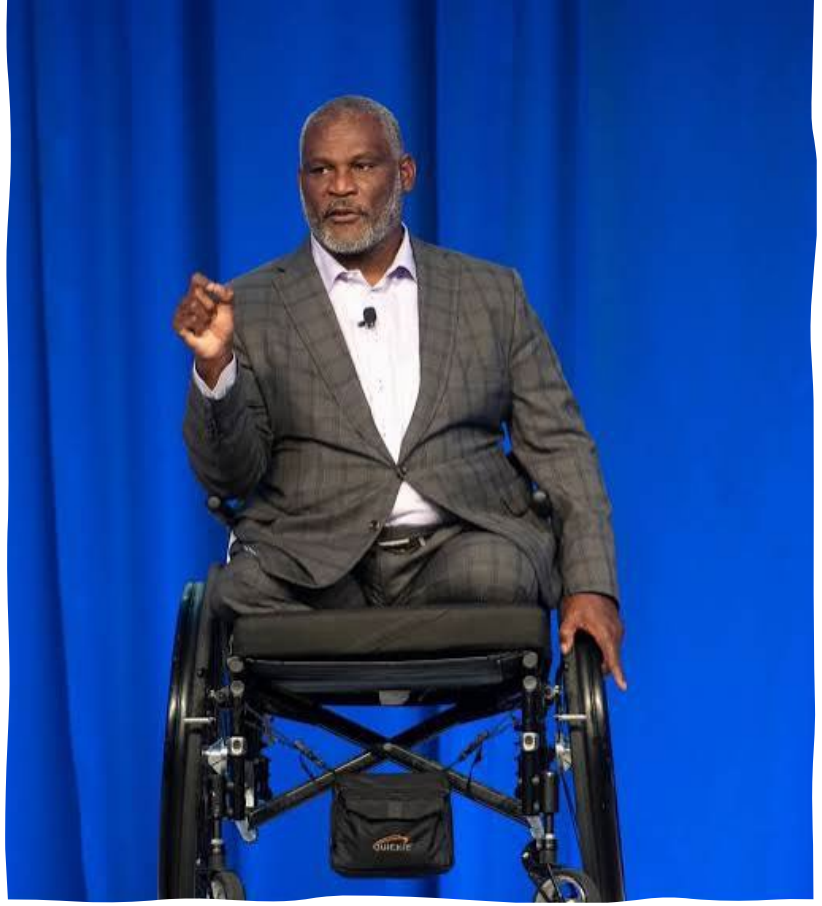














Veterans Day, 2017
Veteran Art Exhibition,
LIU Brooklyn

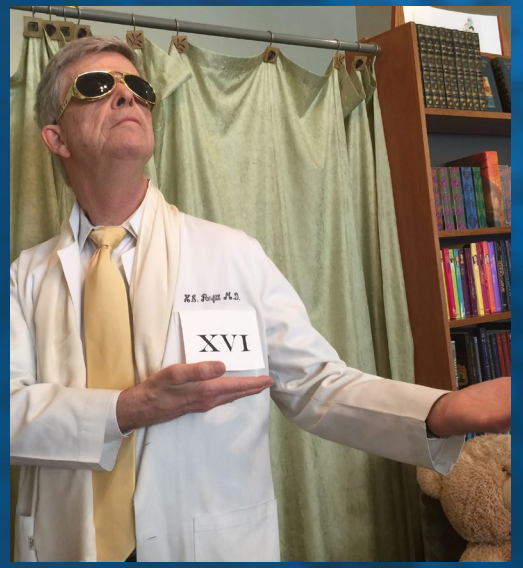
COL (Ret) Greg Gadson, Army Veteran, Wounded Warrior, and Photographer

FAYETTEVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

FSU and the Faculty Task Force Report on Civil Discourse

Dr. Robert Taber
Associate Professor of History
Secretary, UNC Faculty Assembly
Chair, UNC Faculty Task Force on Civil Discourse





What's *in* a chocolate chip cookie?



The Toll House recipe:

- 2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup butter, softened
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- ¾ cup packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs
- 2 cups chocolate morsels
- 1 cup chopped nuts (*optional*)

What's *in* effective civil discourse education?



In the kitchen:

- Academic Freedom
- Free Inquiry
- Institutional Restraint

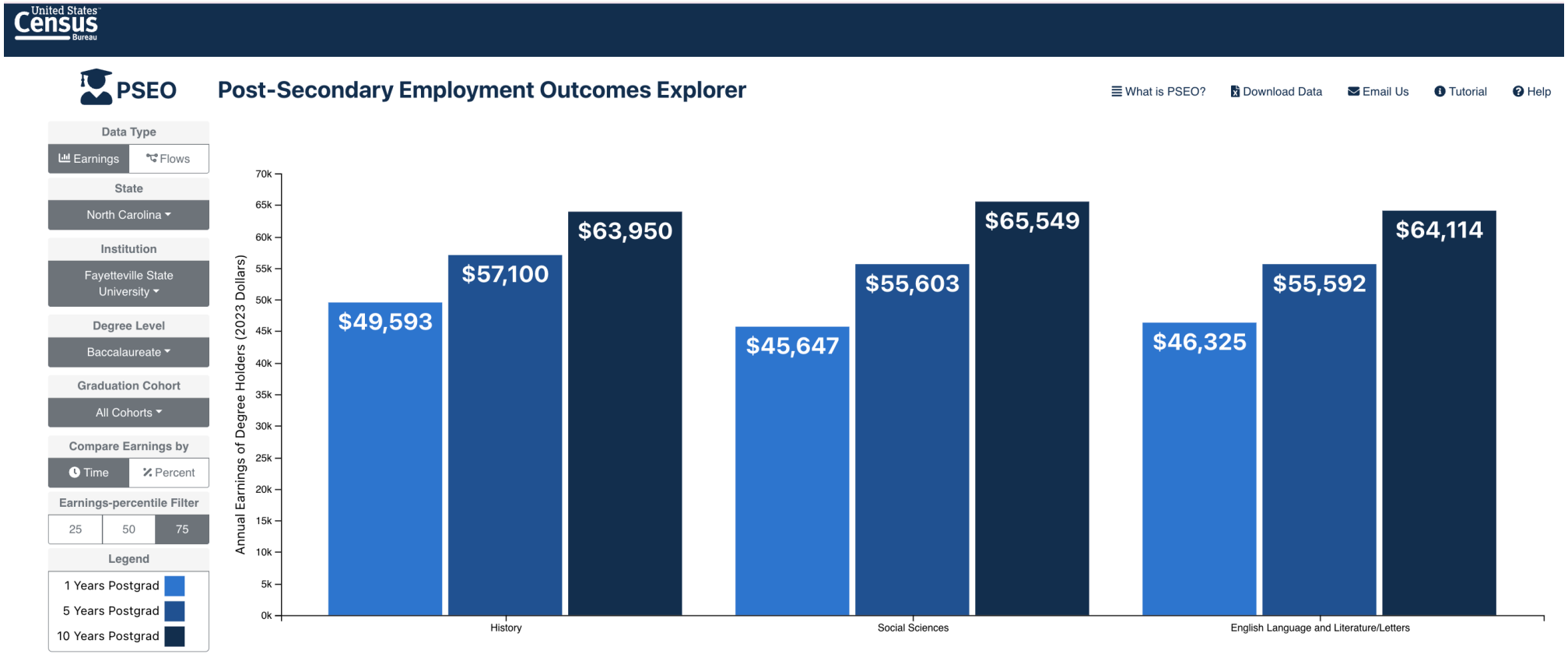
In the recipe:

- Strong Civility
- Collaborative Problem-Solving
- Respecting the Inherent Dignity of All

Note:

Exact program will vary based on home discipline, student need and interest, and whether in a class or co-curricular setting.

FSU Humanities and Social Sciences graduates, top quartile of earners: 1, 5, and 10 years post-graduation.



US Census Bureau, “Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes Explorer.” Accessed 30 October 2026.

FAYETTEVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs
November 18, 2026

AGENDA ITEM

A-4. 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

Elizabeth City State University
Master of Science (MS) in Justice and Legal Systems CIP 43.0104

Fayetteville State University
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Respiratory Therapy CIP 51.0908
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Risk Management and Insurance CIP 52.1701

North Carolina Central University
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Computer Science CIP 11.0701
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Communication Sciences and Disorders CIP 51.0201

University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Emerging Media CIP 50.0706

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 are recommended.

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

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

Request for Authorization to Establish

Master of Science (MS) in Justice and Legal Systems

CIP 43.0104

Elizabeth City State University

I. Program Highlights

- Elizabeth City State University proposes the establishment of a Master of Science (MS) in Justice and Legal Systems.
- The proposed 36-credit, fully online degree will develop advanced knowledge and practical analytical skills for improving outcomes in justice institutions. It is designed for supervisory, analytical, investigative, administrative, policy, and research roles and is projected to enroll 33 students by year five.
- The program expands graduate education for working professionals and residents of rural and underserved communities in northeastern North Carolina. Its curriculum integrates legal systems, criminal procedure, research and data analysis, evidence-based policy, ethical judgment, leadership, and professional communication in an online format that supports continued full-time employment. Students may complete a thesis or capstone, and up to five graduate courses may transfer when requirements are met.
- The proposed program advances ECSU's mission of accessible, student-centered education with regional, state, and national impact. It supports ESCU's ASCEND 2030 priorities for student learning and success, innovative academic programs and growth, a strong place to live and work, and strategic partnerships. It also advances UNC System priorities for access, student success, affordability, economic impact, community engagement, and excellent and diverse institutions.
- Graduates will be prepared for career advancement in law enforcement, courts, corrections, probation and parole, juvenile justice, crime analysis, justice administration, regulatory compliance, victim services, public policy, and justice-related government or nonprofit work.

II. Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The proposed MS in Justice and Legal Systems extends ECSU's existing strengths in criminal justice, public service, applied research, and experiential learning into accessible graduate education. Its fully online delivery responds to geographic and work-schedule barriers affecting rural, working, and nontraditional students. The program supports ECSU's ASCEND 2030 priorities and the UNC System mission by preparing professionals for public service and by applying research to North Carolina justice-system needs.

   The proposed program also aligns with the UNC System's Higher Expectations priorities: access through online delivery; student success through structured advising and predictable course rotation; affordability and efficiency through ECSU's low resident tuition; economic impact and community engagement through workforce preparation; and excellent and diverse institutions through an applied, interdisciplinary curriculum.

2. **Student Demand.** Evidence indicates a meaningful regional and institutional pipeline. In a recent survey, approximately 67% of current criminal justice students reported that they were very likely to apply to an ECSU online master's program in criminal justice. Thirty current ECSU criminal justice students expressed intent to continue into the proposed program, and the undergraduate criminal justice program currently enrolls

approximately 123 students. ECSU also contacted roughly 100 law-enforcement agencies across North Carolina, representing an estimated 100 to 200 potential participants; responses from rural agencies in the Elizabeth City area and surrounding region were positive. Over the past four academic years, ECSU awarded approximately 575 bachelor's degrees in criminal justice, providing an additional pool of prospective graduate students.

The proposed program is intended for working professionals who need graduate education without leaving employment. Peer data show existing demand for graduate criminal justice education within the UNC System, while the response from agencies and current students supports a conservative, gradual enrollment plan.

Table 1. Other UNC System Enrolled CIP 43.0104 [Criminal Justice/Safety Studies], [Master's]

Institution	AY19-20	AY20-21	AY21-22	AY22-23	AY23-24	AY24-25
East Carolina University	34	44	46	35	19	--
Fayetteville State University	25	36	34	28	23	26
North Carolina A&T State University	--	--	--	--	--	27
University of North Carolina at Charlotte	13	15	9	9	10	9

Table 2. Other UNC System Completions for CIP 43.0104 [Criminal Justice/Safety Studies], [Master's]

Institution	AY19-20	AY20-21	AY21-22	AY22-23	AY23-24	AY24-25
East Carolina University	22	20	19	23	--	--
Fayetteville State University	8	6	15	24	13	17
University of North Carolina at Charlotte	2	12	14	6	20	11

Table 3. IPEDS Peer Institution Completions for CIP 43.0104 [Criminal Justice/Safety Studies], [Master's]

Institution	AY19-20	AY20-21	AY21-22	AY22-23	AY24-25
Chicago State University	12	5	10	16	7
Delta State University	10	8	16	14	20
Norfolk State University	5	5	12	11	8

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** The proposed program is a career advancement and professional-development degree. It is designed to strengthen competitiveness for supervision, administration, analysis, policy, research, leadership, legal and regulatory compliance, and other roles that require advanced judgment and the ability to evaluate evidence. Graduates may work in law enforcement, courts, corrections, probation and parole, juvenile justice, victim services, crime analysis, government, nonprofit organizations, and related public or private-sector settings.

