

April 17, 2024 at 2:30 p.m.  
Via Videoconference and PBS North Carolina Livestream  
University of North Carolina School of the Arts  
A.C. Ewing Performance Place, Catawba Theatre  
Winston Salem, North Carolina

## AGENDA

### OPEN SESSION

- A-1. Introduction and Approval of the Open Joint Session Minutes of February 28, 2024 .....Kirk Bradley  
Mark Holton
  
- A-2. Proposed Revisions to Section 400.1 of the UNC Policy Manual, ..... Dan Harrison  
*Policy on Academic Program Planning*
  
- A-3. Implementation Update on Return on Investment.....Andrew Kelly
  
- A-4. Adjourn

## DRAFT MINUTES

February 28, 2024 at 2:15 p.m.  
Via Videoconference and PBS North Carolina Livestream  
UNC System Office  
223 S. West Street, Board Room  
Raleigh, North Carolina

This joint meeting of the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs and Committee on Strategic Initiatives was presided over by Chair Kirk Bradley and Chair Mark Holton. The following committee members of the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs, constituting a quorum, were also present in person or by phone: Lee Barnes, Gene Davis Jr., Estefany Gordillo-Rivas, Wendy Murphy, Art Pope, and Woody White. The following committee members of the Committee on Strategic Initiatives, constituting a quorum, were also present in person or by phone: Carolyn Coward, Joel Ford, Swadesh Chatterjee, Gene Davis Jr., Estefany Gordillo-Rivas, and John Fraley.

Chancellors participating were Chancellor Kimberly Van Noort, Chancellor Philip Rogers, Chancellor Aswani Volety, Chancellor Sheri Everts, and Chancellor Franklin Gilliam. Wade Maki, chair of the UNC Faculty Assembly, was also in attendance.

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

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

The chair called the meeting to order at 2:20 p.m. Wednesday, February 28, 2024. The open session minutes from the January 24, 2024, meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

### 2. Project Kitty Hawk Annual Update (Item A-2)

The two committees heard an annual update from Project Kitty Hawk, presented by Wil Zemp, Raé Williams, and David Eby. Faculty from current participating institutions also participated and spoke about their personal experiences with the Project Kitty Hawk platform.

### 3. Potential Applications of Return on Investment Academic Program Planning (Item A-3)

The committees reviewed a potential draft policy of Section 400.1 of the UNC Policy Manual, *Policy on Academic Program Planning*. Members discussed possible effects of the potential draft and other possible revisions.

#### 4. Adjourn

There being no further business and without objection, the meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

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Art Pope, Secretary

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Carolyn Coward, Secretary

## AGENDA ITEM

A-2. Proposed Revisions to Section 400.1 of the UNC Policy Manual,  
*Policy on Academic Program Planning* ..... Dan Harrison

**Situation:** At its November meeting, the Board of Governors reviewed the results of a two-year study of the return on investment (ROI) associated with nearly every degree program in the System commissioned by the General Assembly. The Board of Governors' transmittal letter to the General Assembly outlined a number of actions to be taken in response to the report's findings, including potential revisions to Board of Governors policies and associated regulations related to academic program planning, approval, and productivity review. In its February meeting, the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs and the Committee on Strategic Initiatives put forth a proposed revision to Section 400.1 of the UNC Policy Manual, *Policy on Academic Program Planning*.

**Background:** N.C. G.S. 116-11(3) tasks the Board of Governors with responsibilities related to academic programming in the system, including "[determining] the types of degrees to be awarded," the "authority to withdraw approval of an existing program if it appears that the program is unproductive, excessively costly or unnecessarily duplicative," and the obligation to review the productivity of academic programs every two years.

Section 400.1 of the UNC Policy Manual, *Policy on Academic Program Planning*, operationalizes these responsibilities and outlines the processes and expectations for academic program planning in the UNC System. The policy calls on both constituent institutions and the System Office to identify programs that are designed to meet local, regional, and state labor market needs. The policy establishes basic criteria for the evaluation of proposed academic programs, including "the demand for the program in the locality, region, or State as a whole" and "employment opportunities for program graduates."

