

16. Request for an alternative minimum admission requirements pilot at NCCU.....Debra Saunders-White

Situation: At the request of Chancellor Debra Saunders-White, NCCU is requesting permission to pilot an alternative to the current Board of Governors minimum admissions requirement of a high school weighted GPA of 2.5 **and** an SAT score of 800 (or an ACT score of 17).

Background: After a three year phase-in period, the BOG increase to minimum admissions standards was fully implemented in Fall 2013. This increase, particularly in required standardized test scores, has been associated with downward enrollment pressure at several UNC institutions. Data clearly show that high school GPA is a much better predictor of student success than a standardized test score. Results from the assessments of summer bridge programs on several UNC campuses indicate that students with lower standardized test scores, supported with high quality advising and student support services, have high probabilities of success as measured by fall to spring semester persistence and freshman to sophomore retention rates.

Assessment: It is recommended that the Board give consideration to this request for an alternative minimum admissions requirement pilot project at NCCU.

Action: This item is for a vote.



North Carolina Central University's Proposal to Waive the UNC System Admissions Requirements

Our Request and Rational:

North Carolina Central University (NCCU) requests a waiver of the current University of North Carolina System admissions requirements of a 2.5 GPA and an 800 SAT score for first year full-time students. We request the approval to accept students with a 3.0 GPA or better and whose SAT scores are between 750-799. Research show the GPA for many students is a better determinant of academic success than the SAT. By having flexibility in admissions, NCCU can target applicants who although slightly on the fringes of the admissions standards, have nonetheless shown the capacity to complete in four years. NCCU is able to motivate and successful matriculate many students who do not present the most competitive SAT scores. These students oftentimes pursue advance degrees and progress into the marketplace to become valuable workers, socially responsible, and active supporters of their alma mater. Last year, NCCU lost the opportunity to evaluate/admit roughly 200 students who had a GPA of 3.0 or higher but a SAT score between 750-799. It is unclear what befell these students. This proposal will allow us to provide higher education opportunity to students. The economic vitality of North Carolina depends on everyone doing their collective part to provide a talented workforce to employers within the state. Consequently, our role here at NCCU is immeasurably important.

Currently, there are 251 applicants who meet the 3.0 GPA or better and whose SAT scores are between 750-799. We are proposing establishing a 3-year pilot program and enrolling 100 of these students or 40% of the pool for academic year 2014-15.

Our Plan:

NCCU, true to our mission, is committed to providing a network of services, including curriculum design, tutoring services, professional development and financial support to ensure these students succeed academically and to align retention strategies with our recruitment goals. Through assessment and intervention during this 3-year pilot program, NCCU can have a long-term impact on how successful these students will become which will have a direct correlation to retention and graduation rates.

Assessments/Metrics

Our Success will be measured using the following evaluation/assessment metrics:

- Each student will sign a contract during an orientation which will outline the expectations of their successful academic performance for each semester
- Students will complete Gateway courses prescribed for the pilot test cohort which includes English, math, science, foreign language and physical education
- A minimum of 16 credit hours will be completed each semester
- A minimum of a 2.0 GPA will be obtained per semester
- Criteria will be used from the Aspiring Eagles program
- Semester progress reports of the students' experiences and status will be ongoing
- Each student who completes a total of 32 credit hours by the end of the second semester will receive a \$1,000 stipend toward their tuition from a Department of Education grant
- There will be a review of grades and overall group performance through qualitative and quantitative measures utilizing the Grades First and Educational Testing Service. Students will provide feedback in the form of evaluations that are critical to the assessment of program activities
- At the end of each semester, the students will have an academic plan review session with the advisor of record, departmental dean and enrollment manager to provide a review of academic progress. A summary report will be provided to the provost
- A minimum of 85% of the cohort will persist from one semester to the next

All students must meet the criteria set forth in the pilot program and must make Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). A comprehensive review of each cohort of the pilot in reaching its goals, including recommendations for ongoing direction will be conducted at the end of each academic year and forwarded to UNC General Administration.