



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

October 21, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.  
Via Videoconference and UNC-TV Live Stream  
University of North Carolina System Office  
Center for School Leadership Development, Room 128  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

## AGENDA

- A-1. Approval of the Minutes of September 16, 2020 ..... Temple Sloan
- A-2. Academic Affairs Update ..... Kimberly van Noort
- A-3. UNC System Peer Study Presentation ..... David English
- A-4. Delegated Academic Program Actions ..... David English
- A-5. Comprehensive Articulation Agreement Annual Report ..... David English
- A-6. Comprehensive Articulation Agreement Technical Corrections ..... David English
- A-7. Outcomes of North Carolina Medical School Graduates ..... Hugh Tilson
- A-8. Pandemic Health Care Workforce Study ..... Hugh Tilson
- A-9. Adjourn

Additional Information Available:

- A-6. Comprehensive Articulation Agreement Technical Corrections Report
- A-7. AHEC Outcomes of NC Medical School Graduates Report



## DRAFT MINUTES

September 16, 2020 at 11:30 a.m.

Via Videoconference and UNC-TV Live Stream

University of North Carolina System Office

Center for School Leadership Development, Board Room

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

This meeting of the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs was presided over by Chair Temple Sloan. Participants joined by videoconference unless noted. The following committee members were present, constituting a quorum: Anna Spangler Nelson, Steven B. Long, (in-person), Jimmy D. Clark, (in-person), Thomas C. Goolsby (in-person), and Isaiah Green, (in-person, nonvoting member).

Chancellors participating were Franklin Gilliam, Todd Roberts, and Elwood Robinson. Chair of the UNC Faculty Assembly Timothy Ives joined.

Staff members participating included Kimberly van Noort, (in-person) and David English from the UNC System Office.

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## OPEN SESSION

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

Chair Sloan called the meeting to order at 11:33 a.m. on Wednesday, September 16, 2020.

Chair Sloan reminded all members of the committee of their duty under the State Government Ethics Act to avoid conflicts of interest and appearances of conflict of interest. He asked if there were any conflicts or appearances of conflict with respect to any matter coming before the committee. No members identified any conflicts at the time. Under the new amendments to the Open Meetings Act, all votes will be taken via roll call.

Chair Sloan called for a motion to approve the minutes of September 16, 2020.

**MOTION:** Resolved, that the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs approve the open minutes of September 16, 2020 as distributed.

**Motion:** Thomas C. Goolsby

**Motion:** carried

Roll Call Vote	
Clark	Yes
Goolsby	Yes
Long	Yes
Nelson	Yes
Sloan	Yes

## 2. Academic Affairs Update (Item A-2)

An update was provided from the Academic Affairs division on the UNC System's continued response to the impacts of COVID-19 on the Fall 2020 semester and beyond. This update included some discussion of the pandemic's impact on fall enrollment levels, with record enrollment at some institutions. President Peter Hans was scheduled to give expanded report at the Board of Governors meeting the following day.

## 3. HB 1043 COVID-19 Response Project (Item A-3)

Dr. van Noort presented an update on the utilization of the General Assembly's \$5 million non-recurring funding (HB 1043) to enhance the student experience in digital learning for the Summer and Fall 2020 semesters in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic. Those funds have been used to support three broad areas: a virtual student support initiative, a digital course enhancements initiative, and a faculty development initiative.

## 4. UNC System Degree Program Consolidation and Discontinuation (Item A-4)

The Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs reviewed and discussed degree program discontinuation and consolidation for the following:

### University of North Carolina at Pembroke

- Bachelor of Science in Biotechnology (CIP 26.1201)
- Bachelor of Science in Middle Grades Education (6-9) (CIP 13.1203)

**MOTION:** Resolved, that the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs approve the above request to discontinue and consolidate the degree programs and recommend approval to the Board of Governors for a vote through the consent agenda.

**Motion:** Anna S. Nelson

**Motion carried**

Roll Call Vote	
Clark	Yes
Goolsby	No
Long	No
Nelson	Yes
Sloan	Yes

## 5. Early College Graduates Report (Item A-5)

The Early College Graduates annual report was presented and reviewed by the committee. The report is submitted to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on behalf of the Board of Governors.

Chair Sloan called for a motion to approve the Early College Graduates Report.

**MOTION:** Resolved, that the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs approve the above request and recommend approval to the Board of Governors for a vote through the consent agenda.

**Motion:** Anna S. Nelson

**Motion carried**

## 6. Licensure Program Approvals (Item A-6)

The Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs reviewed and discussed licensure approvals for the following:

Webber International/Saint Andrew's University: an RN to BSN program

Troy University: Master's of Social Work

Northcentral University: Doctor of Philosophy in Marriage and Family Therapy

Johnson and Wales University -- Charlotte: limited license to teachout two existing locations in two programs

Chair Sloan called for a motion to approve the licensure applications.

**MOTION:** Resolved, that the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs approve the above licensure applications and recommend approval to the Board of Governors for a vote through the consent agenda.

**Motion:** Anna S. Nelson

**Motion: carried**

Roll Call Vote	
Clark	Yes
Goolsby	Yes
Long	Yes
Nelson	Yes
Sloan	Yes

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned 12:19 p.m.

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Steven B. Long, Secretary



## AGENDA ITEM

A-2. Academic Affairs Update..... Kimberly van Noort

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

## AGENDA ITEM

A-3. UNC System Peer Study Presentation ..... David English

**Situation:** The Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina System is responsible for making final determination on the list of peer institutions for each of the 16 constituent universities. These lists are updated periodically, with the two most recent revisions being made in 2011 and 2006. Revised peer lists have been developed and are proposed to remain in force through June 30, 2025.

**Background:** Each peer institution list provides a single collection of universities to be used for benchmarking and comparison. This list provides an objective point of review and departure for strategic planning. The peer institution lists are consulted for analyses of performance benchmarks, including but not limited to: tuition and fees, retention and graduation rates, degree production, faculty workload, staff salaries, space utilization, private fundraising and endowments, student financial aid, institutional revenues, and distribution of institutional expenses.

An internal working group at the UNC System Office, including staff from academic affairs, data and analytics, human resources, finance, and strategy and policy have been working since the summer of 2019 on developing a new list of institutional peers. This work is being done in close partnership with the individual constituent institutions, each of which identified a primary point of contact and an internal working group.

A multi-stage collaborative process was used to identify and evaluate potential peers for each institution. First, the UNC System Office constructed a dataset derived from the federal Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) system. Next, a cluster analyses was run for each institution, using six common variables and four elective variables. A final review and identification of peers was conducted by institutional and UNC System Office leadership.

**Assessment:** The quantitative approach taken for this update is more robust and consistent than previous peer studies. A proposed peer list has been identified for each of the 16 universities in the UNC System, and that information is provided for discussion. A vote is proposed for the November Board of Governors meeting.

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



# THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

## 2020 UNC Peer Institution Study

October 21, 2020

University of North Carolina System  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

# REPORT: 2020 Peer Study

## Introduction

When the University of North Carolina (UNC) was redesignated in 1972 to include all 16 public four-year institutions of higher education, one of the primary responsibilities given to the Board of Governors (BOG) was to “...foster the development of a well-planned and coordinated system of higher education.” One of the key activities the BOG oversees in the execution of this responsibility is periodically updating institutional peer lists. A peer list is a collection of similar institutions that can be used to facilitate objective and useful comparisons and benchmarking for the constituent universities.

The American higher education system is the largest and broadest in the world, with roughly 5,000 colleges and universities varying in size (from institutions with fewer than 100 students to those with nearly 70,000), mission (e.g. liberal arts, religious, special focus, comprehensive, research), control (public, private non-profit, private for-profit), and degree-granting authority (associate, baccalaureate, master’s, doctorate). Institutional missions vary by the student population served, and institutions differ in the amount of resources they have available to them.

Given the breadth and diversity of institutions in the United States, it is impracticable and unproductive to compare any given college or university against all other institutions of higher education. As such, institutions and governing boards have relied upon the identification of smaller sets of institutions to provide a more focused and concise perspective for comparisons. These peer lists provide institutions with a single collection of universities to be used for benchmarking and comparison, and provides an objective point of review and departure for institutional strategic planning.

The UNC System mirrors the larger tapestry of higher education in American with regards to the diversity of its institutions. Unlike many other systems of higher education, the UNC System is comprised of a heterogeneous mix of institutions that differ in mission, size, degree focus, and student body served. As such, the historical use of peer sets has allowed the UNC Board of Governors to examine the positioning and performance of each constituent institution within a group of similarly situated colleges and universities. This facilitates more accurate and more effective assessments and comparisons.

Within the UNC System, the Board of Governors has responsibility for reviewing and approving all institutional peer lists. The peer institution lists have historically been consulted for analyses, including, but not limited to: tuition and fees, retention and graduation rates, degree production, research productivity, space utilization, private fundraising and endowments, student financial aid, institutional revenues, and the distribution of institutional expenses.

The UNC System has historically updated peer institutions roughly every five years, with the two most recent studies occurring in 2006 and 2011. A great deal has changed for both American higher education in general and for UNC System institutions specifically since 2011. As such, the 2020 Peer Study is critically important to ensure that each constituent university has a current and accurate peer set in place.

The remainder of this report provides an overview of the conceptual approach taken in development of the peer sets, the methodological approach that was applied, and a discussion of recommended uses and time limits for the peer sets. The report concludes with the recommended peer lists for each constituent institution.