   Advanced education in this field can provide a substantial wage advantage over a bachelor's degree. Employment estimates below are based on North Carolina occupational projections cross-walked to CIP 43.0104.

Table 4. Estimated Employment in North Carolina for Standard Occupational Codes (SOC) cross-walked to CIP 43.0104 [Criminal Justice/Safety Studies], with Matching Educational Level Requirement

Education Level Requirement	SOC Count	Current Employment	Future Estimated Employment	Net Change	Percent Change
Doctoral or professional degree	1	1,276	1,374	98	8%

Table 5. Median Wage for SOC Codes Cross-walked to CIP 43.0104 [Criminal Justice/Safety Studies]

Education Level Requirement	SOC Count	Median Wage
Doctoral or professional degree	1	$61,580

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** The fully online format expands access for working professionals and students in rural or underserved communities while avoiding the relocation and commuting costs associated with place-bound graduate education. For 2026-27, ECSU's estimated graduate tuition for North Carolina residents is $187.52 per credit hour, or approximately $6,751 for 36 credits before fees. Up to five graduate courses may transfer when requirements are met, which may further reduce time and completion cost.

   Assuming the full tuition amount is financed through Direct Unsubsidized Loans at 8.07% over 10 years, the estimated payment is approximately $82 per month, or $986 annually. Using a 2023 North Carolina median wage of $53,470 for probation officers and correctional treatment specialists, the tuition debt equals approximately 12.6% of annual gross earnings and annual payments equal approximately 1.8% of gross earnings.

5. **Program Specific Fees or Tuition.** ECSU is not requesting program-specific fees or a tuition differential.

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

Fee category	North Carolina Resident	Nonresident
Tuition	$3,375	$16,437
Tuition Differential	--	--
Mandatory Fees (Education & Technology, Campus Security, ASG)	$387	$387
Special fees	--	--

6. **Expected Quality.** The 36-credit curriculum is designed around graduate learning outcomes in advanced legal and justice-system analysis, research and data interpretation, policy evaluation, ethical and evidence-based decision-making, professional communication, and leadership. Students may complete a thesis or applied capstone. Assessment activities will be mapped to outcomes and reviewed through ECSU and UNC System curriculum, faculty-evaluation, and program-assessment processes.

   New online courses undergo instructional-design review for alignment among outcomes, materials, activities, assessments, accessibility, and technology. ECSU uses Quality Matters-informed training and review, online pedagogy and technical support, peer feedback, and low-bandwidth design practices such as downloadable materials. Enrollment, retention, progression, completion, graduate outcomes, and student and employer feedback will guide continuous improvement. The university will maintain required approvals and consider external quality recognition as the program develops.

7. **Faculty Quality and Number.** Four full-time faculty members are qualified to support the initial program, including one faculty member with a J.D., two associate professors, and two full professors. All are research active. The initial staffing plan uses a phased course rotation, cross-listing, reassignment within standard workloads, and limited adjunct support when appropriate for specialized content or high enrollment. ECSU will monitor faculty sufficiency with a benchmark of at least 67% of credit hours taught by full-time faculty and no more than 33% taught through adjuncts or overloads, adding terminal-degree faculty as enrollment requires.

8. **Relevant Lower-Level or Cognate Programs.** ECSU's established undergraduate criminal justice program supplies relevant faculty expertise and infrastructure and currently enrolls approximately 123 students. Faculty expertise includes criminal justice, law enforcement, courts, corrections, research methods, forensic science, security studies, public policy, and justice administration. The graduate curriculum builds on that foundation through advanced research, policy evaluation, leadership, legal writing, comparative legal systems, criminal procedure, and evidence-based decision-making, while remaining appropriate for working professionals and students outside the immediate region.

9. **Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Facilities, etc.).** The university librarian has reviewed the proposal and found current holdings adequate for initial implementation. Relevant collections include criminal justice, criminology, homeland security, public safety, and social sciences, supported by Criminal Justice Abstracts, ProQuest Criminal Justice, NCJRS, Academic Search Complete, the Homeland Security Digital Library, JSTOR, and LexisNexis. Students also have access to e-books, journals, government reports, statistical resources, multimedia, reference assistance, chat, research consultations, NC LIVE, and interlibrary loan. ECSU plans to expand digital resources in areas such as cybersecurity, forensic science, emergency management, and rural criminal justice as demand develops.

   The proposed program will use existing learning management, instructional design, technical support, accessibility, advising, financial-aid, career, counseling, and student-wellness resources. Online students receive support comparable to on-campus students, including 24/7 technical assistance and teletherapy or wellness resources. No new facilities are required for the fully online program.

10. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** East Carolina University, Fayetteville State University (in-person/online), North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (in-person/online), and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (in-person) offer a related online master's program in the same CIP family. ECSU's proposed program is designed to serve a distinct northeastern North Carolina access need and to emphasize justice and legal systems, rural justice leadership, legal writing, comparative legal systems, and criminal procedure.

Table 7. Other UNC System Applied/Admitted /Enrolled for CIP 43.0104 — [Criminal Justice/Safety Studies]

Institution	Degree Level	Counts	AY (e.g., 22-23)	AY (e.g., 23-24)
East Carolina University	Master's	Applied	53	52
East Carolina University	Master's	Admitted	40	32
East Carolina University	Master's	Enrolled	35	19
Fayetteville State University	Master's	Applied	58	42
Fayetteville State University	Master's	Admitted	45	35

Fayetteville State University	Master's	Enrolled	28	23

11.

Potential for Unnecessary Duplication. The proposal does not create unnecessary duplication. Although related criminal justice and public safety programs exist through online, distance, or off-campus modalities, ECSU's program combines a justice and legal systems focus with applied, interdisciplinary preparation for rural justice leadership. Its emphasis on legal writing, comparative legal systems, criminal procedure, policy analysis, and professional advancement responds to students and employers who need flexible graduate education while maintaining employment. ECSU will continue to review curricula and enrollment to preserve a clear distinction from related programs.

12. Feasibility of Collaborative Program. ECSU will explore internal collaboration with Emergency Management, Homeland Security, social work, history, and other public-service disciplines through guest lectures, faculty participation, professional development, and collaborative research. External collaboration may include law-enforcement agencies, courts, corrections and juvenile-justice organizations, victim-services providers, community colleges, and UNC System institutions through practitioner panels, applied student projects, shared instruction or research, and workforce partnerships. ECSU may pursue formal memoranda of understanding when they add value. The program will also engage practicing attorneys and other legal professionals as guest lecturers, panelists, curriculum consultants, or adjunct instructors when appropriate.

13. Other Considerations. None

III. Summary of Review Process

1. **Institution Review Process and Feedback.** The proposal followed ECSU's established curriculum process, including faculty approval, departmental curriculum review, school curriculum review, university curriculum review, review by the provost's Academic Administrative and Planning Committee, the chancellor's Administrative Council, the chief financial officer, and the chancellor. The proposal received approval and support through these levels.
2. **UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback.** Throughout the review process, Elizabeth City 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 Elizabeth City State University's request to establish the Master of Science in Justice and Legal Systems (CIP 43.0104), effective Fall 2027.

Request for Authorization to Establish

Bachelor of Science (BS) in Respiratory Therapy

CIP 51.0908

Fayetteville State University

I. Program Highlights

- Fayetteville State University proposes the establishment of a Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Therapy.
- The proposed 120-credit-hour BS in Respiratory Therapy, offered through a campus-based prelicensure pathway and a fully online pathway, would prepare students for careers as respiratory therapists and provide practicing respiratory therapists opportunities for professional advancement. Enrollment is projected to reach 66 students by year five.
- The proposed program would address respiratory therapy workforce demand and expand bachelor's-level education in southeastern North Carolina. Its 120-credit-hour curriculum would combine foundational sciences, respiratory care coursework, simulation, and clinical education; seek Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) accreditation; and prepare prelicensure graduates for National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC) credentialing examinations. Partnerships with regional healthcare providers and community colleges would support clinical education, transfer pathways, and workforce preparation.
- The proposed program would support FSU's mission by expanding access to career-focused education and preparing graduates for a high-demand healthcare profession. Its campus-based prelicensure and fully online pathways would broaden access to respiratory therapy education while preparing graduates to strengthen North Carolina's healthcare workforce.
- Graduates could pursue careers as respiratory therapists, registered respiratory therapists, respiratory care practitioners, and other related respiratory care professionals. Lightcast identified 4,892 respiratory therapist jobs in North Carolina in 2026, a 17.6% increase since 2020 compared with 9.3% growth for the national benchmark adjusted for regional workforce size. The report identified 19,061 unique job postings from January 2020 through July 2026, with a 2025 median wage of $80,101. Major employers included WakeMed, Atrium Health, Duke University, Novant Health, UNC Health, and Cape Fear Valley Health System.

II. Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The proposed program would expand FSU's health sciences portfolio and support its mission by increasing access to career-focused education and addressing healthcare workforce needs through campus-based prelicensure and fully online options. Located within the School of Nursing, the program would complement existing health sciences programs, support interdisciplinary education, and strengthen FSU's contribution to North Carolina's healthcare workforce.

2. **Student Demand.** Tables 1 and 2 present enrollment and completion data for other UNC System bachelor's programs in respiratory therapy. Table 3 presents completion data for IPEDS peer institutions.

Table 1. Other UNC System Enrolled for CIP 51.0908 [Respiratory Therapy], [Bachelor's]

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
UNC Charlotte	167	151	116	64	45	69
UNC Wilmington	N/A	33	80	103	106	110

Table 2. Other UNC System Completions for CIP 51.0908 [Respiratory Therapy], [Bachelor's]

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
UNC Charlotte	76	50	58	33	16	29
UNC Wilmington	N/A	N/A	N/A	20	38	47

Table 3. IPEDS Peer Institutions Completions for CIP 51.0908 [Respiratory Therapy], [Bachelor's]

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23
Augusta University	13	8	11	13
Baptist Health Sciences University	3	4	2	4
Bellarmine University	11	10	3	7
Cabarrus College of Health Sciences	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Columbia College	2	4	0	N/A
Dalton State College	8	8	11	6
East Tennessee State University	22	21	17	11
Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University	15	11	11	15
Florida National University Main Campus	2	2	6	3
Florida Southwestern State College	13	14	0	0
Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University	N/A	N/A	12	9
Georgia Southern University	19	17	12	11
Georgia State University	35	29	37	34
Liberty University	5	26	20	17
Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center - New Orleans	N/A	N/A	0	0
Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center - Shreveport	N/A	N/A	N/A	1

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** Graduates could pursue careers as respiratory therapists, registered respiratory therapists, respiratory care practitioners, and other related respiratory care professionals. Lightcast identified 4,892 respiratory therapist jobs in North Carolina in 2026, a 17.6% increase since 2020 compared with 9.3% growth for the national benchmark adjusted for regional workforce size, and 19,061 unique job postings from January 2020 through July 2026. The 2025 median wage was $80,101. Major employers included WakeMed, Atrium Health, Duke University, Novant Health, UNC Health, and Cape Fear Valley Health System.

Table 4. Estimated Employment in North Carolina for Standard Occupational Classification Codes (SOC) Cross-walked to CIP Code: 51.0908 with a Matching Education Level Requirement

Education Level Requirement	Count of SOC Codes	2024	2034 Estimate	Net Change	Percent Change
Associate's Degree	29-1126	4,544	5,378	834	1.69%

Table 5. Median Wage for SOC Codes Cross-walked to CIP Code: 51.0908 [Respiratory Therapy]

Educational Level Requirement	SOC Count	Median Wage
Associate's Degree	29-1126	$80,090
Bachelor's Degree	29-1126	$80,090

Source: UNC System Insight Dashboard.

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** The proposed program would expand access to bachelor's-level respiratory therapy education through a campus-based prelicensure pathway serving southeastern North Carolina and a fully online pathway allowing practicing respiratory therapists to remain employed in their communities. Affordability would be supported by FSU's participation in the NC Promise Tuition Plan and recognition of applicable associate-degree transfer credit, reducing educational costs and unnecessary duplication of coursework.

5. **Program Specific Fees or Tuition.** No tuition differential will be requested. Fayetteville State University will request a $200 program-specific fee for this program.