Section 400.1 of the UNC Policy Manual also calls on campuses to "regularly review the priorities of their offerings and are to be prepared to discontinue programs that no longer meet any significant need" and on the System Office to carry out "periodic reviews to determine whether productivity and quality review processes are followed."

Additional materials will be available day of in hard copy as well as uploaded to BoardEffect by the close of the meeting.

**Assessment:** The joint committee will hear feedback from constituent institutions and faculty on the potential revisions to Section 400.1 of the UNC Policy Manual.



MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and  
Programs  
Committee on Strategic Initiatives  
April 17, 2024

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

### Policy on Academic Program Planning

I. Purpose. North Carolina citizens and institutions must be prepared to compete in a rapidly changing global environment. Consistent with this mandate, the University of North Carolina Board of Governors, the University System Office, and the constituent universities shall be guided by the needs of the people of North Carolina in their academic degree program development, approval, and discontinuation actions. Consistent with the statutory mission of the University, the needs of the state are understood to include but not be limited to ensuring graduates are equipped with the knowledge, values, and skills necessary to lead responsible, productive, and personally satisfying lives. Academic program planning and procedures must be nimble, efficient, and responsive to those needs at all levels. To do so, university leaders, including but not limited to chancellors and their leadership teams, faculty and staff senates, assemblies, and curriculum development committees, the President and System Office staff, and members of the Board of Governors and boards of trustees, ~~shall~~should regularly assess the needs of the state and its people; identify, develop, and approve degree programs that will be beneficial to the state; and review existing academic degree programs to ensure continued alignment to state needs.

#### II. Roles and Responsibilities

A. Constituent institutions. Constituent institutions shall have a lead role in identifying academic program needs, in formulating proposals to meet those needs, and in evaluating the alignment of their own academic program inventory with the needs of the state.<sup>1</sup>

B. UNC System Office. The UNC System Office shall also engage in the identification of academic program needs across the University, shall be the principal advisor to the Board of Governors regarding academic program proposals received from constituent institutions, and shall evaluate the University-wide academic program inventory as described in this Policy. The UNC System Office shall develop procedures to regularly review workforce and societal needs and, on at least a biennial basis, identify degrees and programs beneficial to the state. The UNC System Office shall also periodically draw on the expertise of the faculty to identify longer-term emerging trends that may have implications for new degree programs. In its analysis, the UNC System Office shall always consider whether all regions of the state are adequately served by the University. As referenced in this policy, the needs of the state and its citizens are inclusive of requirements growing out of local, regional, national, and global challenges. The UNC System Office shall take a broad view of state needs that includes both current skill demands as well as the contributions that graduates make to the health, well-being, economic prosperity and quality of life in the state. ~~Consistent with the statutory mission of the University, in giving its advice to the Board, the UNC System Office shall make a holistic review encompassing the program's potential to impart the skills necessary for individuals to lead responsible, productive, and personally satisfying lives; to advance knowledge and enhance the educational process; and to contribute to the solution of societal problems and enrich the quality of life in the State.~~

C. UNC Board of Governors. Per N.C. G.S. § 116-11(3), the Board of Governors shall determine the functions, educational activities, and academic programs of the constituent institutions, including the degrees to be awarded. The Board shall: consider the alignment between the University System's academic program portfolio and emerging workforce and societal needs at least every two years; review and approve all proposals for new degree programs put forward by

constituent universities; and consider the productivity, quality, and efficiency of academic degree programs System-wide on a biennial basis.

III. Assessing the Needs of the State.

A. The UNC System Office shall, in consultation with the Board of Governors, regularly review workforce and societal needs and identify:

- i. emerging labor market demands;

- ii. the alignment between the System’s academic program portfolio and the labor market demands;

~~iii.~~ trends in employment outcomes for graduates by program of study; and

~~iv.~~ new and expandable degree and credential programs that would be beneficial to the state.