## **REPORT: 2020 Peer Study**

### **Conceptual Approach**

The UNC System has used a variety of approaches in conducting previous peer studies. The 2006 peer study was outsourced to Dennis Jones, President of the National Center for Higher Management Systems (NCHEMS). This process helped ensure an objective and consistent perspective, but lacked documentation on the specific details considered. The 2011 peer study was conducted internally, but quantitative analysis was delegated to the individual institutions. This allowed for a better understanding of the deliberations, but resulted in a less consistent approach, as larger institutions with more robust institutional research operations were able to conduct more sophisticated modeling than smaller institutions. Previous peer studies have also varied in their intended usage; some were designed to identify similar institutions for outcomes evaluations, while some were constructed to identify universities that were aspirational. At times it was unclear which was of these was the driving objective.

The 2020 peer study has been constructed so that the analyses are objective, consistent, and clearly understood. The work has also been clearly focused on identifying peer sets that are composed of realistic and accurate sets of institutions that can be used for current benchmarking and outcomes analyses. This has been a highly collaborative and consultative process, with responsibility shared by the UNC System Office and the individual institutions. To that end, each UNC System university was asked to identify one individual to serve as the primary point of contact who had the institutional standing and knowledge to guide their campus process. Additionally, each university established an internal working group composed of individuals to participate in the working process. This typically included individuals from Academic Affairs, Institutional Research, Finance, Human Resources, and representatives of Faculty and Staff Councils and Senates. The UNC System Office developed a parallel internal steering group led by Academic Affairs, including representatives from Data and Analytics, Strategy and Policy, Finance, Human Resources, the chief of staff, and the chief operating officer. Identification of the methodological approach, variable identification, and ultimate peer selection was conducted in a collaborative manner, involving individuals from the UNC System Office and each constituent university.

### **Methodological Approach**

A guiding objective of the 2020 peer study was to employ a quantitative and data-driven approach to identify institutional peers that would be consistent across institutions. To that end, and as opposed to previous iterations of peer studies, UNC System Office staff from Data and Analytics conducted all quantitative analyses for the 16 constituent universities. This ensured a common approach was used in the consideration of peers for all institutions, and also helped to ameliorate the differences in resources that exist across the constituent institutions.

The first step in the process was to identify a methodology. Following discussions, cluster analysis was selected as the quantitative approach, as it allows for institutions to be compared simultaneously across a variety of variables. Next, individual variables were identified for use in the cluster analysis. A cluster analysis was then run for each institution, and output lists were provided to the institutions for review. Institutions were allowed to identify colleges and universities that they felt should be included on their peer list, but which were not included in the cluster analysis. This typically included institutions for which there was a historical connection on peer studies or similar academic focus. Institutions subsequently provided a list of proposed peers, which were reviewed by the UNC System Office steering committee. A final proposed list was then negotiated by each institution and the UNC System Office.

## REPORT: 2020 Peer Study

### *Variable Identification*

Potential variables were identified by staff from the UNC System Office and the individual institutions, and were ultimately approved by the UNC System Office steering group. Given that the desired objective of the peer study was to identify lists that could be used for outcomes assessment, the majority of the variables identified were measures of institution resources and mission. Variables fall into one of three broad categories: those that help understand an institution's mission and positioning (e.g. academic program mix, undergraduate enrollment as a percent of total enrollment); the study body an institution serves (e.g. total student enrollment, percent of undergraduate students receiving a Pell Grant); and institutional resources (e.g. percent of faculty that are full-time, instructional expenditures per student FTE). It was decided that ten variables would be used in each cluster analysis. Of those ten, six would be common to all institutions, and four would be selected by the individual institution in consultation with the UNC System Office. A full list of the variables is provided below.

### Variables Used in the Cluster Analysis

- 12-month Enrollment Full-Time Equivalent (FTE), (*Core Variable*)
- Percent of Undergraduate Students Receiving a Pell Grant, (*Core Variable*)
- Undergraduate Enrollment as a Percent of Total Enrollment, (*Core Variable*)
- Academic Program Mix, (*Core Variable*)
- Percent of Faculty Who are Full-Time, (*Core Variable*)
- Instructional Expenditures per Student FTE, (*Core Variable*)
- Percent of Undergraduate Students Who are Part-Time, (*Elective Variable*)
- Percent of Undergraduate Students Who are Transfers, (*Elective Variable*)
- Percent of Undergraduate Students Who are 25 and older, (*Elective Variable*)
- Percent Underrepresented Minority Student Enrollment, (*Elective Variable*)
- ACT Composite Score 75<sup>th</sup> Percentile (*Elective Variable*)
- Percent Five-Year Change in FTE Enrollment (*Elective Variable*)
- Percent of Faculty Who are Tenured or Tenure-Track (*Elective Variable*)
- Average Full Professor Salary (*Elective Variable*)
- Research Expenditures per FTE (*Elective Variable*)
- Public Service Expenditures per FTE (*Elective Variable*)
- Core Operational Revenue per FTE (Tuition & Fees – Discounts & Allowances, + State Appropriations), (*Elective Variable*)
- Endowment per Student FTE, (*Elective Variable*)

### *Cluster Analysis*

The analysis started with all institutions who reported data to the U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) as a basis for selection. As UNC is a system of four-year public universities, the analysis excluded private institutions and institutions that do not offer bachelor's degrees. Of the ten variables evaluated, five were pre-determined, one was semi-custom, and four were selected by the institution. Using these ten variables, analysts assessed the distribution of values across the aforementioned list of public universities. In cases where an institution had a missing response for one of the ten variables, that institution was removed from the evaluation dataset. There are instances where it might be desirable to include a missing response, which can be evaluated in a future iteration. All variables' values were scaled to prevent skewing the results towards those variables with large values. Depending on the distribution of values, steps were taken to normalize/standardize the spread within each variable. Additional data manipulations were conducted, particularly for the financial variables, to correct for skewness in the distribution. Rather than identifying and removing

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institutions with single-variable outliers prior to clustering, a large k-means cluster analysis was used to identify outliers in the data. Using this process, outliers ended up in clusters by themselves. Once identified, outlier institutions were removed from the evaluation dataset, and the remaining institutions were re-standardized. A new k-means cluster analysis was run using an appropriate k-based value based on model measures and other key assessment criteria, such as the number and geographic diversity of in-cluster institutions. A final list of in-cluster institutions was produced for institutional review and discussion. A single peer list was identified for each institution, with between 10 and 12 institutions included. Given the focus on outcomes benchmarking, inclusion of aspirational and private peers was limited compared to previous peer studies.

### Recommended Uses and Timeline

The proposed peer sets were developed first and foremost for current benchmarking and comparisons. Accordingly, it is recommended that these peer lists serve as the basis of analysis for outcomes assessment on areas such as student retention rates, graduation rates, degree production, research productivity, and other relevant metrics, particularly those associated with the UNC System Strategic Plan, *Higher Expectations*.

In the past, the peer sets have served as the primary comparison group for faculty salaries. This has limited the efficacy of those comparisons, as the peer sets do not represent a full competitive employment market. As such, moving forward, peer sets will not be used as the primary source of analysis for faculty salaries. The UNC System Office is currently developing a Faculty Salary Analysis Tool (FacSAT), which will serve as a more robust and comprehensive platform for conducting faculty salary analyses in the future.

Finally, there were significant concerns that the peer sets have not been updated in nine years. As such, the new peer sets will be used between the date adopted by the BOG and June 30, 2025. Therefore, the next peer study will be conducted in the 2024-2025 academic year, with an implementation date of July 1, 2025.

### Proposed Peers

The following pages contain the proposed peer sets for each of the UNC System constituent universities. For each peer institution the following information is provided: name of institution, state the institution is located in, whether or not the peer was identified through the cluster analysis, whether or not the peer was included on the 2011 list, and whether or not the peer was included on the 2006 list. Some lists are more stable across studies than others, which reflects a fairly mature institutional comparison set. Other lists have changed dramatically, given either growth and development of the individual constituent institution or similar changes in the comparison set. Similar to previous peer studies, the UNC-Chapel Hill list includes ten public institutions and five private institutions; the UNC School of the Arts list includes six public institutions and six private institutions; the UNC Asheville list contains ten public institutions and two private institutions; and the Elizabeth City State list includes ten public institutions and one private institution. For those universities, the private institutions will factor into analyses of outcomes measures such as retention and graduation rates, but do not factor into considerations of tuition and fees.