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

Category	Resident	Nonresident
Tuition	$4,452.00	$10,452.00
Tuition Differential	--	--
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)		
Special Fees	200.00	200.00

6. **Expected Quality.** The proposed program is designed to meet CoARC accreditation standards and NBRC credentialing expectations. Program quality will be supported by qualified faculty, laboratory and simulation experiences, supervised clinical education, and FSU's established health professions environment. Effectiveness will be assessed through student performance and progression, clinical competencies, NBRC examination readiness, credentialing outcomes, and job placement.

7. **Faculty Quality and Number.** The proposed program will be supported by qualified existing faculty and one new respiratory therapy faculty member with appropriate academic credentials, clinical expertise, and applicable licensure or certification. FSU will hire one full-time faculty member in the first year, with an additional full-time faculty member anticipated by year three as enrollment and clinical needs increase. Qualified adjuncts and existing faculty in related disciplines will provide specialized instruction and clinical supervision as needed. All faculty will meet applicable FSU and programmatic accreditation requirements.

8. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** FSU has lower-level and cognate programs in nursing, biology, forensic science, chemistry, computer science, and mathematics that provide foundational coursework and expertise in the sciences, clinical reasoning, data analysis, and laboratory skills. The School of Nursing also provides an established health professions environment with expertise in clinical education, simulation, advising, and licensure preparation.

9. **Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Facilities, etc.).** Existing campus resources will support the proposed program. The Southeastern North Carolina Nursing Education and Research Center provides classrooms, laboratories, faculty offices, and simulation and clinical practice facilities, with respiratory therapy-specific equipment and resources to be added as needed. The Charles W. Chesnutt Library provides on-campus and remote access to healthcare research resources and library services. Students also will have access to existing academic, tutoring, and technology support.

10. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** Comparable programs are offered by UNC Charlotte and UNC Wilmington, and Cabarrus College of Health Sciences offers a related program. Tables 7a and 7b presents institution, program, CIP code, mode-of-delivery, and enrollment information for these programs.

Table 7a. Comparable Programs for CIP 51.0908 [Respiratory Therapy], [Bachelor's]

Institution	Program	CIP Code	Mode of Delivery
Cabarrus College of Health Sciences	BS Respiratory Therapy	51.0908	Online/Hybrid
UNC Charlotte	BSRT Respiratory Therapy	51.0908	Campus/Online
UNC Wilmington	BS Respiratory Therapy	51.0908	Campus

Table 7b. Other UNC System Enrolled/Completed for [Respiratory Therapy], [Bachelor's]

Institution	Degree Level	Counts	AY 21	AY 22	AY 23	AY 24	AY 25
UNC Wilmington	BS	Enrolled	33	80	103	106	110
UNC Wilmington	BS	Completed	N/A	N/A	20	38	47
UNC Charlotte	BS	Enrolled	116	64	45	69	101
UNC Charlotte	BS	Completed	58	58	33	16	29

11. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** The proposed program would complement rather than unnecessarily duplicate existing UNC System offerings. Although UNC Charlotte and UNC Wilmington offer bachelor's-level respiratory therapy programs, neither is in the region served by FSU. The proposed program would expand access and workforce capacity in the region while complementing existing UNC System programs.

12. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program.** Potential collaborations with UNC Charlotte and UNC Wilmington could include curriculum benchmarking, faculty consultation, guest lectures, and sharing effective practices in clinical education, online delivery, accreditation preparation, and course sharing. UNC Charlotte's MS in Respiratory Care could also provide an advanced-study pathway for FSU

graduates. These collaborations would leverage existing expertise, strengthen program quality, and complement UNC System capacity while supporting regional workforce needs.

13. **Other Considerations.** None.

III. Summary of Review Processes

1. **Institution Review Process and Feedback.** The academic proposal was reviewed and approved by the School of Nursing; the College of Health, Science, and Technology; the accreditation 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 the Fayetteville State University request to establish the Bachelor of Science (BS) in Respiratory Therapy (CIP 51.0908), effective fall 2027.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

Request for Authorization to Establish

Bachelor of Science (BS) in Risk Management and Insurance

CIP 52.1701

Fayetteville State University

I. Program Highlights

- Fayetteville State University proposes the establishment of a Bachelor of Science in Risk Management and Insurance.
- The proposed 120-credit-hour program, offered on campus and online, prepares students for careers in insurance, finance, consulting, and risk management. Enrollment is projected to reach just over 100 students by year five, including 85 full-time students.
- A dual-track curriculum in insurance and risk management includes 39 credit hours of general education and 81 credit hours of major courses and core business requirements, plus a practicum, internship, and preparation for industry certifications. Students develop competencies in insurance, financial management, risk assessment, and strategic decision-making.
- The program advances Fayetteville State University's mission by expanding access to career-focused education, particularly for students in eastern North Carolina and military-affiliated populations, while addressing workforce needs in insurance and risk management.
- Graduates could pursue careers as insurance sales agents, financial risk specialists, risk analysts, claims adjusters, compliance officers, and related professionals. Lightcast identified 55,475 North Carolina jobs in 2026, 33.9% growth since 2020, 41,703 unique postings from 3,003 employers, and a 2025 median wage of $61,627.

II. Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The proposed program expands Fayetteville State University's undergraduate business portfolio in a high-demand field while building on existing strengths in business, finance, and risk management. The program supports the UNC System mission through career-focused education, expanded access, and preparation for North Carolina's insurance and financial services workforce.
2. **Student Demand.** Enrollment and completion data for Appalachian State University's comparable program, together with completions at IPEDS peer institutions, demonstrate demand for insurance education; Tables 1-3 provide the underlying comparisons.

Table 1. Other UNC System Enrolled for CIP 52.1701 [Insurance], [Bachelor's]

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
App State	195	169	123	104	115	134

Table 2. Other UNC System Completions for CIP 52.1701 [Insurance], [Bachelor's]

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
App State	52	37	28	32	26	26

Table 3. IPEDS Peer Institutions Completions for CIP 52.1701 [Insurance], [Bachelor's]

Institution	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24
Eastern Kentucky University	29	21	23	36
Florida State University	117	112	97	103
Georgia State University	43	47	34	24
Middle Tennessee State University	11	0	0	0
University of Central Arkansas	22	17	14	10
University of Georgia	233	253	252	265
University of Louisiana at Lafayette	8	14	13	2
University of Louisiana at Monroe	32	37	25	24
University of Mississippi	38	29	37	25
University of South Carolina – Columbia	124	119	109	62
University of South Florida	5	10	7	2

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** Graduates of the proposed Bachelor of Science in Risk Management and Insurance would have opportunities across insurance, financial services, consulting, and risk management. Lightcast identified 55,475 jobs in North Carolina in 2026, a 33.9% increase since 2020 compared with 18.4% growth in the adjusted national benchmark, and 5,790 occupational openings in 2025. From January 2020 through July 2026, Lightcast identified 41,703 unique job postings from 3,003 employers and characterized demand as high relative to the adjusted national benchmark; the 2025 median wage was $61,627. Appalachian State University reported that 96% of its 2024-25 risk management and insurance graduates reached a first destination within six months, with a mean salary of $66,207.

Table 4. Estimated Employment in North Carolina for Standard Occupational Classification Codes (SOC) Cross-walked to CIP Code: 52.1701 with a Matching Education Level Requirement

Education Level Requirement	Count of SOC Codes	2024	2034 Estimate	Net Change	Percent Change
Bachelor's degree	11-3111	761	825	64	8%
Bachelor's degree	11-1141	3,512	3,988	476	14%
Bachelor's degree	13-2053	3,404	3,422	18	1%

Table 5. Median Wage for SOC Codes Cross-walked to CIP Code: 52.1701 - Insurance, Bachelor's

Educational Level Requirement	SOC Count	Median Wage
Bachelor's degree	11-3111	$73,430*
Bachelor's degree	13-1141	$73,430
Bachelor's degree	13-2053	$73,430

Source: UNC System Insight Dashboard. *The dashboard displayed one median wage for CIP Code 52.1701.

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** HyFlex delivery would expand access for students in eastern North Carolina and military-affiliated populations while using existing facilities, technology, and academic support resources. FSU's average undergraduate loan debt is approximately $22,987, or 37% of the $61,627 median wage reported for related North Carolina occupations, with estimated annual payments representing approximately 5% of earnings. These data, combined with labor-market demand, suggest graduates would be positioned to manage educational debt while pursuing careers in the field.

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

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

Category	Resident	Nonresident
Tuition	$4,452	$10,452.00
Tuition Differential	--	--
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)		
Special Fees	--	--

6. **Expected Quality.** The 120-credit-hour curriculum integrates general education, core business requirements, and specialized risk management and insurance coursework within the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)-accredited Broadwell College of Business and Economics. A required practicum, internship, industry certification preparation, and HyFlex delivery support career readiness.

7. **Faculty Quality and Number.** The proposed program would be taught by qualified faculty with expertise in finance, financial planning, risk management, and insurance, including doctoral-level finance faculty and a North Carolina-licensed insurance instructor. FSU plans to add two tenure-track risk management and insurance faculty and one full-time, non-tenure-track faculty member. Existing faculty would teach selected courses with minor workload adjustments, while new positions would provide capacity as the proposed program grows.

8. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** The program builds on existing degrees in accounting, banking and finance, business administration, information systems, and business analytics. Existing risk management and insurance concentrations and cross-listed banking and finance courses provide an additional foundation for the stand-alone proposed degree program. FSU will develop Gamma Iota Sigma, a student-led RMI organization, for experiential learning initiatives, including networking and mentoring events, speaker series, and job fairs.

9. **Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Facilities, etc.).** Chesnutt Library provides onsite and remote access to extensive electronic collections, databases, and interlibrary loan services, with additional resources added as needs emerge. Existing HyFlex classrooms, Canvas, Microsoft Teams, and 24/7 IT help desk services are sufficient; no new square footage or renovation is required.

10. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** Appalachian State University offers the only stand-alone bachelor's degree in risk management and insurance in the UNC System; East Carolina University and UNC Charlotte offer related concentrations. Table 7 provides available application, admission, and enrollment data for the comparable program.

Table 7. Other UNC System Enrolled/Completed for CIP 52.1701 - Insurance

Institution	Degree Level	Counts	AY 2023-24	AY 2024-25
App State	Bachelor's	Enrolled	150	152
App State	Bachelor's	Completed	42	49

Source: UNC System Insight Dashboard.

11. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** Appalachian State University offers the only stand-alone UNC System bachelor's degree in risk management and insurance (CIP 52.1701), while East Carolina University and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte offer related concentrations. FSU's program would complement the western North Carolina offering by serving the Sandhills and Eastern North Carolina, including military-affiliated populations, through distinct insurance and risk management tracks.
12. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program.** Fayetteville State University would collaborate with App State on curriculum development, experiential learning, Gamma Iota Sigma activities, and the Risk Management and Insurance Summer Summit. Additional opportunities include study abroad with Appalachian State University and Campbell University and industry engagement with MedPro Group. Appalachian State University provided a letter of support that was included in the full program proposal.
13. **Other Considerations.** None.

III. Summary of Review Processes

1. **Institution Review Process and Feedback.** The proposal was reviewed and approved by the Department of Accounting, Finance, Healthcare Administration, Information Systems and Business Analytics; the Broadwell College of Business and Economics Academic Affairs Committee; the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee; the Faculty Senate; the institutional accreditation liaison; the provost; and the chancellor.

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 Bachelor of Science (BS) in Risk Management and Insurance (CIP 52.1701), effective spring 2027.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

Request for Authorization to Establish

Bachelor of Science (BS) in Computer Science

CIP 11.0701

North Carolina Central University

I. Program Highlights

- North Carolina Central University proposes the establishment of a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science.
- The program will provide a rigorous, workforce-aligned foundation in computer science theory, software development, data systems, and artificial intelligence, with projected year-five enrollment of 115 students.
- Distinctive features include experiential learning, a capstone course, and planned concentrations in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and data science, with later pursuit of accreditation by ABET's Computing Accreditation Commission.
- The program advances North Carolina Central University's mission to prepare global leaders and practitioners who transform communities through teaching, research, and service, while broadening participation in computing.
- The Lightcast CIP/SOC crosswalk identifies roles including software developer, data scientist, computer systems analyst, database architect, and computer and information systems manager. Related UNC System graduates had a five-year median income of $91,123, which was 56% above the median for all instructional programs.

II. Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** North Carolina Central University is the only UNC System institution without a stand-alone bachelor's degree in computer science. The program expands statewide capacity and access in the Research Triangle. As a historically Black university serving a significant population of first-generation and underrepresented students, NCCU plays an essential role in broadening participation in high-growth technology fields. The program supports the UNC System mission by broadening participation in high-growth technology fields.
2. **Student Demand.** Tables 1 and 2 report enrollment and completion data for other UNC System bachelor's programs with CIP 11.0701. Table 3 reports completion data for IPEDS peer institutions.