B. The UNC System Office shall also periodically draw on experts, including academic leaders, faculty, and staff at constituent institutions, to identify longer-term emerging trends that may have implications for new degree programs. ~~UNC System Office shall also periodically draw on the expertise of the faculty and other experts to identify longer term emerging trends that may have implications for new degree programs.~~

C. In its analysis, the UNC System Office shall consider whether all regions of the state are adequately served by the University. As referenced in this policy, the needs of the state and its citizens are inclusive of requirements growing out of local, regional, national, and global challenges.

D. In April 2026 and at least every other year thereafter, the UNC System Office shall present a report to the Board of Governors that summarizes the emerging needs of the state.

#### IV. Academic Program Development and Approval.

A. Identification of academic program needs. Academic needs may be identified by the UNC System Office or by one or more constituent institutions.

i. Needs identified by the System Office. All constituent institutions shall have an opportunity to participate in a process for recommending the best way to address academic program needs identified by the System Office. Disciplinary and cross-disciplinary processes that utilize campus faculty and administrators shall be established to recommend whether expansion of a current degree program, collaboration ~~in a joint degree between campuses~~ in-on a program, an online degree program, or a stand-alone degree program is the best option. Campuses are urged to give high priority to collaborative ~~or joint~~ program development. The System Office shall balance responsiveness with due diligence and a state-wide perspective. In achieving this balance, the System Office shall develop expedited program review processes for rapid response where warranted. The campuses’ faculty and administration and the System Office shall assure a continuing commitment to academic excellence.

ii. Needs identified by constituent institutions. Constituent institutions may propose for consideration by the Board new academic programs, or changes to delivery modality or delivery location of existing programs, designed to fill needs they have identified, in accordance with UNC Policy Manual section 400.1.1[R].

B. Presentation to the Board. Once academic program needs are identified by the campuses or by the System Office, the System Office, in consultation with the campuses, shall forward, after appropriate review, recommendations to the Board of Governors regarding how best to meet those needs.

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C. Principles for academic program development. In these processes, faculty expertise is essential for sound academic decision making at the campus and system levels. At the campus, disciplinary, cross-disciplinary, University, and board levels, analysis, and recommendation of the need for a new academic program, the place for its establishment, and the method of its delivery shall be based on:

- i. number, location, and mode of delivery of existing programs;
- ii. the relation of the program to the distinctiveness of the campus and the mission of the campus;
- iii. student demand for the program in the locality, region, or state as a whole;
- iv. whether the program would create unnecessary duplication;
- v. detailed regional or state economic data on employment opportunities for program graduates at the degree level proposed;
- vi. faculty quality and number for offering the program;
- vii. the availability of campus resources (library, space, labs, equipment, external funding, and the like) to support the program, and five years of projected revenues and expenses associated with the program;
- viii. the number and quality of lower-level and cognate programs for supporting the new program;
- ix. impact of program decision on access and affordability, including a reasonable comparison of the expected earnings of graduates with the projected costs of earning the degree and/or the projected amount of debt a student may incur (return on investment);
- x. the expected academic quality of the proposed degree program;
- xi. the feasibility of a joint or collaborative program by two or more campuses;
- xii. the contribution of the program to ~~critical professions that are critical to the health, educational attainment, and quality of life of North Carolinians and the needs of the state and of society, and~~ and
- ~~xi-xiii.~~ any other consideration relevant to the need for the program.

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V. Review and Evaluation of Existing Academic Programs.

A. Campus-level review of academic programs. Primary responsibility for quality, efficiency, and productivity of academic degree programs rests at the campus level.

- i. Academic Program Review. Chancellors shall regularly review their institution's

academic programming to ensure the maintenance of a sound and balanced educational program that is consistent with the functions and mission of the institution. Chancellors shall ~~priorities of their offerings and~~ be prepared to expand, contract, or discontinue programs based upon that review. To do so, chancellors shall review all academic degree programs at least once every seven years from the date of the preceding review or from the implementation date of a new academic program, or on such schedule as the President may prescribe by regulation.