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### Appalachian State University

Institution	State	Cluster Analysis	2011 Peer	2006 Peer
California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo	CA	Yes	No	No
Grand Valley State University	MI	Yes	No	No
Bowling Green State University-Main Campus	OH	Yes	Yes	Yes
Miami University-Oxford	OH	Yes	Yes	Yes
Indiana University of Pennsylvania-Main Campus	PA	Yes	Yes	No
West Chester University of Pennsylvania	PA	Yes	Yes	Yes
College of Charleston	SC	Yes	Yes	Yes
James Madison University	VA	Yes	Yes	Yes
Western Washington University	WA	Yes	Yes	Yes
Western Michigan University	MI	No	No	No

10 Total Peers

7 Peers were included on 2011 List

6 Peers were included on 2006 List

1 Peer Off-Cluster

0 Private Peers

### East Carolina University

Institution	State	Cluster Analysis	2011 Peer	2006 Peer
Illinois State University	IL	Yes	No	No
Ball State University	IN	Yes	No	No
Central Michigan University	MI	Yes	Yes	No
Western Michigan University	MI	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of Nevada-Las Vegas	NV	Yes	No	No
Utah State University	UT	Yes	No	No
Washington State University	WA	Yes	No	No
Northern Arizona University	AZ	No	No	No
Florida Atlantic University	FL	No	No	No
Ohio University-Main Campus	OH	No	Yes	Yes
Kent State University at Kent	OH	No	No	No

11 Total Peers

3 Peers were included on 2011 List

2 Peers were included on 2006 List

4 Peers Off-Cluster

0 Private Peers

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### Elizabeth City State University

Institution	State	Cluster Analysis	2011 Peer	2006 Peer
Bowie State University	MD	Yes	Yes	No
Coppin State University	MD	Yes	No	No
Mississippi Valley State University	MS	Yes	No	No
Lincoln University	PA	Yes	No	No
South Carolina State University	SC	Yes	No	No
Norfolk State University	VA	Yes	Yes	No
Virginia State University	VA	Yes	Yes	No
Florida Memorial University	FA	No	No	No
Frostburg State University	MD	No	Yes	No
Delta State University	MS	No	No	No
Christopher Newport University	VA	No	Yes	Yes

11 Total Peers

5 Peers were included on 2011 List

1 Peer was included on 2006 List

4 Peers Off-Cluster

1 Private Peer

### Fayetteville State University

Institution	State	Cluster Analysis	2011 Peer	2006 Peer
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff	AR	Yes	No	No
Fort Valley State University	GA	Yes	No	No
Savannah State University	GA	Yes	No	No
Grambling State University	LA	Yes	Yes	No
Alcorn State University	MS	Yes	No	No
Prairie View A&M University	TX	Yes	No	No
Norfolk State University	VA	Yes	Yes	No
Virginia State University	VA	Yes	Yes	No
Alabama State University	AL	No	No	No
Lincoln University	PA	No	No	No

10 Total Peers

3 Peers were included on 2011 List

0 Peers were included on 2006 List

2 Peers Off-Cluster

0 Private Peers

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### North Carolina A & T State University

Institution	State	Cluster Analysis*	2011 Peer	2006 Peer
Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University	FL	Yes	Yes	Yes
The University of Louisiana at Lafayette	LA	Yes	Yes	No
University of Maine	ME	Yes	Yes	Yes
Montana State University	MT	Yes	No	Yes
New Mexico State University-Main Campus	NM	Yes	Yes	No
South Dakota State University	SD	Yes	Yes	Yes
The University of Texas at El Paso	TX	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wichita State University	KS	Yes	No	No
North Dakota State University-Main Campus	ND	Yes	No	Yes
University of Southern Mississippi	MS	No	No	No
Old Dominion University	VA	No	Yes	No

11 Total Peers

7 Peers were included on 2011 List

6 Peers were included on 2006 List

2 Peers Off-Cluster

0 Private Peers

\* Two cluster models were used to develop NC A&T's proposed list.

### North Carolina Central University

Institution	State	Cluster Analysis	2011 Peer	2006 Peer
Alabama State University	AL	Yes	No	No
Delaware State University	DE	Yes	No	No
Bowie State University	MD	Yes	No	No
Morgan State University	MD	Yes	Yes	No
Jackson State University	MS	Yes	Yes	No
Tennessee State University	TN	Yes	Yes	Yes
Texas A&M University-Kingsville	TX	Yes	No	No
Norfolk State University	VA	Yes	No	No
Virginia State University	VA	Yes	No	No
New Jersey City University	NJ	No	Yes	Yes

10 Total Peers

4 Peers were included on 2011 List

2 Peers were included on 2006 List

1 Peer Off-Cluster

0 Private Peers

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### North Carolina State University

Institution	State	Cluster Analysis	2011 Peer	2006 Peer
University of Arizona	AZ	Yes	Yes	No
University of California-Davis	CA	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of Florida	FL	Yes	Yes	Yes
Georgia Institute of Technology-Main Campus	GA	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	IL	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of Maryland-College Park	MD	Yes	Yes	Yes
Michigan State University	MI	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rutgers University-New Brunswick	NJ	Yes	Yes	No
Texas A&M University-College Station	TX	Yes	Yes	Yes
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	VA	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of Wisconsin at Madison	WI	Yes	Yes	Yes
Purdue University-Main Campus	IN	Yes	Yes	Yes

12 Total Peers

12 Peers were included on 2011 List

10 Peers were included on 2006 List

0 Peers Off-Cluster

0 Private Peers

### University of North Carolina at Asheville

Institution	State	Cluster Analysis	2011 Peer	2006 Peer
St. Mary's College of Maryland	MD	Yes	Yes	Yes
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts	MA	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of Minnesota-Morris	MN	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ramapo College of New Jersey	NJ	Yes	Yes	Yes
SUNY College at Geneseo	NY	Yes	Yes	Yes
SUNY at Purchase College	NY	Yes	Yes	No
Christopher Newport University	VA	Yes	Yes	No
University of Mary Washington	VA	Yes	No	Yes
The University of Virginia's College at Wise	VA	Yes	No	No
New College of Florida	FL	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>The College of Wooster</i>	<i>OH</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Furman University</i>	<i>SC</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>

12 Total Peers

9 Peers were included on 2011 List

8 Peers were included on 2006 List

2 Peers Off-Cluster

2 Private Peers

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### University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Institution	State	Cluster Analysis	2011 Peer	2006 Peer
University of California-Berkeley	CA	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of California-Los Angeles	CA	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of Florida	CA	Yes	No	Yes
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	IL	Yes	No	Yes
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor	MI	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of Pittsburg-Pittsburgh Campus	PA	Yes	Yes	Yes
The University of Texas at Austin	TX	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of Washington-Seattle Campus	WA	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of Wisconsin-Madison	WI	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of Virginia-Main Campus	VA	No	Yes	Yes
Emory University	GA	No	No	Yes
Northwestern University	IL	No	Yes	No
Johns Hopkins University	MD	No	Yes	Yes
Duke University	NC	No	Yes	Yes
Vanderbilt University	TN	No	No	No

15 Total Peers

11 Peers were included on 2011 List

13 Peers were included on 2006 List

6 Peers Off-Cluster

5 Private Peers

### University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Institution	State	Cluster Analysis	2011 Peer	2006 Peer
Northern Arizona University	AZ	Yes	No	No
San Diego State University	CA	Yes	No	Yes
Florida Atlantic University	FL	Yes	Yes	No
University of Nevada-Las Vegas	NV	Yes	Yes	Yes
Portland State University	OR	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of Houston	TX	Yes	No	No
The University of Texas at San Antonio	TX	Yes	Yes	Yes
George Mason University	VA	Yes	No	Yes
Old Dominion University	VA	Yes	Yes	No
Indiana University-Purdue University-Indianapolis	IN	No	No	No
University of Massachusetts-Lowell	MA	No	Yes	Yes
University of Maryland-Baltimore County	MD	No	No	Yes

12 Total Peers

6 Peers were included on 2011 List

7 Peers were included on 2006 List

3 Peers Off-Cluster

0 Private Peers



## REPORT: 2020 Peer Study

### University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Institution	State	Cluster Analysis	2011 Peer	2006 Peer
Northern Arizona University	AZ	Yes	No	No
San Diego State University	CA	Yes	No	No
Florida Atlantic University	FL	Yes	No	Yes
Portland State University	OR	Yes	Yes	Yes
Texas State University	TX	Yes	No	No
The University of Texas at San Antonio	TX	Yes	No	No
University of Massachusetts-Boston	MA	No	No	No
University of Nevada-Las Vegas	NV	No	No	No
University of Memphis	TN	No	Yes	No
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	WI	No	No	Yes

10 Total Peers

2 Peers were included on 2011 List

3 Peers were included on 2006 List

4 Peers Off-Cluster

0 Private Peers

### University of North Carolina at Pembroke

Institution	State	Cluster Analysis	2011 Peer	2006 Peer
Northwestern State University of Louisiana	LA	Yes	No	No
Frostburg State University	MD	Yes	Yes	No
SUNY Buffalo State	NY	Yes	No	No
Francis Marion University	SC	Yes	Yes	No
Lander University	SC	Yes	No	No
Austin Peay State University	TN	Yes	Yes	Yes
Virginia State University	VA	Yes	No	No
University of Wisconsin-Parkside	WI	Yes	No	No
Middle Georgia State University	GA	Yes	No	No
Eastern New Mexico University-Main Campus	NM	No	Yes	No
Northeastern State University	OK	No	Yes	Yes

11 Total Peers

5 Peers were included on 2011 List

2 Peers were included on 2006 List

2 Peers Off-Cluster

0 Private Peers

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### University of North Carolina at Wilmington

Institution	State	Cluster Analysis	2011 Peer	2006 Peer
California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo	CA	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of California-Santa Cruz	CA	Yes	No	No
University of Maryland-Baltimore County	MD	Yes	Yes	No
University of Massachusetts-Lowell	MA	Yes	No	No
Rowan University	NJ	Yes	Yes	Yes
Binghamton University	NY	Yes	Yes	No
Ohio University-Main Campus	OH	Yes	No	No
University of Rhode Island	RI	Yes	No	No
The University of Montana	MT	No	No	No
University of South Dakota	SD	No	No	No
College of William and Mary	VA	No	Yes	No
Western Washington University	WA	No	Yes	Yes

12 Total Peers

6 Peers were included on 2011 List

3 Peers were included on 2006 List

4 Peers Off-Cluster

0 Private Peers

### University of North Carolina School of the Arts

Institution	State	Cluster Analysis	2011 Peer	2006 Peer
Massachusetts College of Art and Design	MA	Yes	Yes	Yes
SUNY at Purchase College	NY	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of California-Los Angeles	CA	No	Yes	No
<i>California Institute of the Arts</i>	CA	No	No	Yes
<i>Savannah College of Art and Design</i>	GA	No	Yes	Yes
Indiana University-Bloomington	IN	No	No	No
<i>Berklee College of Music</i>	MA	No	No	No
<i>The Juilliard School</i>	NY	No	Yes	Yes
<i>New York University</i>	NY	No	Yes	No
University of Cincinnati-Main Campus	OH	No	Yes	No
<i>Carnegie Mellon University</i>	PA	No	Yes	No
The University of Texas at Austin	TX	No	Yes	No