Table 1. Other UNC System Enrolled for CIP 11.0701 [Computer Science], [Bachelor's]

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
App State	520	568	591	632	655	554
ECU	420	421	437	448	456	424
ECSU	64	67	74	75	84	102
FSU	105	98	113	119	182	257

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
N.C. A&T	271	295	384	406	487	541
NC State	910	1013	1153	1278	1388	1362
UNC-CH	1229	1458	1438	1365	1239	1096
UNCA	159	154	143	117	139	142
UNCC	2636	2738	2803	3015	3392	3501
UNCG	552	591	640	698	718	733
UNCP	174	201	217	215	229	227
UNCW	441	446	425	423	430	391
WCU	54	74	74	83	97	92
WSSU	48	41	46	32	29	78

Table 2. Other UNC System Completions for CIP 11.0701 [Computer Science], [Bachelor's]

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
App State	71	89	67	85	87	111
ECU	63	68	52	74	80	85
ECSU	9	9	13	7	15	11
FSU	21	23	24	21	29	38
N.C. A&T	37	43	57	63	50	78
NC State	232	244	281	287	373	386
UNC-CH	379	416	432	427	404	430
UNCA	43	37	28	26	24	20
UNCC	539	633	593	644	666	841
UNCG	61	62	56	75	79	124
UNCP	11	19	28	40	29	26
UNCW	85	85	86	96	96	102
WCU	12	22	21	22	23	32
WSSU	15	12	17	6	11	7

Table 3. IPEDS Peer Institutions Completions for CIP 11.0701 [Computer Science], [Bachelor's]

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23
Alabama State University	8	24	26	20
California State University-Bakersfield	61	62	54	65
Delaware State University	30	28	46	30
Tennessee State University	94	46	54	56
Virginia State University	36	46	28	54

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** Graduates will be career-ready for high-tech roles in all aspects of computer science professions.

Table 4. Estimated Employment in North Carolina for Standard Occupational Classification Codes (SOC) Cross-walked to CIP Code: 11.0701 with a Matching Education Level Requirement

Education Level Requirement	Count of SOC Codes	2024	2034 Estimate	Net Change	Percent Change
Bachelor's degree	8	129,246	147,246	18,000	14%

Table 5. Median Wage for SOC Codes Cross-walked to CIP Code: 11.0701 Computer Science

Educational Level Requirement	SOC Count	Median Wage
Some College or Associate Degree	2	$66,840
Bachelor's Degree	8	$119,655

Source: North Carolina Department of Commerce, Labor & Economic Analysis Division (LEAD), occupational employment projections aligned with CIP 11.0701.

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** Annual in-state tuition and fees, excluding housing and meals, total $6,734; median federal undergraduate loan debt is $28,250, compared with a related-field median fifth-year wage of $91,123. These values produce a debt-to-earnings ratio of 0.3, with approximately 4.2 percent of earnings devoted to a standard 10-year loan repayment.

5. **Program Specific Fees or Tuition.** North Carolina Central University is not requesting program-specific fees or a tuition differential for this program.

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

Category	Resident	Nonresident
Tuition	$3,840	$17,267
Tuition Differential	--	--
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)	$2,934	$2,934
Special Fees	--	--

6. **Expected Quality.** The 120-credit-hour program will include an experiential-learning capstone and planned concentrations in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and data science. North Carolina Central University plans to pursue ABET accreditation after implementation.

7. **Faculty Quality and Number.** The program currently has four tenured computer science faculty members, including three full professors and one associate professor. By year five, planned hiring would add three tenure-track and three fixed-term faculty members, for 10 total faculty members.

8. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** The curriculum builds on computer science coursework within the BS in Mathematics — Computational Engineering and Mathematics (CEMA) concentration, including software engineering, data science, and computational science. Fifteen core courses and several electives already exist, and no new general education, mathematics core, or science core courses are required.

9. **Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Facilities, etc.).** James E. Shepard Memorial Library has holdings supporting the program's instructional and research needs. The requested budget includes renovation of existing computer laboratories and creation of additional laboratory space.

10. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** Other UNC System programs are listed in Table 7, which reports enrollment counts for AY 2023 and AY 2024.

Table 7. Other UNC System Enrolled for CIP 11.0701 [Computer Science], [Bachelor's]

Institution	Degree Level	Counts	AY 2023	AY 2024
App State	Bachelor's	Enrolled	219	228
ECU	Bachelor's	Enrolled	151	183
ECSU	Bachelor's	Enrolled	29	25
FSU	Bachelor's	Enrolled	161	184
N.C. A&T	Bachelor's	Enrolled	138	201
NC State	Bachelor's	Enrolled	79	68
UNC-CH	Bachelor's	Enrolled	349	399
UNCC	Bachelor's	Enrolled	868	1068
UNCG	Bachelor's	Enrolled	245	258
UNCP	Bachelor's	Enrolled	83	88
UNCW	Bachelor's	Enrolled	77	82
WCU	Bachelor's	Enrolled	32	36

Source: UNC System admissions dashboard, AY 2023-24 and AY 2024-25; filters include CIP 11.0701, new and transfer applicants, undergraduate degree levels, and primary program.

11. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** North Carolina Central University's program is distinct because the institution currently lacks a stand-alone bachelor's degree in computer science. It adds capacity near the Research Triangle and expands access for first-generation and underrepresented students. North Carolina's ten-year (2024 to 2034) employment projection for aligned SOC codes is 14%, supporting continued demand.

    The existence of multiple computer science programs does not mean that North Carolina has an adequate supply of computer scientists. The 2026 UNC System Workforce Alignment Report projects an 8.6% increase in "AI-Prone" computer occupations (including all occupation codes in our program summary) nationally between 2024 and 2034. This is substantially higher than the 3.1% projected growth for all "AI-Prone" occupations. For the same Standard Occupational Classification Codes (SOC) cross-walked to CIP Code: 11.0701 with a matching education level, the growth over the same period in North Carolina is projected to be 14%. This workforce analysis projects continued employment growth in computer occupations. Therefore, NCCU is committed to developing a distinctive, strategically aligned, cost-effective computer science program that complements rather than duplicates existing programs.

12. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program.** Consultations identified opportunities to strengthen transfer pathways, align introductory course prerequisites, share assessment practices, explore BS-MS pathways, and consider dual enrollment with UNC System institutions.

13. **Other Considerations.** NCCU serves a distinctive educational mission that cannot simply be substituted by existing computer science programs elsewhere in the state. The proposed program adequately reaches every population and contributes to producing the diverse computing workforce the state needs. Expanding computer science at NCCU could increase access to computing education for students who may not otherwise attend larger research universities and could strengthen the state's pipeline of diverse technology professionals.

III. Summary of Review Processes

1. **Institution Review Process and Feedback.** Following a yearlong feasibility study, the mathematics and physics faculty approved an intent to develop the program. The college curriculum committee and Academic Program Council approved the Request for Preliminary Authorization. The provost, chancellor, and chief financial officer reviewed and approved the proposal.

2. **UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback.** Throughout the review process, North Carolina Central 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 the North Carolina Central University request to establish the Bachelor of Science (BS) in Computer Science (CIP 11.0701), effective fall 2027.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

Request for Authorization to Establish

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Communication Sciences and Disorders

CIP 51.0201

North Carolina Central University

I. Program Highlights

- North Carolina Central University proposes the establishment of a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD).
- The online 60-credit program will prepare independent researchers, doctoral faculty, and scholars addressing communication and swallowing disorders. Projected enrollment is 12 students in year five.
- Workforce need is supported by projected speech-language pathologist employment growth of 15% from 2024 to 2034 and approximately 13,300 annual openings (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024).
- The proposed program will be North Carolina's first online Ph.D. in communication sciences and disorders and the second such program at a historically Black college or university.
- Graduates will fill faculty, researcher, grant-development, and clinical-scholarship roles. National CSD programs reported 277 research-doctorate faculty openings in 2023-2024, while only 66.2% of searches were filled according to data from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) 2024-2025 report.

II. Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The proposed program supports North Carolina Central University's 2025-2030 Strategic Plan through graduate education, online access, academic innovation, and research that improves quality of life. The program advances the UNC System mission through workforce development and applied research.

   Doctoral training will strengthen research capacity in communication sciences and disorders, health disparities, and social drivers of health and education. The program also supports North Carolina Central University's progress toward Research 2 (R2) status through expanded scholarship and research activity.

2. **Student Demand.** Proposed program demand is supported by the national shortage of research-trained communication sciences and disorders faculty. According to ASHA data, in 2024-2025, 80 U.S. institutions enrolled 899 research-doctoral students and awarded 139 research doctorates. The proposed online format expands access for working professionals, adult learners, and students unable to relocate. The program's year-five enrollment target of 12 students reflects a measured launch plan.

Table 1. Other UNC System Enrolled for CIP 51.0204 – [Speech and Hearing Sciences] [Doctoral]

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
UNC-Chapel Hill	2	3	2	2	4	--

Table 2. Other UNC System Completions for CIP 51.0204 [Speech and Hearing Sciences] [Doctoral]

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
East Carolina University	1	--	--	--	--	--
UNC-Chapel Hill	3	4	2	2	3	2

Table 3. IPEDS Peer Institutions Completions for CIP 51.0204 – [Speech and Hearing Sciences] [Doctoral]

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY24-25
N/A	--	--	--	--	--

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** Proposed program graduates will be prepared for faculty, research, grant-development, and leadership positions in communication sciences and disorders. Potential employers include universities, health systems, schools, research centers, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations.

   National faculty demand is reinforced by unfilled research-doctorate searches. Faculty-researcher mean salaries reported by the Council of Academic Programs in CSD in 2018 ranged from $70,408 for assistant professors to $108,376 for full professors.

Table 4. Estimated North Carolina Employment in North Carolina for Standard Occupational Classification Codes (SOC) Cross-walked to CIP 51.0204 with Matching Education Requirements

Education Level Requirement	SOC Count Codes	Current Employment	Future Estimated Employment	Net change	Percent change
Doctoral or professional degree	2	11,564	14,444	2,880	25%

Table 5. Median Wage for SOC codes Cross-walked to CIP 51.0201 and 51.0204 – [Communication Sciences and Disorders, General] and [Audiology/Audiologist and Speech-Language Pathology/Pathologist] [Doctoral]

Educational level requirement	SOC count	Median wage
Doctoral or professional degree	2	$105,250

4. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** The online format reduces relocation and commuting barriers for working professionals, adult learners, and students in rural or underserved regions. North Carolina Central University's 2026-27 resident graduate tuition is $4,882 per year, among the lowest reported options for comparable doctoral education.

   Using four years of resident tuition, estimated tuition-only debt is $19,528. At 8.07% over 10 years, monthly payments are approximately $238, or 4.1% of a $70,408 assistant professor salary. The debt-to-earnings ratio is approximately 27.7% calculated from cited tuition and salary data.

5. **Program Specific Fees or Tuition.** North Carolina Central University is not requesting program-specific fees or a tuition differential for this program.

Table 6. Full-time 2026-2027 Ph.D. tuition and fees per year (in dollars)

Category	Resident	Nonresident
Tuition	$4,882	$18,590
Tuition differential	--	--
Mandatory fees (Educational & Technology, Campus Security, ASG)	$549	$549
Special fees	--	--

6. **Expected Quality.** The proposed program requires at least 60 credit hours: 18 hours of core communication sciences and disorders courses, 18 hours of advanced professional coursework, 12 hours of interdisciplinary graduate coursework, and 12 hours of dissertation research.

   Advanced coursework includes research methods, statistics, grant writing, teaching, and teaching practicum. Interdisciplinary study may include psychology, special education, aging, neuroscience, leadership, and clinical supervision. Doctoral programs in the field are not accredited; quality will be supported through faculty mentoring, research expectations, and dissertation review-scholarly publication.

7. **Faculty Quality and Number.** Eight current communication sciences and disorders faculty members will initially support the program. All hold Ph.D. degrees and the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology, with experience in graduate teaching, mentoring, research, grant development, and scholarly publication.

   Faculty expertise includes multilingualism, language development, health equity, autism, developmental disabilities, interprofessional education, dysphagia, artificial intelligence, feeding, voice, craniofacial anomalies, and medical speech-language pathology. Additional interdisciplinary faculty in counseling and special education will support research and doctoral committees.

8. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** Potential cognate coursework is available through nursing, kinesiology, public health, special education, and nutrition. Existing doctoral tracks in counseling and integrated biosciences provide additional interdisciplinary expertise. These areas support research on communication, health, education, aging, neuroscience, leadership, and clinical supervision.