12 Total Peers

9 Peers were included on 2011 List

5 Peers were included on 2006 List

10 Peers Off-Cluster

6 Private Peers

## REPORT: 2020 Peer Study

### Western Carolina University

Institution	State	Cluster Analysis	2011 Peer	2006 Peer
University of Central Arkansas	AR	Yes	No	No
University of Colorado-Colorado Springs	CO	Yes	No	No
University of North Florida	FL	Yes	No	No
Indiana State University	IN	Yes	No	No
Western Kentucky University	KY	Yes	No	Yes
Ferris State University	MI	Yes	No	No
Saint Cloud State University	MN	Yes	Yes	No
University of Central Oklahoma	OK	Yes	No	No
The University of Tennessee-Chattanooga	TN	Yes	No	No
Central Washington University	WA	Yes	No	No
Eastern Washington University	WA	Yes	No	No
Western Illinois University	IL	No	Yes	No

12 Total Peers

2 Peers were included on 2011 List

1 Peer was included on 2006 List

1 Peer Off-Cluster

0 Private Peers

### Winston-Salem State University

Institution	State	Cluster Analysis	2011 Peer	2006 Peer
Alabama State University	AL	Yes	No	No
Delaware State University	DE	Yes	Yes	No
Eastern Illinois University	IL	Yes	No	No
Western Illinois University	IL	Yes	No	No
Coppin State University	MD	Yes	No	No
University of Maryland Eastern Shore	MD	Yes	Yes	Yes
SUNY College at Potsdam	NY	Yes	No	No
Francis Marion University	SC	Yes	Yes	No
South Carolina State University	SC	Yes	No	No
Tennessee State University	TN	Yes	Yes	No
Norfolk State University	VA	Yes	Yes	No
Virginia State University	VA	Yes	Yes	No

12 Total Peers

6 Peers were included on 2011 List

1 Peer was included on 2006 List

0 Peers Off-Cluster

0 Private Peers

## AGENDA ITEM

A-4. Delegated Academic Program Actions ..... David English

**Situation:** The Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina (UNC) System is charged with “determining the functions, educational activities, and academic programs of the constituent institutions.” G.S. 116-11(3). Section 400.1.1[R] of the UNC Policy Manual, Regulation for Academic Program Planning and Evaluation, further defines the academic program actions that are delegated to staff at the UNC System Office. This report provides information on the academic program actions taken by UNC System Office staff since the last meeting of the Board of Governors.

**Background:** As this is the first iteration of this report, it covers the period of time dating back to the July, 2020 Board of Governors meeting. Between that meeting and September 30, 2020, the following academic program actions have been taken:

Type of Change	Programs Impacted
Mode of Delivery Changes:	4 programs authorized for new online delivery
Off-Site Location Changes:	4 programs authorized for new off-site locations
CIP, Degree, Title Changes:	4 programs authorized for CIP, degree, or title changes
Specialty Code Changes:	39 programs authorized for specialty code changes

**Assessment:** The academic program actions listed in this report were approved in accordance with the provisions of Section 400.1.1[R] of the UNC Policy Manual.

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

### UNC System: Delegated Academic Program Actions

#### Mode of Delivery Changes

	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Program Title</b>	<b>CIP</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>Date</b>
1.	FSU	BA	English	23.0101	Online	07/31/2020
2.	FSU	BA	History	54.0101	Online	07/31/2020
3.	FSU	BA	Political Science	45.1001	Online	07/31/2020
4.	NCCU	BS	Environment and Geographic Sciences	30.0104	Online	09/14/2020

#### Off-Site Instruction Changes

	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Program Title</b>	<b>CIP</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Date</b>
1.	ECU	BS	Industrial Design and Logistics	15.1501	Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point Havelock, NC	45%	07/31/2020
2.	ECU	BS	Industrial Technology	15.0612	Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point Havelock, NC	45%	07/31/2020
3.	ECU	BS	Industrial Technology	15.0612	Wake Technical Community College, Southern Wake Campus	45%	07/31/2020
4.	ECU	MSA	School Administration	13.0401	Central Middle School Gatesville, NC	25-49%	07/31/2020

### CIP, Degree, and Title Changes

	Order	Institution	Degree	Program Title	CIP	Date
1.	Old	FSU	BS	Forensic Science	43.0106	08/06/2020
1.	New	FSU	BS	Forensic Science	43.0406	
2.	Old	FSU	MS	Nursing: Patient Safety and Quality	51.3801	08/18/2020
2.	New	FSU	MSN	Patient Safety and Quality	51.3801	
3.	Old	NCCU	BS	Kinesiology and Recreation Administration	31.0501	09/14/2020
3.	New	NCCU	BS	Kinesiology	31.0501	
4.	Old	UNCG	MS	Sustainability and Environment	03.3301	08/25/2020
4.	New	UNCG	MS	Sustainability and Environment	03.0103	

### Specialty Code Changes

	Institution	Degree	Program Title	CIP	Date
1.	ECU	BS	Family and Consumer Sciences Education	13.1308	08/17/2020
2.	ECU	BA	Foreign Languages and Literatures	16.0101	08/17/2020
3.	ECU	BS	History, Secondary Education	13.1318	08/17/2020
4.	ECU	MLS	Library Science	25.0101	08/17/2020
5.	ECU	MAED	Mathematics Education	13.1311	08/17/2020
6.	ECU	BS	Mathematics, Secondary Education	13.1311	08/17/2020
7.	ECU	MAED	Reading and Literacy Education	13.1315	08/17/2020
8.	ECU	BS	Science Education	13.1316	08/17/2020
9.	ECU	MAED	Science Education	13.1316	08/17/2020
10.	ECU	MAT	Master of Arts in Teaching	13.1299	08/20/2020
11.	ECU	MAED	Special Education	13.1011	08/20/2020
12.	ECSU	BS	Biology	26.0101	08/20/2020
13.	NCCU	MA	Career Counseling and Placement	13.1102	09/04/2020
14.	NCCU	MS	Communication Sciences and Disorders	51.0201	09/04/2020
15.	NCCU	MA	Educational Technology	13.0501	09/04/2020
16.	NCCU	MLS	Library Science	25.0101	09/04/2020
17.	NCCU	MA	School Counseling	13.1101	09/04/2020
18.	NCCU	BA	Theatre and Dance	50.0101	09/04/2020

19.	UNCC	MED	Curriculum and Instruction	13.0301	07/31/2020
20.	UNCC	BA	French	16.0901	07/31/2020
21.	UNCC	BA	German	16.0501	07/31/2020
22.	UNCC	MAT	Master of Arts in Teaching	13.1299	07/31/2020
23.	UNCC	BA	Mathematics	27.0101	07/31/2020
24.	UNCC	BS	Mathematics	27.0101	07/31/2020
25.	UNCC	MED	Reading Education	13.1315	07/31/2020
26.	UNCC	BA	Spanish	16.0905	07/31/2020
27.	UNCC	MS	Mathematics	27.0101	08/23/2020
28.	UNCW	BA	Geography	45.0701	08/24/2020
29.	UNCW	MAT	Master of Arts in Teaching	13.1299	08/14/2020
30.	WCU	MS	Communication Sciences and Disorders	51.0201	08/14/2020
31.	WCU	BSED	Mathematics, Secondary Education	13.1311	08/14/2020
32.	WCU	BSED	Middle Grades Education	13.1203	08/14/2020
33.	WCU	BSED	Science Education	13.1316	08/14/2020
34.	WCU	BSED	Social Sciences, Secondary Education	13.1318	08/14/2020
35.	WCU	MSW	Social Work	44.0701	08/14/2020
36.	WCU	BSED	Spanish, Secondary Education	13.1330	08/14/2020
37.	WCU	PSYD	Doctor of Psychology in Health Service Psychology	42.2801	08/14/2020
38.	WCU	MAED	Comprehensive Education	13.0101	08/20/2020
39.	WCU	MAT	Master of Arts in Teaching: Comprehensive Education	13.1299	08/20/2020

## AGENDA ITEM

A-5. Comprehensive Articulation Agreement Annual Report ..... David English

**Situation:** The revised *Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA)* was signed by the UNC Board of Governors and the State Board of Community Colleges on February 21, 2014. The CAA was implemented in the Fall 2014 semester.

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

**Background:** This report summarizes ongoing efforts to implement and fulfill the CAA. The Transfer Advisory Committee (TAC) is committed to providing students and institutions with information and strategies to support both associate degree and baccalaureate degree completion. Information is provided on NCCCS transfer student enrollment and academic performance, efforts to improve transfer efficiency and effectiveness, status of compliance visits, and recommendations for future actions.

**Assessment:** The annual report demonstrates compliance with NCGS 116-11(10c). Third-round compliance visits are underway, and thus far all institutions have been found to be in compliance with the provisions of the CAA. There was a slight decline in the total number of NCCCS transfer students in fall 2019, which corresponds with enrollment trends. Students who obtain the Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degree prior to transferring continue to exhibit stronger academic performance following their first year at a UNC System institution. The TAC also identifies a number of areas of recommendation, including staffing support; technological and operational improvements, such as common-course numbering; a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusivity in student transfer; and a continued partnership with groups such as the NCSU Belk Center for Community College Leadership and Research, myFutureNC, and the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities.

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



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

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

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

November 1, 2020

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

**ANNUAL REPORT ON THE *COMPREHENSIVE ARTICULATION AGREEMENT* TO  
THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

**NOVEMBER 1, 2020**

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

**SUMMARY**

The revised *Comprehensive Articulation Agreement* (CAA) was signed by the UNC Board of Governors and the State Board of Community Colleges on February 21, 2014. The CAA was implemented in the fall 2014 semester. To date, the Transfer Advisory Committee (TAC) has completed two full rounds of compliance visits and is just beginning their third round. There have yet to be any reports of noncompliance by any institution.

The University of North Carolina (UNC) System and the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) continue to work to enhance educational opportunities for NCCCS students by improving transfer administration, utilizing data to assess transfer effectiveness, and facilitating communication between respective constituent institutions. The UNC Transfer Student website, the College Foundation of North Carolina, and published baccalaureate degree plans (BDPs) from each university provide access to details that students need to make informed choices when selecting institutions, degree programs, and courses. Online data dashboards containing transfer information for each community college and university, as well as aggregate information for the two systems, improves transparency and accountability through public access to transfer and performance data. Both systems of public higher education in the state of North Carolina continue to work together to develop and support degree-mapping tools to facilitate informed and efficient transfer.

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

The most recent version of the 2014 CAA, complete with appendices, is available at [https://myapps.northcarolina.edu/transfertoolbox/download/5/caa/619/caa\\_2020-tac-approved-08-28-20.pdf](https://myapps.northcarolina.edu/transfertoolbox/download/5/caa/619/caa_2020-tac-approved-08-28-20.pdf)

## **CAA PROGRESS - 2020**

### **Transfer Enrollment and Performance Data**

The UNC System data dashboard provides essential data on transfer students to include enrollment trends, credit hours and degree transfers, graduation rates, grade point average, and performance in disciplines after transfer. Within the dashboard, data for individual community colleges and universities are available for deeper analysis. The UNC System data dashboard continues to be a vital resource in determining whether the 2014 CAA is having the desired impact on transfer student success and whether the changes in policy and practice put in place because of the CAA and the associated compliance site visits are achieving the desired positive outcomes. This information is critical to the decision-making process for both individual community colleges and universities, as well as for the two systems. Students who entered the NCCCS in fall 2014 are under the protections of the 2014 CAA, and an increasing number continue to transfer to the UNC System as of fall 2019. This increasing number of transfer students who possess the protections of the 2014 CAA and their successful transfer to the state universities give a clear indication of the value of the 2014 CAA to students.

### **Transfer Student Enrollment**

There continues to be a steady increase in the enrollment of NCCCS transfer students into UNC System institutions. This increase is a clear result of the revised CAA, proper advising, and the strong collaboration between the UNC System and NCCCS. Data from fall 2018 and fall 2019 indicate slight decreases in associate degree completion and in overall transfer enrollment. Since the majority of community college students do not complete their associate degrees in two years, the TAC anticipates an increasing trend in associate degree completion prior to transfer and in overall transfer enrollment as students, advisors, and institutions continue to gain a better understanding of the protections of the CAA and the wide-ranging benefits of degree completion.

Data illustrate a slight decrease in the number of NCCCS students transferring to the UNC System, decreasing from 11,160 in fall 2018 to 10,756 in fall 2019. This represents a decrease of 404 students or 3.6% (see Figure 1); however, the overall trend since the institution of the 2014 CAA has been markedly positive.

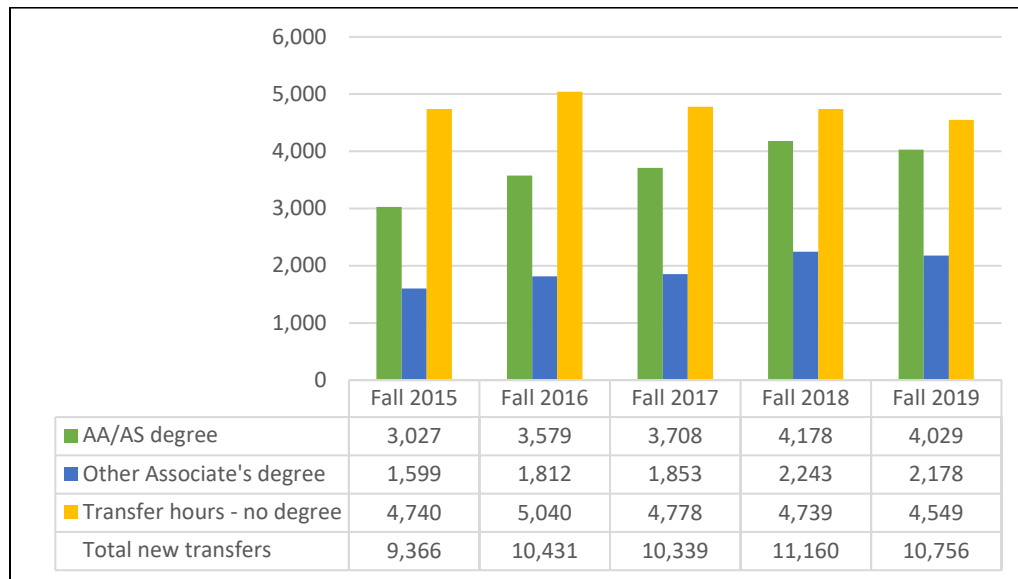
The number of NCCCS students transferring with a completed associate degree also dropped slightly (see Figure 2) during the past year. In fall 2018, the total number of NCCCS students transferring with a completed degree (AA/AS or any other associate degree) was 6,421 compared to 6,207 students in fall 2019. This change represents a decrease of 214 students or 3.3% (see Figure 2), but it is only the first year since the implementation of the 2014 CAA in which we have seen any decrease at all.

Conversely, the number of NCCCS students who transfer to UNC System institutions with transfer credits but no degree has declined since the implementation of the revised CAA. In fall 2016, 5040 NCCCS students transferred before completing an associate degree compared to 4549 non-degree-earning students in fall 2019 (see Figure 1). From fall 2016 to fall 2019, this number has decreased every year, and the overall decrease in the number of students transferring with credits but without a degree over this period totals 491 students or 9.7%. This decrease supports the sustained emphasis on degree completion at the community college level prior to transfer to a senior institution. The increase in

overall transfer numbers and the increase in degree completers prior to transfer illustrate the continued positive impact of the 2014 CAA on transfer student success in North Carolina.

Figure 1

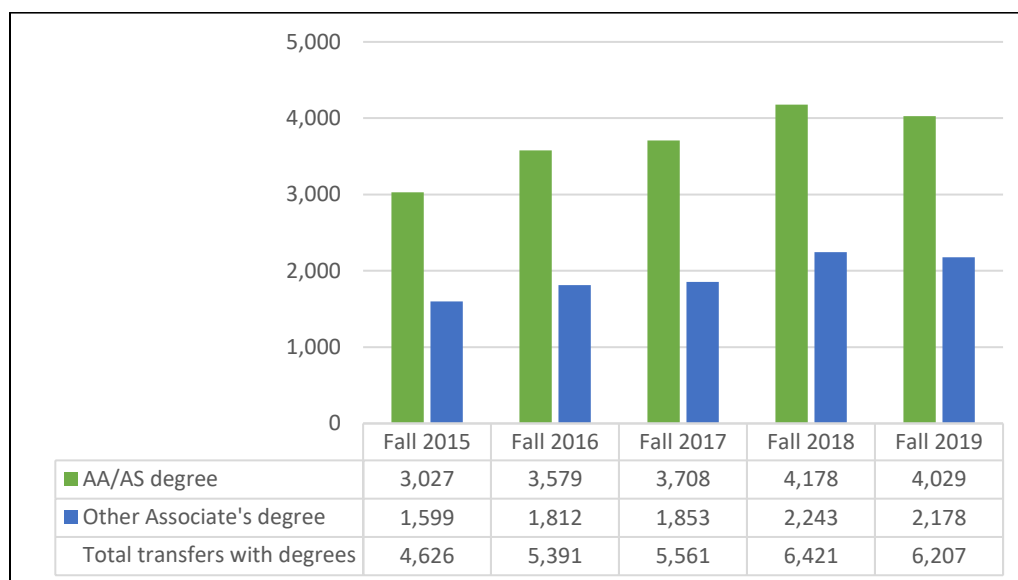
*New NCCCS Student Enrollment in UNC System Institutions*



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

Figure 2

*NCCCS Student Transfers with Completed Associate Degree*



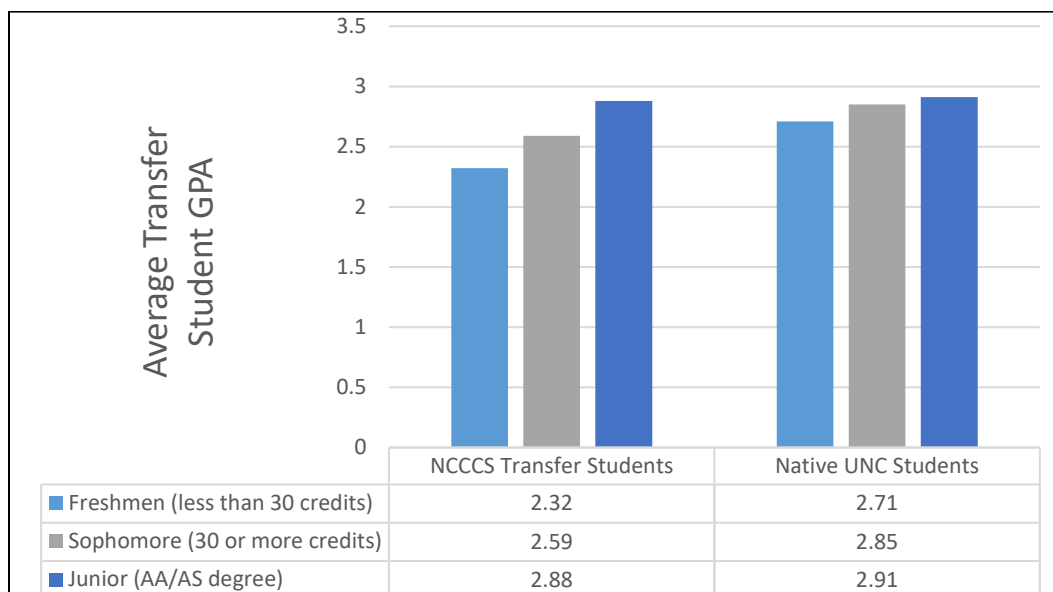
*Note: Data within Figure 2 include the most current information posted on the UNC public dashboards and may differ slightly from previously reported information.*