9. **Availability of Campus Resources.** Existing campus spaces and infrastructure are sufficient for initial implementation. North Carolina Central University has proposed remodeling existing space for department offices, a clinic, and research laboratories, and the department's needs assessment includes space for additional doctoral faculty.

10. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill offers a related in-person Ph.D. program, while East Carolina University offers an in-person Ph.D. in rehabilitative

sciences rather than communication sciences and disorders. The available data in Table 7 show continued enrollment and student demand at-UNC-Chapel Hill.

Table 7. Other UNC System Applied/Admitted /Enrolled for CIP 51.0204 — [Speech and Hearing Sciences]

11.

Institution	Degree Level	Counts	AY (e.g., 22-23)	AY (e.g., 23-24)
UNC-Chapel Hill	PhD	Applied	7	8
UNC-Chapel Hill	PhD	Admitted	3	5
UNC-Chapel Hill	PhD	Enrolled	2	4

Potential for Unnecessary Duplication. Due to its distinct online delivery mode, the proposed program does not create unnecessary duplication. Existing UNC System programs are in-person and focus on different degree or disciplinary structures. North Carolina Central University's program will be North Carolina's first online Ph.D. in communication sciences and disorders.

Distinctive emphases include health equity, social drivers of health and education, interdisciplinary research, and multilingualism. These features complement existing programs while addressing unmet access and faculty-workforce needs.

12. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program.** The proposed doctoral program will leverage partnerships across North Carolina Central University and the Research Triangle. The Julius L. Chambers Biomedical and Biotechnology Research Institute JLC-BBRI, the UNC-Chapel Hill LEND program, North Carolina State University's FACES Autism Program, and Duke University collaborations provide potential research, mentoring, and leadership opportunities.

    These relationships can support interdisciplinary research on health disparities, neuroscience, brain-behavior relationships, autism, and communication outcomes. Collaboration will be developed through research projects, mentoring, joint appointments, and shared professional activities as appropriate.

III. Summary of Review Processes

1. Institution Review Process and Feedback. Communication sciences and disorders faculty proposed and approved the intent to develop the program. The Request for Preliminary Authorization was approved by the college curriculum committee and the Academic Program Council, followed by Request to Establish approval from the provost, chancellor, and chief financial officer.

2. UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback. Throughout the review process, North Carolina Central 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 North Carolina Central University's request to establish the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CIP 51.0201), effective fall 2027.

Request for Authorization to Establish

Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Emerging Media

CIP 50.0706

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

I. Program Highlights

- The University of North Carolina at Greensboro proposes the establishment of a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Emerging Media.
- The proposed MFA is a terminal, 60-credit degree designed to bridge traditional cinematic storytelling with virtual production, extended reality, immersive storytelling, and the creative and ethical application of generative artificial intelligence. The program is expected to enroll 20 students by year five.
- The curriculum combines advanced studio practice, critical media theory, and technical direction. UNC Greensboro became an Unreal Academic Partner with Epic Games in January 2025, and the Media Studies Department has an established virtual production studio and upper-level coursework that can be expanded for graduate study.
- The proposed program supports UNC Greensboro Strategic Plan, *Pillar 1, Ensure Success and Upward Mobility for Students from All Backgrounds*, by preparing students for sustainable careers that require advanced technical and creative skills. It also supports UNC System goals for workforce preparation, student success, and research excellence.
- Graduates will be prepared for roles such as technical director, virtual production manager, emerging media producer, multimedia producer or designer, special effects artist and animator, and producer or director.
- Peer NC Tower and Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes benchmarks show five-year median earnings of approximately $54,234 to $62,500 for comparable UNC System programs, with a 94% five-year employment benchmark reported for one peer program. Higher outcomes may be possible in technical director and virtual production roles.

II. Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The proposed MFA develops competence in designing impactful experiences with emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence and virtual production, while cultivating practical skills for careers in digital media innovation, immersive entertainment, and technology-driven storytelling. These objectives are consistent with the UNC System mission to discover, create, transmit, and apply knowledge to address societal and individual needs. The program also addresses a digital skills gap in North Carolina and leverages UNC Greensboro's Unreal Academic Partner status to support workforce productivity, student success, and research.

2. **Student Demand.** Comparable UNC System programs (CIP 50.0401 and CIP 50.0602) demonstrate sustained demand for graduate study in filmmaking, design, and media, while peer data show that related MFA programs are typically small and selective. Preliminary interest reported in the planning

materials includes seven of 15 surveyed UNCG media production seniors indicating that they would apply. Internal demand has also supported expanded offerings such as Virtual Production II.

The exact CIP codes and annual completion count for IPEDS peer programs in Table 3 are not consistently reported publicly. Available information indicates that completions at San Diego State University , San Francisco State and University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee have remained steady or slightly increased over the last five academic years.

Table 1. Other UNC System Enrolled for CIP 50.0401 [Design and Visual Communications, General] and CIP 50.0602 [Filmmaking], [Master's]

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
NCSU	32	32	30	23	19	28
UNCSA	43	41	43	47	48	41
UNCW	x	11	22	34	37	35

Table 2. Other UNC System Completions for CIP 50.0401 [Design and Visual Communications, General] and CIP 50.0602 [Filmmaking], [Master's]

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY2023-24	AY2024-25
NCSU	7	12	17	10	6	9
UNCSA	20	21	15	26	21	26
UNCW	--	--	--	8	9	7

Table 3. IPEDS Peer Institutions Completions for comparable media fields, CIP 50.0602 [Filmmaking], [Master's]

Institution	AY2019-20	AY2020-21	AY2021-22	AY2022-23	AY23-24
San Diego State University	21	6	21	27	18
San Francisco State University	20	10	12	12	26
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	10	0	20	50	30

3. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** The most direct National Center for Education Statistics and Bureau of Labor tatistics mapping for CIP 50.0706 Intermedia/Multimedia is SOC 27-1014, Special Effects Artists and Animators. The curriculum also supports related occupations in media production, virtual production, technical direction, animation, editing, camera operation, lighting, sound, broadcast technology, public relations, and producing and directing. The program's combination of creative authorship, leadership,

critical thinking, and applied AI competency is designed to transfer across film, advertising, live events, gaming, corporate training, and other digital media sectors.

Table 4. Estimated Employment in North Carolina for Standard Occupational Classification Codes (SOC) Cross-walked to CIP 50.01 and related CIP 50.0706 media occupations with a matching education level requirement

Education Level Requirement	Count of SOC Codes	Current Employment	Future Estimated Employment	Net Change	Percent Change
Bachelor's	3	25,927	27,602	1,675	6.3%

Table 5. Median Wage for SOC Codes Cross-walked to CIP 50.06 [Media Studies]

Educational Level Requirement	SOC Count	Median Wage
Bachelor's Degree	3	$49,895
Master’s Degree	3	$63,900

Related occupational wages vary by sector, with higher earnings commonly reported in software publishing, motion picture and video, and advertising and public relations.

3. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** The program is designed as a two-year, 60-credit degree to limit time to completion and tuition exposure. Based on BLS OEWS and Lightcast data matched to related media occupations in North Carolina, the estimated early- to mid-career annual salary range is $54,490 to $72,250, with a weighted regional mean of approximately $62,000. Estimated cumulative program debt is $22,000, producing a debt-to-earnings ratio of 0.35:1. Estimated standard 10-year federal Direct Unsubsidized repayment is $2,820 per year, or approximately $235 per month, representing 4.55% of gross annual income and remaining below the 8% affordability benchmark.

4. **Program Specific Fees or Tuition.** UNC Greensboro is requesting a $3,000 annual tuition differential for this program. The differential supports specialized virtual production equipment, software licensing, and studio maintenance. The university plans to include the differential in financial-aid calculations and to prioritize assistantships and other aid strategies so that the charge does not unnecessarily restrict access.

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

Category	Resident	Nonresident
Tuition	$5,536	$21,313
Tuition Differential	$3,000	$3,000
Mandatory Fees (Athletics, Student Activities, Health Services, Educational & Technology, Campus Security, Debt Service, ASG)	$2,477	$2,477
Special Fees	--	--

5. **Expected Quality.** The proposed MFA is a 60-credit, two-year terminal professional degree that combines sustained studio and creative practice with graduate history, theory, criticism, research methods, interdisciplinary electives, and a thesis project with public presentation. UNC Greensboro is a fully accredited member of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), and the

curriculum is designed to meet or exceed NASAD standards for the Master of Fine Arts. Graduate-level outcomes and separate assessment expectations will apply to students in 500-level dual-listed courses.

6. **Faculty Quality and Number.** Graduate instruction will be supported by four media studies faculty members and one faculty member from Videogaming and Esports Studies, all of whom hold Graduate Faculty status. One new tenure-track faculty member will be hired. Media Studies will reallocate service and advising duties and use course stacking and cross-listing to support the MFA while protecting the undergraduate program. Graduate instructors will meet UNC Greensboro credentialing requirements and applicable accrediting standards.

7. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** The proposed MFA builds on UNC Greensboro's undergraduate and interdisciplinary strengths. The BA in Media Studies, with more than 250 majors, provides a strong applicant pool and foundational preparation. Videogaming and esports, computer science, and media management provide additional expertise and support the MFA's interdisciplinary electives. Existing upper-level courses in virtual production, emerging technologies, gaming and esports production, and Unreal Engine for filmmaking can be adapted for graduate-level expectations.

8. **Availability of Campus Resources (Library, Facilities, etc.).** The university libraries provide collections and services that support advanced study in media theory, cinematic history, and digital production. The Media Studies Department's existing virtual production studio is the primary specialized facility for program launch, and construction is complete. The proposed program will optimize existing high-end production space rather than require new construction, while phased investments in equipment, software, and maintenance will be aligned with enrollment growth.

9. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** Similar UNC System programs are campus-based master's programs in creative writing (University of North Carolina Wilmington and NC State University) and design, filmmaking, and cinematic arts (UNC School of the Arts).

10. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** The proposed MFA does not result in unnecessary duplication. A review of active UNC Systemwide degrees identified no comprehensive North Carolina MFA focused on AI for media production and virtual production while combining creative practice, interactive media design, and cinematic AI applications. NC State's MADTech program awards a master's degree and emphasizes experimental media arts and new media; UNCSA and UNCW award MFAs centered primarily on narrative filmmaking, screenwriting, or related conventional production. During development, UNCG consulted with faculty at comparable UNC System programs regarding curriculum, facilities, student demographics, and opportunities for collaboration. The proposed MFA complements these programs through its sustained emphasis on real-time engines, LED volumes, motion capture, XR, and cinematic A

Table 7. Other UNC System Applied/Admitted /Enrolled for CIP 50.0401 [Design and Visual Communications, General] and CIP 50.0602 [Filmmaking], [Master's]

Institution	Degree Level	Counts	AY (e.g., 22-23)	AY (e.g., 23-24)
UNC Wilmington	Master's	Applied	24	27
UNC Wilmington	Master's	Admitted	19	15
UNC Wilmington	Master's	Enrolled	12	11

UNC School of the Arts	Master's	Applied	98	111
UNC School of the Arts	Master's	Admitted	39	45
UNC School of the Arts	Master's	Enrolled	22	27
NC State University	Master's	Applied	24	21
NC State University	Master's	Admitted	16	10
NC State University	Master's	Enrolled	12	8

11. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program.** UNC Greensboro can collaborate with other UNC System institutions by pooling expensive resources such as LED volumes and motion-capture systems, sharing technical troubleshooting and best practices, and exploring remote multiuser sets in a common Unreal Engine environment. The program also plans to develop Open Educational Resources documenting technical workflows for distribution across the UNC System and to explore shared guest instruction, cross-listed courses, and collaborative showcases.

Other Considerations. The program will undergo ongoing curricular review as emerging technologies and industry expectations change. Its initial design includes graduate-specific outcomes and assessment rubrics for dual-listed courses, optional summer enrollment, and a required thesis that integrates technical mastery, creative research, and critical inquiry. The degree title is intentionally broad enough to remain durable as specific tools and platforms evolve.

III. Summary of Review Processes

1. **Institution Review Process and Feedback.** The proposed MFA proposal followed UNC Greensboro's curriculum review process, beginning with faculty approval, school or college curriculum committee approval, and university-wide curriculum committee approval. The Graduate Council reviewed and voted on the graduate program. The Office of Assessment, Accreditation, and Academic Program Planning reviewed the proposal for compliance with accreditation standards. The provost and chancellor reviewed the proposal, and the chief financial officer reviewed the financial worksheets.