## Transfer Performance Data

The most recent data on transfer student performance (2019-2020 data for students who transferred in fall 2018) continue to indicate a strong correlation between degree and credit-hour completion prior to transfer and academic performance at the university (see Figure 3). With regard to first-year performance, students who transfer from an NCCCS institution into a UNC System institution with fewer than 30 completed credit hours significantly lag behind those who started at a university as freshmen. This is also true of students who transfer before completing an associate degree but have more than 30 credit hours of transferable coursework: The overall first-year student GPA of non-degree-earning transfer students with more than 30 completed hours is lower compared to their native UNC System sophomore counterparts. Students who complete the associate degree prior to transfer and matriculate as juniors, however, perform comparably with native UNC System juniors. These results confirm the foundational principle of the CAA that transfer students who complete the associate degree prior to transfer will perform as well as students who began their higher education journeys at UNC System institutions.

Figure 3

*2019 Transfer Student Performance Grade Point Average After First Year*



*Note: Data indicated in Figure 3 are reflective of first-year performance at UNC institutions for transfer students. This measurement was taken during fall 2019 to spring 2020 for the cohort entering in fall 2018.*

## Campus Compliance Site Visits

In January 2016, the Transfer Advisory Committee (TAC) established a process for reviewing the institutional transfer credit policies and procedures of UNC System institutions once every two years to ensure compliance with the CAA. (The North Carolina School of the Arts is not included in the compliance visits because it has very few transfer students). The TAC completed its first round of reviews for the 15 UNC System institutions in November 2017 (see Table 1). The second round of reviews began in October 2018 and was completed in November 2019. The third round of reviews began in March 2020 and is projected to be completed in fall 2021. To date, each institution has been found in compliance with the CAA after each site visit review of its policies.

Table 1

*Dates of TAC Site Visits to each UNC System Institution*

Institution	First-round Visit	Second-round Visit	Third-round Visit
Appalachian State University	07/25/2016	10/18/2018	04/24/2020
East Carolina University	09/15/2016	10/11/2018	Fall 2020 TBD
Elizabeth City State University	09/16/2016	10/12/2018	Fall 2020 TBD
Fayetteville State University	10/18/2017	10/29/2019	Fall 2021 TBD
North Carolina A&T University	03/29/2017	04/30/2019	Spring 2021 TBD
North Carolina Central University	11/17/2016	11/28/2018	Fall 2020 TBD
North Carolina State University	11/16/2016	11/07/2018	Fall 2020 TBD
UNC Asheville	04/17/2017	04/17/2019	Spring 2021 TBD
UNC-Chapel Hill	04/05/2017	05/01/2019	Spring 2021 TBD
UNC Charlotte	04/13/2016	10/16/2018	04/08/2020
UNC Greensboro	04/14/2016	10/18/2018	03/10/2020
UNC Pembroke	10/18/2017	10/28/2019	Fall 2021 TBD
UNC Wilmington	10/20/2017	10/17/2019	Fall 2021 TBD
Western Carolina University	04/19/2017	03/28/2019	Spring 2021 TBD
Winston-Salem State University	06/23/2016	11/16/2018	05/27/2020

## **TAC/CAA Campus Site Visit Process and Compliance Feedback Reports**

The UNC System sends a CAA Review Form to each of the universities at least one month prior to the scheduled site visit. The TAC continued to refine this form in the past year to make it more useful to the institution under review and to the TAC site visit team. Accompanying this form, the UNC System Office forwards data concerning transfer statistics and asks the university to reflect on their observations from these data on the CAA Review Form. A site visit team consisting of one TAC representative from the NCCCS and one from the UNC System reviews the forms along with other information from the Data Dashboard and the institution's website to assess transfer student admissions and performance data, completion rates, transfer credits accepted, total credits accumulated upon baccalaureate degree completion, most popular transfer student majors, top feeder community colleges, currency of baccalaureate degree plans (BDPs), and institutional practices. The TAC site visit team then interviews key transfer personnel at the UNC System institution and meets with NCCCS transfer students to hear about their transition experience. (Due to rather low attendance on previous occasions and the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, the TAC site visit teams decided to cancel the scheduled open forums for all campus personnel during the site visits held during spring 2020.)

Upon completion of the compliance visit, the site visit team submits feedback reports to the entire TAC for review and approval. The UNC System Office then sends the approved reports to each university provost for distribution to appropriate university personnel. To date, all UNC System institutions have been found to be in compliance with the provisions and guidelines of the CAA. TAC members continue to observe a growing familiarity with the tenets and provisions of the CAA now that the third round of site visits have begun. Furthermore, many UNC System institutions have implemented additional practices to form stronger partnerships with their community college neighbors. For example, several UNC System institutions have developed co-admission or provisional admission programs that allow university advisors the opportunity to work more closely with prospective transfer students. Additionally, several community colleges are offering dedicated space on their campuses for UNC System institution advisors to visit and work with students to be sure they are on a seamless path to transfer.

### **COVID-19 Impacts**

As with so many other institutions and processes, the work of the TAC was disrupted, but not impeded, by the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. Three site visits that were initially scheduled to occur in person during the spring 2020 semester, had to be modified for virtual visits instead. Furthermore, all four site visits planned for the fall 2020 semester will be conducted virtually, and it is likely that spring 2021 site visits will be scheduled in that same manner as well. The main difference between these virtual visits and the traditional in-person visits has been the reduction in time spent with university representatives and the lack of student interaction. Fortunately, as university personnel are becoming more familiar with the CAA, the time required to address concerns and to hear of successes is not as great as in the initial rounds of visits. However, the lack of interaction with NCCCS transfer students is not ideal, and concerted efforts to meet with these students will be undertaken with the resumption of site visits in fall 2020.

The main challenges mentioned by UNC System institutions regarding COVID-19 were the difficulty in predicting enrollment trends with both transfer and traditional student populations and the implementation of grading systems that were fair to students during the unprecedented times faced in

spring 2020. Understandably, universities were unsure how students and families would react to the worldwide pandemic as regards to their enrollment in higher education. This made it difficult to plan accordingly for fall 2020. Additionally, decisions regarding the nature of grading (a traditional grading scale versus a pass/fail scale) and its relationship to transferring students were difficult to make. Fortunately, most, if not all, universities decided to hold students harmless for grades earned during the spring 2020 semester, regardless of whether they were traditional or transfer students.

### **Transfer Credit Appeal Procedure**

Students who believe the terms of the CAA have not been adhered to by universities to which they are admitted may appeal by following the Transfer Credit Appeal provision in Appendix E of the CAA. Student awareness and use of the appeal process remain quite limited though, with no formal appeals having been filed to date. When faculty and staff advisors at NCCCS institutions have conveyed concerns about CAA adherence to the TAC, the issues have been resolved through conversations between TAC members and UNC System Office personnel. This process has worked well for situations of which college and university personnel have been made aware and given the opportunity to make satisfactory resolutions or explanations; however, there may be other undocumented cases whereby students are being deprived of the guarantees of the CAA but are also unaware of their options for recourse. Thus, the TAC is examining ways to encourage the appeals process, thereby creating a history of documented issues and their eventual resolutions. This would create greater transparency in the appeals process, strongly advocate for transfer student rights, and provide a record of issues and associated resolutions should those issues arise again in the future at a different institution. The TAC continues to promote greater awareness of the Transfer Credit Appeal provision among transfer students by recommending it be a required topic in the ACA 122 – College Transfer Success courses taken at NCCCS institutions.

### **Baccalaureate Degree Plans**

The 2014 CAA requires UNC System institutions to develop and maintain baccalaureate degree plans (BDPs) to outline community college and university courses that lead to timely baccalaureate degree completion for each major plan of study that the university offers. While there remain varied approaches for maintaining these BDPs, more institutions are centralizing the responsibility for BDP maintenance in hopes of creating consistent and accurate BDPs while also being able to respond to course and program updates in a timely manner. The TAC continues to share best practices for BDP maintenance with UNC System institutions during site visits.

### **CAA Revisions**

In August 2020, the TAC made minor modifications to phrasing and references to names in the most recent version of the 2014 CAA. The most substantial update added references to other commonly recognized exams besides Advanced Placement exams in section V.A.10. This year, no new courses were added to the Universal General Education Transfer Component or other General Education lists. However, multiple foreign language courses in Irish were added to the list of Pre-major/Elective courses. All changes to the CAA were presented to appropriate personnel in both systems, with the expectation that BDPs will continue to be updated to reflect these changes in the next academic term. The latest version of the CAA has been presented to both the State Board of Community Colleges and the UNC Board of Governors.