2. **UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback.** Throughout the review process, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro 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 Greensboro request to establish the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Emerging Media (CIP 50.0706), effective fall 2027.

AGENDA ITEM

A-5a. Laboratory Schools Evaluation Report ..... Ashton Clemmons

Situation: G.S. 116-239.13 requires the University of North Carolina Board of Governors Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs committee to review and evaluate the educational effectiveness of the laboratory schools for both public-school students and students enrolled in educator preparation programs and report certain information each year to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

Background: Legislation governing the laboratory schools' initiative calls for annual reporting by the subcommittee on particular items listed in G.S. 116-239.13, including information about laboratory schools' demographics, admissions processes, student achievement data, educator preparation program student outcomes, best practices, and other information the subcommittee deems appropriate.

The UNC System Office has contracted with independent evaluators at the Education Policy Initiative at Carolina (EPIC) to review and evaluate the laboratory schools and produce an annual report for the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee in accordance with statutory requirements.

Assessment: Committee members will hear an overview of the evaluation process and its key findings and will have an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the report.

The full annual evaluation report is included as an appendix for the record and will be submitted to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

Action: This item is for information only.

AGENDA ITEM

A-5b. Laboratory School Renewals ..... Ashton Clemmons

Situation: Pursuant to G.S. 116-239.7, a laboratory school shall operate for a period of five years. At the end of the initial five years of operation, the laboratory schools shall renew the term of operation for additional five-year periods if the laboratory school is still located in a local school administrative unit that has 25% or more of the schools identified as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.37, or if the subcommittee renews a waiver of this requirement. If the laboratory school is no longer (i) located in a qualifying local school administrative unit or (ii) meeting the purposes of this Article under a waiver at the end of five years, the subcommittee may renew the term of operation for additional five-year periods if the subcommittee finds the school is successfully meeting its mission to improve student performance and provide valuable exposure and training for teachers and principals in the constituent institution's educator preparation program.

Background: Four UNC System Laboratory Schools are seeking renewal. The Catamount School and East Carolina Community School are in their 10th year of operation. The 2026-27 school year marks the fifth year of operation for Aggie Academy and Carolina Community Academy. Western Carolina University, East Carolina University, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill each seek a renewal period of five additional years to operate their respective laboratory school.

Assessment: A renewal report summarizing the progress of the school is presented for committee review.

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

AGENDA ITEM

A-7. UNC System Fall Enrollment Report and Actions Taken Pursuant to Section 700.1.3 of the UNC Policy Manual, *Policy on Nonresident Undergraduate Enrollment*. ..... Katie O'Connor

Situation: A primary responsibility of the University of North Carolina Board of Governors is to "…foster the development of a well-planned and coordinated system of higher education." One of the key activities the Board oversees in executing this responsibility is periodically evaluating enrollment trends. The Fall 2026 Enrollment Report provides an overview of trends and statistics for the current academic term, along with information related to monitoring Board policy items, including nonresident enrollment levels.

Section 700.1.3 of the UNC Policy Manual states that any constituent institution that exceeds its out-of-state freshmen enrollment limitation identified in the policy for two consecutive fiscal years shall have its state operating budget reduced. This reduction shall be made in the second fiscal year in which the two-consecutive-fiscal-year condition is violated; the reduction shall be made, on a nonrecurring basis, immediately after the Board receives the annual enrollment report. The budget reduction shall be based on the tuition revenue received from out-of-state freshmen enrolled more than the specific limitation. Institutions are provided a warning (no penalty) in the first year that they exceed their Board limitation.

Background: Student enrollment is a key metric for evaluating institutional health and stability. As enrollment funding represents one of the largest financial components of institutional budgets, significant shifts in growth or decline can have a substantial financial impact. The total headcount for fall 2026 is 260,196 — an increase of 3,667 students or 1.4% over fall 2025. The nonresident threshold for each institution is defined in Section 700.1.3 of the UNC Policy Manual (the University of North Carolina School of the Arts is exempted from the policy, as its nonresident enrollment threshold is specified by S.L. 1985-479, Sec. 73.). The Fall 2026 Enrollment Report identified the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Western Carolina University as having exceeded their nonresident enrollment cap.

Assessment: UNC-Chapel Hill has been notified that they have exceeded their institutional cap for the second consecutive year, and a financial penalty will be assessed in accordance with policy. Western Carolina University did not exceed their cap last year, but did so this year, and has been notified that upon doing so again in the fall of 2027, a financial penalty shall be assessed in accordance with policy.

Action: This item is for information only.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

FALL 2026 ENROLLMENT REPORT

November 18, 2026

University of North Carolina System
Raleigh, North Carolina

Executive Summary

When the University of North Carolina System was redesigned in 1972 to include all 16 public four-year institutions of higher education, one of the primary responsibilities given to the University of North Carolina Board of Governors was to "…foster the development of a well-planned and coordinated system of higher education." One key activity the Board oversees in executing this responsibility is periodically evaluating enrollment trends and making projections about the future. The Fall 2026 Enrollment Report presents enrollment trends across the 17 institutions of the UNC System.

- **Overall Enrollment.** The fall 2026 total UNC System headcount enrollment is 260,196 students, an increase of 3,667 students (1.4%) from the previous fall.
- **New First-Year Undergraduate Enrollment.** The System saw strong demand in first-year enrollment from both in- and out-of-state students. Collectively, the UNC System enrolled 41,157 new first-year students in fall 2026, which is a 2.4% increase compared to fall 2025.
- **New Transfer Undergraduate Enrollment.** The UNC System hit a record for new transfer enrollment with 19,248 new transfer students enrolling in fall 2026 — a 2.8% increase from fall 2025.
- **Graduate Enrollment**. Total graduate enrollment for fall 2026 is 52,053 students, which is a decrease of 1,070 students (-2.0%) from fall 2025. New graduate student enrollment decreased by 674 students (-3.7%). These decreases were primarily driven by a decline in out-of-state and international student enrollment.

Overall Enrollment

The UNC System experienced our fourth consecutive year of enrollment growth this fall. We reached a record headcount of 260,196 students, which is an increase of 3,667 students (1.4%) from fall 2025. Undergraduate enrollment rose by 4,737 students (2.3%), while graduate enrollment declined by 1,070 students (-2.0%) compared to the prior fall.

Figure 1. Total Fall Enrollment, 2017-2026

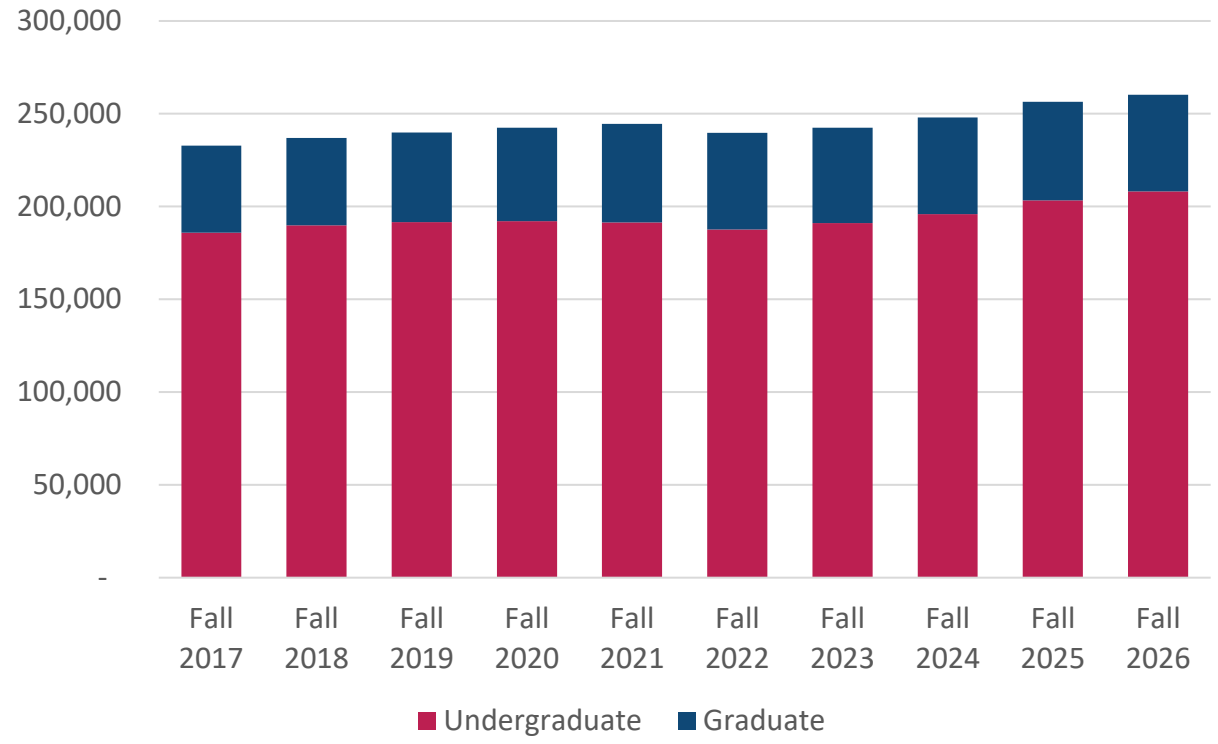


Table 1. Total Fall Enrollment, 2017-2026

	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	Fall 2026
Undergraduate	185,880	189,890	191,632	192,170	191,510	187,676	191,013	195,889	203,406	208,143
Graduate	46,992	47,103	48,349	50,276	52,990	51,987	51,505	52,038	53,123	52,053
Total	232,872	236,993	239,981	242,446	244,500	239,663	242,518	247,927	256,529	260,196

Table 2. Total Fall Enrollment by Institution, 2024-2026

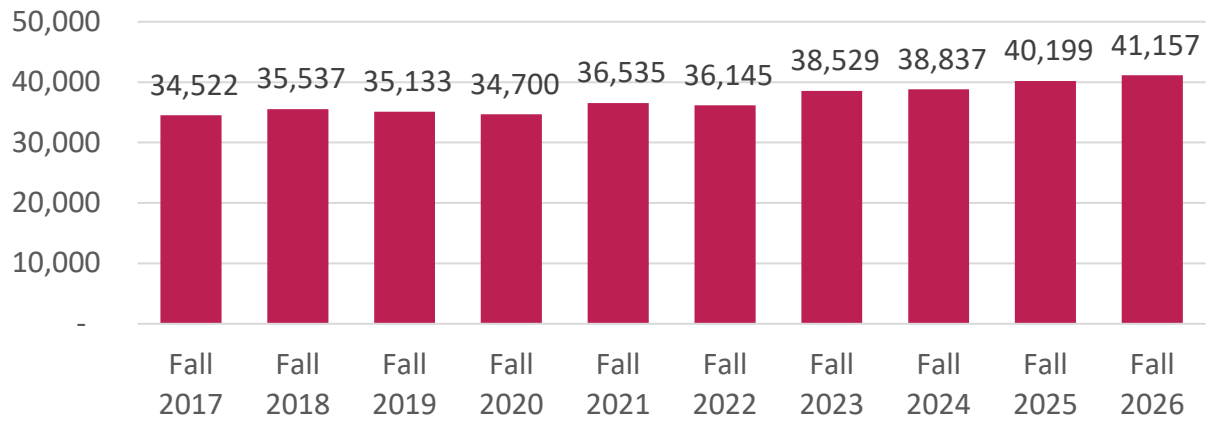
	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	Fall 2026	YoY Change
ASU	21,570	21,798	21,308	-2.2%
ECU	26,940	27,153	27,206	0.2%
ECSU	2,258	2,358	2,445	3.7%
FSU	7,107	7,607	7,741	1.8%
NC A&T	14,311	15,275	15,713	2.9%
NCCU	8,579	9,281	10,124	9.1%
NC State	38,464	39,259	39,219	-0.1%
UNCA	3,056	2,874	2,644	-8.0%
UNC-CH	32,438	34,099	34,482	1.1%
UNCC	31,091	32,207	33,045	2.6%
UNCG	18,012	18,682	19,078	2.1%
UNCP	7,674	8,074	7,977	-1.2%
UNCW	18,848	19,895	20,555	3.3%
UNCSA	1,111	1,150	1,141	-0.8%
WCU	11,686	11,845	12,308	3.9%
WSSU	4,782	4,972	5,210	4.8%
Total	247,927	256,529	260,196	1.4%

New Student Enrollment

In addition to tracking overall enrollment, analyzing new student enrollment can provide an early look at emerging trends. This section analyzes three categories of new student enrollments: new first-time freshmen, new undergraduate transfer students, and new graduate students.