## **Data Improvements**

At the request of TAC, the UNC System Data and Analytics team has been able to provide more detailed information on their data dashboard. Specifically, they have been able to break out the category previously labeled as “other associate degrees” into more specific degrees (e.g., AAS, AE, AGE, etc.). Additionally, each semester, this team has begun to provide the TAC with updated data on transfer performance and completion metrics for each state university. To complement this work, the NCCCS Analytics and Reporting team has also begun instituting detailed data dashboards to provide relevant transfer information from the NCCCS institutions. Fortunately, a strong partnership and collaborative spirit has developed between these two teams so that they can provide more cohesive data that informs relevant stakeholders concerning the effectiveness of a variety of educational initiatives including, but not limited to, transfer.

## **UNC System Director of Community College Partnerships**

The UNC System has experienced regular turnover in their Director of Community College Partnerships position (established in 2017). The most recent director was appointed in March 2019 but left the position (due to a promotion) after only one year in the role. This director brought a significant understanding of institutional practices and capacity at both the community college and university levels and was very well aware of transfer student needs. Thus, the director instituted many new initiatives to enhance the transfer process. These initiatives resulted in greater and more regular communication between the TAC and the information technology and data analysts employed by the UNC System Office to assist in the improvement of the UNC System data dashboard, the creation of transfer equivalency tools for more consistent credit evaluation, the collection of advising resources in an electronic *Transfer Toolbox* (see “Communication” below), and regular monthly communication about all things transfer-related with both community college and university transfer personnel. While the role of Director of Community College Partnerships currently remains unfilled, it is imperative that another passionate professional be appointed soon so as to promote the continued successful implementation of the CAA.

## **Communication**

The dissemination of transfer information to appropriate personnel in a timely manner can create challenges for both NCCCS and UNC System institutions. Up-to-date adjustments to the CAA as approved by the TAC, advising information, and a clearinghouse of best practices are invaluable resources to transfer advisors and administrators. In addition, the TAC strives for transparency and public accessibility in its work. To these ends, two platforms for enhanced communication among constituents were launched during fall 2019 to promote a smoother flow of information across both the NCCCS and the UNC System, as well as to the public at large. A Transfer Toolbox – Advisor Resource website now houses information about policy changes, CAA updates, advising tools, best practices, and opportunities for connections (e.g., transfer conferences) such that advisors can obtain needed information in one location. The Transfer Advisory Committee website provides the public with details regarding membership, meetings, and current policy. This website curates information about the work of the TAC that was previously split between websites belonging to both the NCCCS and the UNC System. It also serves a workspace for TAC members to participate in ongoing discussions and committee work.

The immediate past Director of Community College Partnerships also instituted a monthly series of Transfer Talk webinars designed to promote enhanced communication and collaboration for successful

student transitions between the two systems. Separate webinar series were launched for university advising personnel and for community college advising personnel. Participants discuss relevant information about the CAA and the work of the TAC, and group facilitators collect concerns from individuals who work most directly with transfer students in both systems to share with TAC members so that they are aware of challenges that exist in the field. Unfortunately, because the position of Director of Community College Partnerships remains unfilled and because the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a focus in other more pressing areas, the webinars were temporarily halted during spring 2020. They remain in hiatus for the time being but are scheduled to reemerge once the appropriate personnel can be put in place at the UNC System Office.

### **Collaborative Efforts and Initiatives**

The TAC participated in a Transfer Data Convening for leaders from the NCCCS Office, the UNC System Office, the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities, myFutureNC, North Carolina State University's Belk Center, and researchers from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. They met on July 13, 2020, to discuss opportunities for collaboration to better support transfer student success across the state. Following the meeting, attendees agreed to form working groups to focus on Policy Implementation, Policy Analysis, and Research & Evaluation. These working groups began meeting in September 2020 and will identify action steps for the 2020-2021 academic year. The Research & Evaluation group is using recent TAC Legislative Reports (including this one) to guide the focus of the needed research and evaluation action steps.

### **Funding for TAC**

Since its inception, the TAC has relied upon the home institutions of its members to fund member participation in TAC meetings, compliance site visits, and presentations at professional conferences or workshops. The TAC is intentionally comprised of members from across the state from both urban and rural areas and representing both large and small institutions. Unfortunately, the travel costs associated with the duties and responsibilities of membership place an additional financial obligation on institutions that have already existing significant constraints and limitations on their spending. The NCCCS and the UNC System Offices both strongly advise that funding be allocated to provide for travel to TAC meetings, site visits, and professional presentations – all of which support the mission of increased transfer efficiency and effectiveness – for each of the members of the TAC. While the need for funding has been lessened this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we anticipate an increase in funding needs to meet the new reality in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Conclusion and TAC Recommendations**

In the past six years, NCCCS and UNC System institutions have made steady progress toward seamless transfer. They continue to perfect and improve their partnerships to provide more effective advising, clear and consistent communication, and ongoing support to transfer students. As awareness and execution of the 2014 *Comprehensive Articulation Agreement* increase in North Carolina, more students are completing associate degrees at community colleges and transferring to UNC System institutions. Upon transfer, these degree-completers are performing comparably with students who started as freshmen at those same universities. The data provided in this report demonstrate that UNC System institutions are not only meeting the expectations set out in the CAA, but they are finding creative ways

to enhance the transfer process and to champion transfer student success. In light of this positive momentum, the TAC continues to promote ongoing support of the following efforts:

- The swift hiring of a Director of Community College Partnerships at the UNC System Office, a role critical to the success of the work of the TAC and beneficial to transfer students statewide;
- Technological and operational solutions that create greater continuity, clarity, accessibility, and transparency for advising and the processing of transfer students and informing course, program, and institution selection (e.g., a common course-numbering or common course-equivalency system, the electronic transfer of transcripts, etc.) among the NCCCS and UNC System institutions;
- An examination of policies and procedures as they relate to issues involving diversity, equity, and inclusivity among NCCCS and UNC System transfer students, with the objective of promoting equitable outcomes and ameliorating any discovered inequities;
- Co-admission initiatives and UNC System advisor residency on community college campuses to guide students toward completion of appropriate courses, programs, and institutions earlier in the transfer process; and
- Development and growth of collaborations with other key partners (e.g., NCSU's Belk Center for Community College Leadership and Research, myFutureNC, North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities, etc.) in the work of transfer success.

## AGENDA ITEM

A-6. Comprehensive Articulation Agreement Technical Corrections .....David English

**Situation:** The revised *Comprehensive Articulation Agreement* (CAA) was signed by the University of North Carolina Board of Governors and the State Board of Community Colleges on February 21, 2014. The CAA was implemented in the Fall 2014 semester. The Transfer Advisory Committee (TAC) is charged with the authority to interpret CAA policy and is made up of four representatives of the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) and the University of North Carolina (UNC) System. The TAC is charged with maintaining the CAA, and adopting technical corrections as needed to remain current and accurate.

**Background:** This report summarizes ongoing efforts to implement and fulfill the CAA. The TAC is committed to providing students and institutions with information and strategies to support both associate degree and baccalaureate degree completion. Information is provided on NCCCS transfer student enrollment and academic performance, efforts to improve transfer efficiency and effectiveness, status of compliance visits, and recommendations for future actions.

**Assessment:** Technical changes to the CAA are indicated in the attached document. There are three categories of technical changes included this year. First, a number of formatting changes were made to ensure that fonts and spacing were consistent throughout the document. Second, members of the TAC and representatives of the University of North Carolina System Office and North Carolina Community College System Office were updated to reflect staffing changes. And finally, a note previously passed by the TAC encouraging institutions to apply the standard for Advanced Placement courses to other commonly recognized exams (e.g. IB, CLEP, DANTES, Cambridge).

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

## AGENDA ITEM

A-7. Outcomes of North Carolina Medical School Graduates ..... Hugh Tilson

**Situation:** Presentation of the annual report from the North Carolina Area Health Care Education Centers, (NC AHEC), "Monitoring the Progress of North Carolina Medical School Graduates Entering Primary Care Careers in North Carolina."

**Background:** This report responds to General Assembly mandates, as established in 1993 and since amended (G.S. 143-613), to expand the state's pool of generalist physicians. The General Assembly required that each of the state's (then) four schools of medicine develop a plan to expand the percentage of medical school graduates choosing primary care residency positions and that the Board of Governors "shall certify data on graduates, their residencies and clinical training programs." The approved report is due to the Fiscal Research Division of the Legislative Services Office and to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by November 15 each year.

**Assessment:** This report summarizes the primary care outcomes at five years post-graduation for Brody School of Medicine, Duke University School of Medicine, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine, and Wake Forest University School of Medicine.

**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-8. Pandemic Health Care Workforce Study.....Hugh Tilson

<b>Situation:</b>	Presentation of a draft of the “Pandemic Health Care Workforce Study” from the North Carolina Area Health Care Education Centers, (NC AHEC).
<b>Background:</b>	Session Law 2020-3, Senate Bill 704 directed NC AHEC to conduct a study of the issues that impact health care delivery and the health care workforce during a pandemic. The initial report focuses on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, issues that need to be addressed in the aftermath of this pandemic, and plans that should be implemented in the event of a future health crisis. The study includes input from universities, colleges, and community colleges that educate health care providers.
<b>Assessment:</b>	Because of the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, the report focuses on the processes being undertaken to gather the required input and information needed to provide substantive findings and recommendations. AHEC anticipates providing such findings and recommendations in the first quarter of 2021.
<b>Action:</b>	This item is for information only.

Report to the North Carolina General Assembly



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**Pandemic Health Care Workforce Study**  
**S.L. 2020-3, Sec. 3D.6.**

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October 12, 2020

**DRAFT**

Submitted by:

Hugh H. Tilson, Jr., JD, MPH  
Director  
NC AHEC Program

## Report to the NC General Assembly

S.L. 2020-3 required the N.C. Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program to “conduct a study of the issues that impact health care delivery and the health care workforce during a pandemic.” The provision further requires that “[t]he study shall focus on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, issues that need to be addressed in the aftermath of this pandemic, and plans that should be implemented in the event of a future health crisis.”

To conduct the study, AHEC shall “include input from universities, colleges, and community colleges that educate health care providers; health care provider licensing boards; the Department of Health and Human Services; the Department of Public Safety; and geographically dispersed rural and urban hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers, primary care practices, specialty care practices, correctional facilities, group homes, home care agencies, nursing homes, adult care homes, and other residential care facilities.”

The provision further requires AHEC to “report findings and recommendations to the House Select Committee on COVID-19, Health Care Working Group, on or before November 15, 2020. The report shall include a summary section to provide a high-level debriefing to the State's leaders, health care providers, and others, on successes and priority items to address as the State moves forward.” It further provides that “[d]ue to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, the NC AHEC has authority to report subsequent study findings and recommendations, as appropriate, to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services, the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services, and the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services.”

Because of the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, this Report focuses on the processes being undertaken to gather the required input and information needed to provide substantive findings and recommendations. AHEC anticipates providing such findings and recommendations in the first quarter of 2021.

### **Background:**

The NC General Assembly enacted S.L. 2020-3 on May 2, 2020. S.L. 2020-3 includes Section 3D.6. PANDEMIC HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE STUDY, which directs the NC Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program to conduct a comprehensive study of issues related to the pandemic's effects on the health workforce and the organizations where they work, and to obtain input from specified stakeholders in order to make findings and recommendations to the NC General Assembly on or before November 15, 2020.

Sec. 3D.6(c). provides that “[t]he study shall include, but is not limited to, examination of, and reporting on, the issues outlined below:

- (1) Adequacy of the health care workforce supply to respond to a pandemic in the following settings: acute care, ambulatory, primary care, nursing homes, adult care homes, other residential care facilities, correctional facilities, and in-home care.
- (2) Adequacy of the health care workforce supply to address the COVID-19 surge; the ability to redirect the existing workforce supply to meet staffing demands, including the identification of any barriers; and recommendations to eliminate barriers and readily deploy staffing in a future health crisis.



- (3) Adequacy of the health care workforce training, by setting, and the need for additional training or cross-training of health care providers.
- (4) Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on communities with preexisting workforce shortages.
- (5) Impact of personal protective equipment (PPE) availability on the health care workforce, by setting.
- (6) Sufficiency of support mechanisms for the health care workforce, including the availability of child care, transportation, mental health and resilience support services, and other support items.
- (7) Impact of postponing or eliminating nonessential services and procedures on the health care workforce.
- (8) Impact of postponing or eliminating nonessential services and procedures on hospitals, particularly rural hospitals.
- (9) Interruptions in the delivery of routine health care during the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact to citizens, primary and specialty care practices, and the health care workforce employed in these practices.
- (10) Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the delivery of behavioral health services.
- (11) Ability of telehealth options to deliver routine and emergent health and behavioral health services to patients.
- (12) Impact of telehealth on hospitals during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- (13) Support necessary to resume health care delivery to pre-pandemic levels.
- (14) Ability of the health care workforce and health care delivery structure to respond to the needs of minority populations, individuals with health disparities, and individuals and communities with increased health risks, during a pandemic.
- (15) Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, including concerns surrounding PPE availability, on current health sciences students and implications for future students contemplating a career in health sciences.”

Similar to states across the United States, the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to adversely affect North Carolinians and the health care providers who care for them since the enactment of S.L. 2020-3. These adverse effects are more prolonged in duration and more substantial in effect than ever anticipated, when S.L. 2020-3 was passed, and when AHEC was asked to study them. AHEC began seeking out and assembling the resources and team needed to carry out such a comprehensive study by gathering key and relevant information from stakeholders. Our goal was to ensure that the inputs and information gathered during the study fully reflected the pandemic’s effects on N.C., while being sensitive to the providers from whom information would be sought. The latter point was very

important, as many providers remained focused on and, in many instances, overwhelmed by caring for COVID-19 patients and their communities.

Included in the NC General Assembly's enactment of S.L. 2020-4 on May 4, 2020 were funds directed to the Campbell University School of Osteopathic Medicine (Campbell). S.L. 2020-4's provision authorizes Campbell to expend federal CARES Act funds "for a community- and rural-focused primary care workforce response to COVID-19, including, but not limited to, (i) supporting community testing initiatives, (ii) providing treatment in community-based health care settings, (iii) monitoring rural populations, (iv) educating health professionals on best practices for a pandemic response, and (v) supporting rural communities through primary care." With this authorization, Campbell dedicated a portion of the funds to support the Pandemic Health Workforce Study. AHEC worked with Campbell to execute a study that meets both the requirements of S.L. 2020-3 and S.L. 2020-4.

With Campbell's support, AHEC has partnered with nationally recognized health workforce researchers from the UNC School of Nursing (project team) to develop survey instruments, transfer the surveys into a secure, online format, and to use other processes to gather the input and information needed to complete the study and to ensure its results meet the highest standards. Also funded through Campbell's support, AHEC has leveraged capacity in the nine (9) regional AHEC Centers and the Duke AHEC Program to obtain data and information from local community providers.

To gain input from stakeholders, each regional AHEC Center made an online survey instrument available or offered interviews to at least one "geographically disbursed rural and urban hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers, primary care practices, specialty care practices, correctional facilities, group homes, home care agencies, nursing homes, adult care homes, and other residential care facilities" in at least three (3) counties in the regions they serve. Additionally, they obtained input from three (3) primary care settings in at least three (3) counties.

The NC AHEC Program and/or the UNC project team has interviewed or made an appropriate version of the online survey instrument available to "universities, colleges, and community colleges that educate health care providers; health care provider licensing boards; the Department of Health and Human Services; the Department of Public Safety".

Despite the continued prevalence of COVID-19 in North Carolina, the regional AHECs began outreach to providers and leaders in their catchment areas in August/early September, with results expected by the beginning of November. The NC AHEC Program and/or the UNC project team began outreach to state agencies, educational organizations, licensing boards and health professional associations in October with results expected in the middle of November. AHEC and the UNC project team will analyze these inputs and provide results and recommendations to the N.C. General Assembly during the first quarter of 2021.

Although we are not able to provide formal findings or recommendations at this time, AHEC offers the following initial observations:

1. **Stakeholders appreciate the opportunity to participate and share their perspectives about their workforce challenges during the pandemic.** The pandemic has profoundly affected the lives of health care providers and the operations of health care facilities and other organizations. Stakeholders have expressed their appreciation for the General Assembly's interest in their lessons learned and perspectives and are optimistic the information they

provide will help inform future decisions that will enhance their ability to care for their workforce, their patients and their communities.

2. **Funding from Campbell will enable a more comprehensive approach to the study.** Without funding from Campbell, AHEC would have had limited capacity to execute the study, and would have only been able to broadly survey relevant professional associations and statewide organizations. We would not have been able to reach out to providers in local communities and those that represent diverse and underserved populations. The Campbell funding has enabled AHEC to engage health workforce researchers at the UNC School of Nursing (the project team) to help us develop and deploy an evidenced-based interview and survey process that will gather information relevant to the COVID-19 pandemic, to the extent evolving evidence is available on the pandemic. Moreover, partnering with the project team will enable us to more thoroughly analyze information and determine the findings that will be used to formulate our recommendations. It has also enabled the regional AHECs to become highly engaged in the study by allocating the time needed to reach out to providers in their regions to obtain local and more geographically diverse input.
3. **Confidentiality is crucial.** AHEC's initial inquiries about obtaining the input needed to complete the study indicated that many providers were reluctant to provide the information absent an assurance that it would remain confidential and be provided only on a de-identified basis. Many still are reluctant. However, because AHEC is part of UNC, the study was approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure that we minimize risks that might breach participants' confidentiality and to ensure the highest ethical integrity as we carry out the study. In fact, the role of an IRB is to protect subjects. Because we received IRB approval for the study, we are better able to assure participants of the confidential treatment of the information they provide and the ethical integrity of the study.
4. **The COVID-19 Pandemic continues to affect health care organizations and their health workforce, making it challenging to gather information** in the 15 areas requested by the NC General Assembly. Although the health care providers and stakeholders with whom we are engaging have expressed that they appreciate the opportunity and desire to provide information about their experiences, they remain challenged because they must balance caring for their patients and communities, with committing the resources of time and personnel to provide requested information.
5. **The Study is broad and far-reaching.** Although the study seeks to obtain relevant and timely information to address important questions, because of its breadth multiple people within organizations are often required to respond on behalf of an organization. This requirement has further challenged organizations and their leaders to provide timely and complete input. Also, because the issues addressed in the study are broad, the organizations providing the information often have multiple questions about the intent of the study and the confidentiality of the results, so they can better and more directly answer the questions. AHEC staff are working hard to facilitate the collection of organizational information while not interpreting the questions in a manner that might skew results. Our goal is to gather objective and realistic information that reflects actual organizational and workforce experiences.
6. **The time frame to complete the study is ambitious.** Even without the continued prevalence of the pandemic, obtaining required stakeholder input from key organizations and leaders, and

compiling results and recommendations in a compressed timeframe has been challenging. We appreciate the NC General Assembly's acceptance of this Report describing the current status of our work and look forward to providing substantive findings and recommendations during the first quarter of 2021.