New first-time freshmen enrollment rose to 41,157, a 2.4% increase from fall 2025, making this the largest entering freshmen class in the UNC System's history. These gains are particularly significant within the broader national landscape, where many institutions continue to face enrollment challenges driven by demographic shifts, economic pressures, and evolving public perceptions of higher education's value.

Figure 2. New First-Time Freshman Fall Enrollment, 2017-2026



New transfer student enrollment grew again in fall 2026 to 19,248 students, a 3.6% increase from fall 2025. The majority of students transferred from the North Carolina Community College System, though some also transferred from other UNC System institutions, from North Carolina private institutions, or from out-of-state.

Figure 3. New Undergraduate Transfer Student Fall Enrollment, 2017-2026

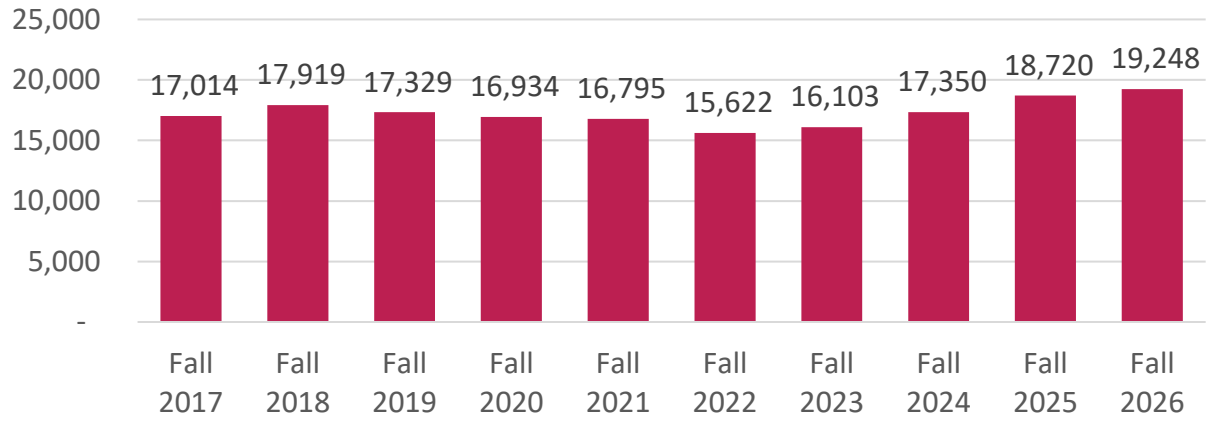
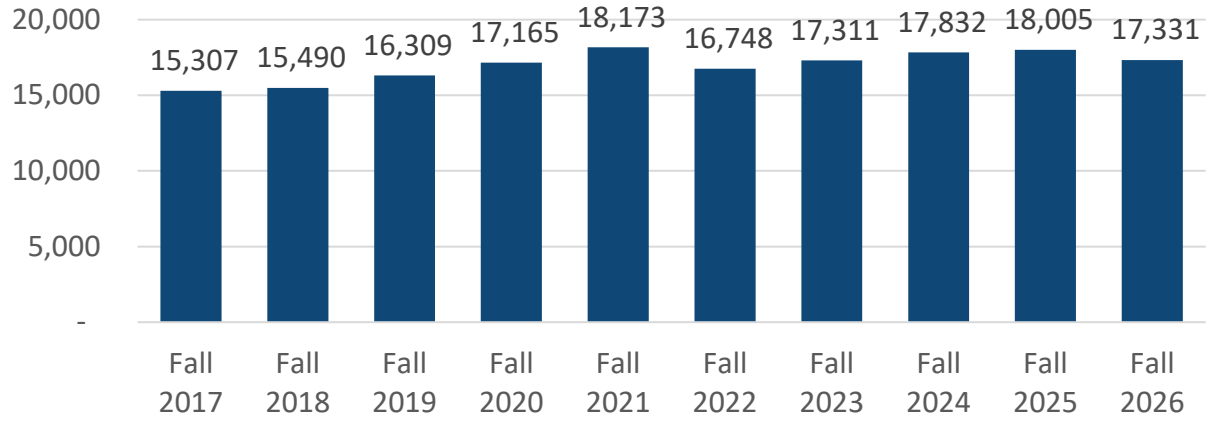


Table 3. Where UNC Students Transfer From

	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	Fall 2026
NCCCS	10,049	10,841	11,230
UNC-to-UNC	2,216	2,375	2,392
NC Private	894	956	990
Out-of-State	4,191	4,548	4,636
Total	17,350	18,720	19,248

The UNC System welcomed 17,331 new graduate students in fall 2026. This enrollment represents a decrease of 674 students as compared to fall 2025. Much of the decrease was in out-of-state and international enrollment.

Figure 4. New Graduate Student Fall Enrollment, 2017-2026



Enrollment by Residency

Section 700.1.3 of the UNC Policy Manual, *Policy on Nonresident Undergraduate Enrollment,* outlines caps set by the Board on the percentage of nonresident students enrolled at each institution as first-time freshmen. As of a 2022 policy change, the out-of-state caps are calculated as a percentage of the previous year's first-time freshman cohort.

Two institutions exceeded their out-of-state enrollment caps in fall 2026. Western Carolina University enrolled 29% of out-of-state first-time freshmen (above its 25% limit), and UNC-Chapel Hill enrolled 20% (above its 18% limit). Detailed figures are provided in Table 4.

WCU did not exceed its cap in fall 2025, so they will not receive a penalty this year. This is the second year in a row that UNC Chapel Hill has exceeded its cap, so their State operating budget will be reduced in accordance with policy. The budget reduction is based on the number of nonresident students for tuition purposes in the entering fall first-time class enrolled in excess of the specified institutional percent limitation, multiplied by the base nonresident undergraduate tuition rate for the academic year.

Table 4. New Freshman Enrollment by Residency

	Fall 2025 Enrollment	Fall 2026 Enrollment			Fall 2026 Out-of-State Enrollment Cap based on Fall 2025 Cohort				
	Total	In-State	Out-of-State	Total	Allowable Percentage	Actual Percentage	Allowable Enrollment	Actual Enrollment	Enrollment Exceeding Cap
ASU	3,993	3,141	351	3,492	18%	9%	718	351	.
ECU	4,129	3,266	615	3,881	25%	15%	1,032	615	.
ECSU	362	294	115	409	50%	32%	181	115	.
FSU	807	574	151	725	25%	19%	201	151	.
NCA&T*	2,687	2,006	804	2,810	35%	30%	940	804	.
NCCU	1,688	1,107	560	1,667	35%	33%	590	560	.
NC State	5,906	5,332	753	6,085	18%	13%	1,063	753	.
UNCA	490	447	73	520	35%	15%	171	73	.
UNC-CH	5,091	4,299	1,020	5,319	18%	20%	916	1,020	104
UNCC	4,934	4,664	501	5,165	18%	10%	888	501	.
UNCG	2,606	2,569	143	2,712	25%	5%	651	143	.
UNCP	898	693	137	830	25%	15%	224	137	.
UNCW	3,109	2,859	505	3,364	18%	16%	559	505	.
UNCSA**	259	115	114	229	.	44%	.	114	.
WCU	1,903	1,866	558	2,424	25%	29%	475	558	83
WSSU	1,003	891	229	1,120	35%	23%	351	229	.
Total	*39,865*	*34,123*	*6,629*	*40,752*	.	.	.	.	.

**This table excludes out-of-state engineering students at N.C. A&T, per policy 700.1.3. There are 405 out-of-state, first-time freshman engineering students enrolled at N.C. A&T in Fall 2026.*

**The University of North Carolina School of the Arts nonresident enrollment levels shall not exceed 50%, per S.L. 1985-479, Sec. 73, and therefore the school is not subject to this policy.

High School Student Enrollment

The UNC System has two constituent institutions with residential high school programs — the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, and the high school program at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. Enrollment in these programs is largely stable and generally constrained by residence hall capacity. As directed by Section 8.13 of NC Session Law 2026-41, 2026 Appropriations Act (S.B. 257), System Office staff, in consultation with the chancellor of NCSSM, are currently assessing the feasibility of expanding the Morganton campus and virtual programs. They will submit the resulting plans, once approved by the Board, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by February 15, 2027.

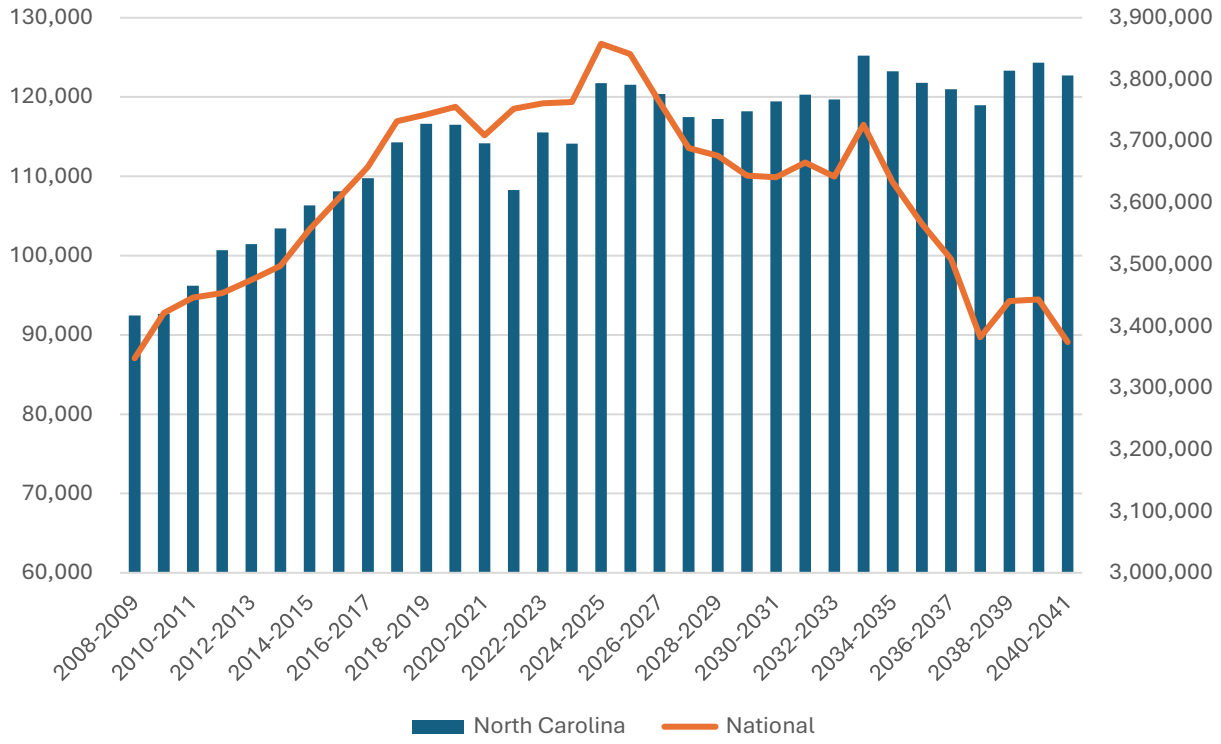
Table 5. Residential High School Enrollment

Institution	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	Fall 2026
NCSSM - Durham	675	675	675
NCSSM - Morganton	300	300	302
UNC School of the Arts	252	235	242
UNC System Total	**1,227**	**1,210**	**1,219**

Projecting Future Enrollment

While UNC System enrollment remains strong, it is important to monitor potential headwinds that could affect future enrollment trends. One of the most widely cited sources for projecting future college-going populations is the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), which publishes forecasts of high school graduates nationwide. According to these projections, the number of U.S. high school graduates peaked with the graduating class of 2025 and is expected to decline dramatically over the next decade. North Carolina will see a few years of declines, followed by a projected increase. However, even though North Carolina is better positioned than many states facing steeper demographic challenges, competition for North Carolina high school graduates is expected to intensify as out-of-state institutions seek to offset their own enrollment losses by recruiting beyond their home markets.

Figure 5. Comparing North Carolina vs. National High School Graduate Projections



Source: Lane, P., Falkenstern, C., & Bransberger, P. (2024). Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates. Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. https://www.wiche.edu/knocking.

An important way to combat declining populations of traditional college aged students is to diversify enrollment pipelines. UNC System institutions have been working to broaden appeal for years, and this fall's enrollment data indicates they are succeeding in their efforts. Fall 2026 brought record numbers of transfer student enrollments and undergraduate adult learner enrollments. Enrollment in Flight Path Programs, which are fully online programs powered by Project Kitty Hawk, increased 55% since fall 2025 to over 3,100 in fall 2026. This enrollment is across six UNC institutions, two of which are new partners that started in 2026.

Conclusion

The UNC System experienced sustained, steady enrollment growth over the past four years, culminating in record enrollment in fall 2026. Total headcount enrollment rose 1.4% from the previous year, marking the highest enrollment in System history. We reached record enrollment with both new first-year and new transfer students. Freshmen enrollment rose by 2.4%, while new transfer student enrollment increased by 2.8%. The results reflect our continued momentum across multiple student segments.

The UNC System's continued growth underscores its leadership and strategic focus on access and student success, including efforts to expand educational opportunities, offer flexible and simplified admission pathways, and strengthening partnerships with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina Community College System.

Appendix A: Interactive Data Dashboards

The UNC Data Dashboards are interactive reports sourced from an online database that gives students, parents, policymakers, and taxpayers expanded access to detailed system data on selected core measures. This enrollment report is intended to provide an overview of key trends and data points; for additional detailed and customizable information, please visit the interactive data dashboards linked below.

- **Degrees**
  With degrees offered in more than 200 disciplines across our institutions, UNC System students earn degrees in a variety of critical fields. Learn more about degrees awarded over the past 10 years, and sort the data by level of degree, field of study, and demographics.
- **Enrollment**
  Explore enrollment trends across the UNC System. Learn more about who our students are and where they come from.
- **Financial Aid**
  Explore financial aid trends across the UNC System. This dashboard displays the number of students who receive financial aid, the average amounts of aid they receive, and the total financial aid dollars awarded. See the sources and types of financial aid awarded across the System, plus the average federal debt of recent graduates.
- **Freshmen Admissions and Performance**
  Students, parents, schools, and school district officials can see admissions and performance information about high school graduates pursuing degrees at all constituent universities. This includes graduation rate information, peer comparisons, and more.
- **Transfer Students**
  Examine trends in transfer student enrollment, first-year performance, and graduation rates.

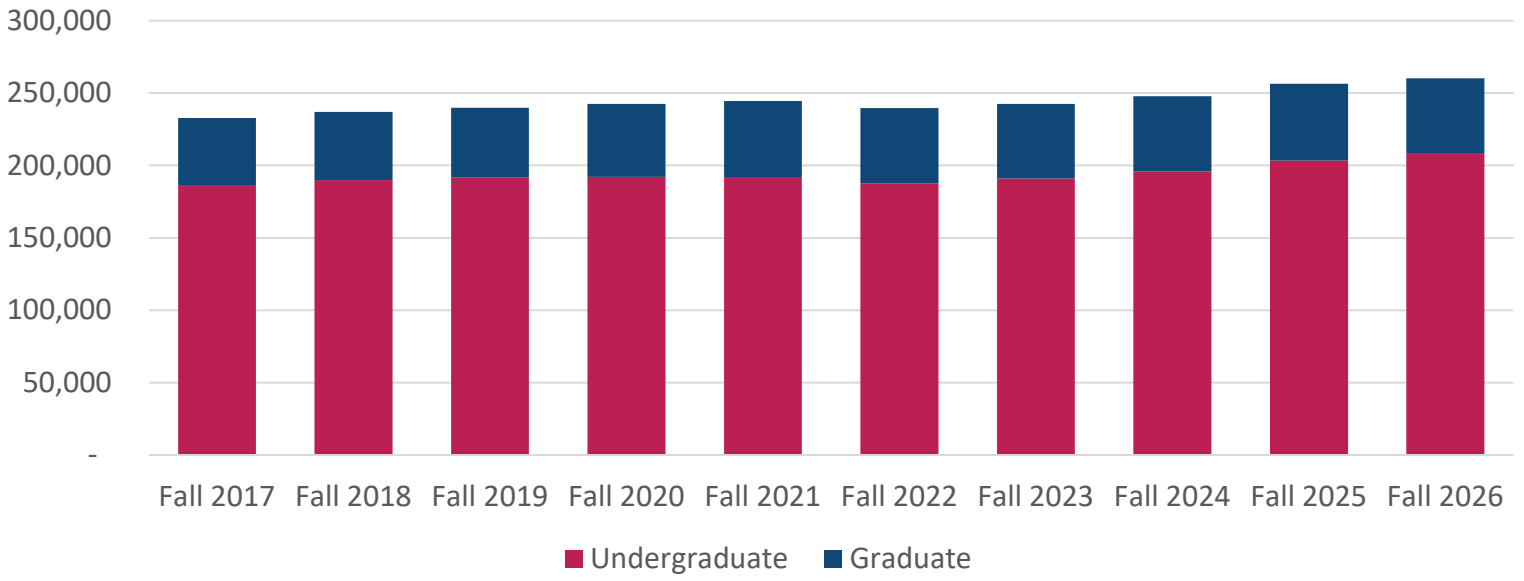
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

Fall 2026 Enrollment

Report to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs

November 18, 2026

Overall Enrollment – over 260K students!

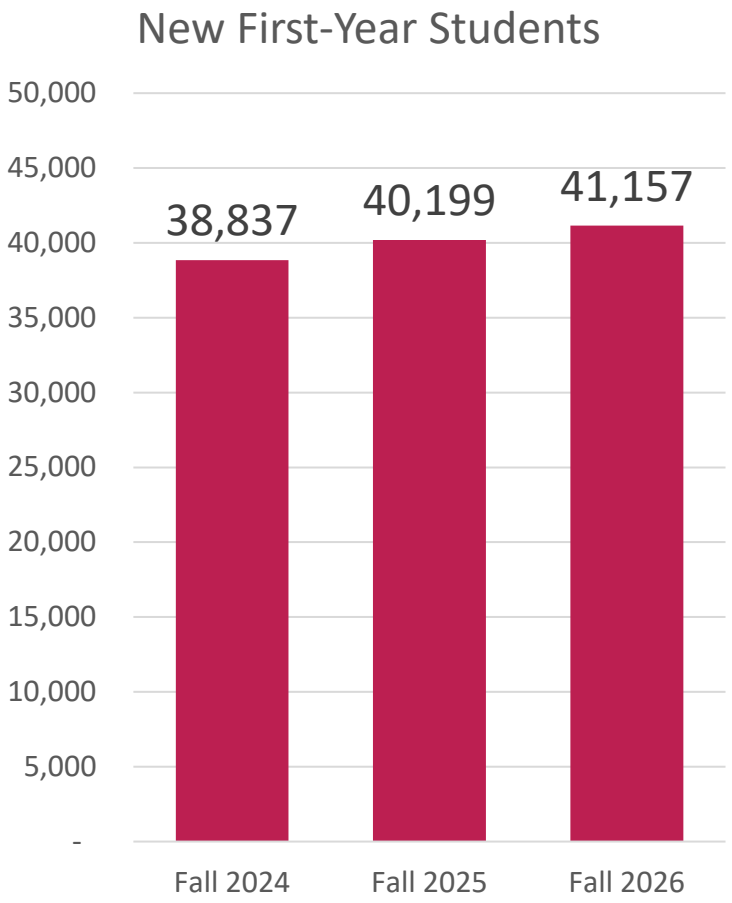


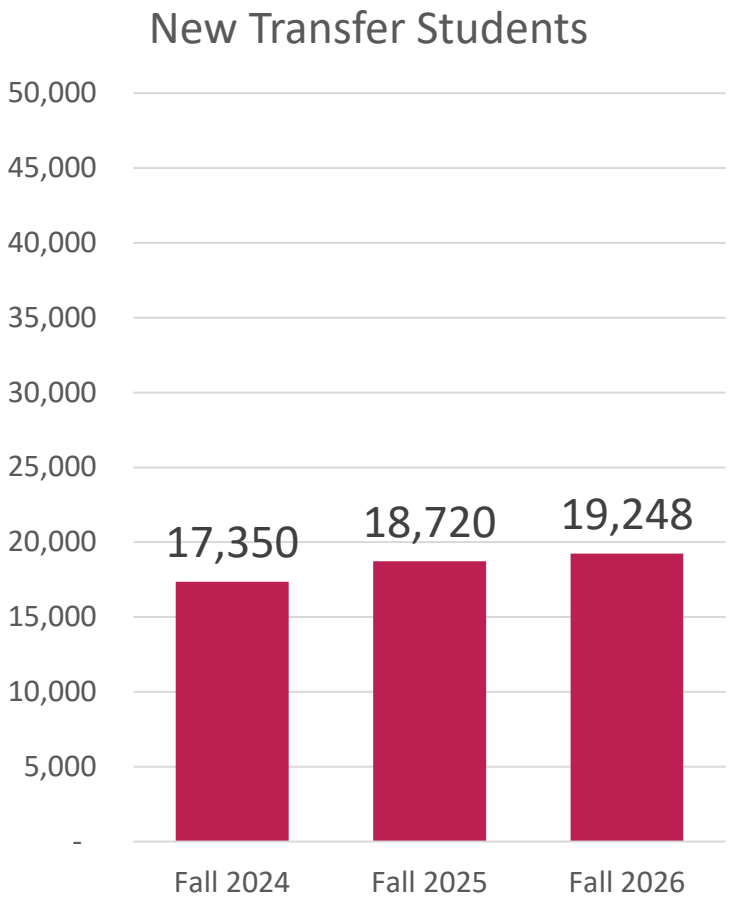
Compared to Last Fall

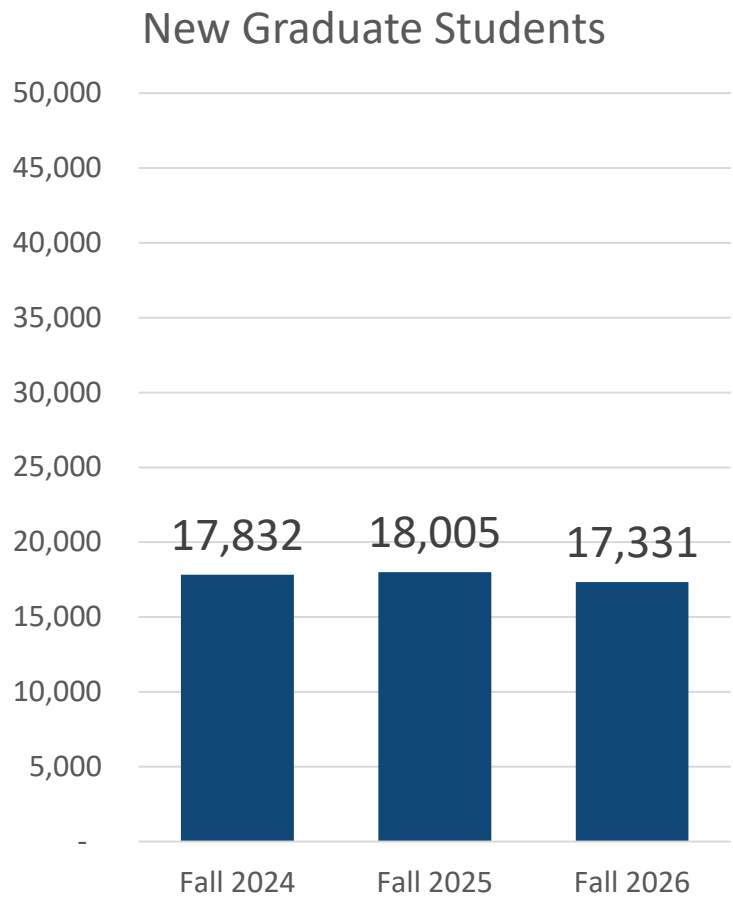
- 1.4% increase in total headcount
- 2.3% increase in undergraduate students
- 2.0% decrease in graduate students

	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	Fall 2026
Undergraduate	185,880	189,890	191,632	192,170	191,510	187,676	191,013	195,889	203,406	208,143
Graduate	46,992	47,103	48,349	50,276	52,990	51,987	51,505	52,038	53,123	52,053
Total	232,872	236,993	239,981	242,446	244,500	239,663	242,518	247,927	256,529	260,196

New Student Enrollment







THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

Enrollment by Residency and Out-of-State Caps

	Fall 2025 Enrollment	Fall 2026 Enrollment			Fall 2026 Out-of-State Enrollment Cap based on Fall 2025 Cohort				
	Total	In-State	Out-of-State	Total	Allowable Percentage	Actual Percentage	Allowable Enrollment	Actual Enrollment	Enrollment Exceeding Cap
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Total	39,865	34,123	6,629	40,752	.	.	.	.	.

2nd year (penalty)

1st year (no penalty)

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

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THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

THANK YOU

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

QUESTIONS?