- ii. These Academic Program Reviews shall evaluate:
  - a. Current and projected student demand, as measured by enrollments in the majors and degrees produced;~~;~~
  - b. Current and projected workforce demand, as measured by projected job growth and existing data on student employment outcomes;~~;~~
  - c. Student outcomes, including persistence, graduation, time to degree, and, where possible, post-graduation success;~~;~~
  - d. Program costs and productivity, including research, scholarship, and creative activity and student credit hours produced compared to the number and cost of faculty and staff;
  - e. The contribution of the program to professions that are critical to the health, educational attainment, and quality of life of North Carolinians; and ~~critical professions and the needs of the state and of socie.~~
  - f. Any other considerations identified by the chancellor or by the President.

iii. Each campus must establish and publish clearly defined policies, procedures, and schedules for reviewing academic programs and for ensuring continuous program improvement ~~and for creating, expanding, contracting, and eliminating programs consistent with the criteria found in this Policy. These policies shall describe the process by which the Chancellor, based on the results of an Academic Program Review, takes action to expand, contract, or eliminate an academic program. These policies must further account for the faculty's role in shared governance regarding the development and review of the curriculum consistent with the authority and expectations of the Chancellor articulated in section 502D of the Code of the University of North Carolina. These Academic Program Review policies must be approved by campus Boards of Trustees and sent to the UNC System Office by ~~September~~ January 1, 20252024.~~

iv. Summary reports of all Academic Program Reviews shall be reviewed by Boards of Trustees and then submitted annually to the ~~System Office~~ President. The first summary report, focused on the initial subset of programs reviewed by each campus, shall be due to the President by ~~July~~ January 31, 20262025.

v. A review made for another entity, including buty not limited to a programmatic accreditor or a professional licensing board, which satisfies section V(A)(ii) of this policy may be submitted to the President in lieu of a separate report. If a review

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made for another entity partially satisfies section V(A)(ii) of this policy, the institution may supplement that review so that it ~~satisfies~~ satisfies section V(A)(ii) of this policy and submit ~~that supplemented review~~ to the President.

~~iv.~~

B. System-level review of academic program productivity. The System Office shall be responsible for periodic reviews to determine whether productivity and quality review processes are followed, and benchmarks are met.

i. Biennial Program Productivity Review. In collaboration with the campuses, the System Office shall identify standards for degree program productivity and, on a biennial basis, evaluate the full portfolio of academic programs across the System based on those standards.

ii. The Biennial Program Productivity Review shall include data on key measures of productivity, including student demand, credentials produced, post-graduation employment and earnings, return on investment, and other considerations.

iii. Each Biennial Program Productivity Review shall also evaluate the projections made by the campus and the System Office as to those matters found in section 4(c) of this Policy for programs approved by the Board in the preceding two years.

iv. The Biennial Program Productivity Review shall be presented to the Board of Governors in April 2025 and every other April thereafter.

#### VI. Other Matters.

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

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

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

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<sup>i</sup> Because of the differences in institutional mission at the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, that institution is exempt from the requirements of this policy. The North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics shall develop program review procedures appropriate for its respective secondary education program.

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# Revisions to Policy 400.1: Policy on Academic Program Planning

*April 17, 2024*

*Joint Committee : Ed Planning, Policies, and Programs & Strategic  
Initiatives*

# Academic Planning is a Key Responsibility of the Board of Governors

## G.S. § 116-11(3) "Powers and Duties Generally"

- "The Board shall determine the functions, educational activities and academic programs of the constituent institutions. The Board shall also determine the types of degrees to be awarded."
- "The Board shall have authority to withdraw approval of any existing program if it appears that the program is unproductive, excessively costly or unnecessarily duplicative."
- "The Board shall review the productivity of academic degree programs every two years, using criteria specifically developed to determine program productivity."

# Areas of Proposed Reform

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Institutionalize a focus on student ROI in program development and review



Empower campus leaders to engage in regular Academic Program Review processes



Strengthen and clarify System Office's obligations regarding assessment of the needs of the state and the System's program portfolio

# The Way Ahead

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1. Discussion and feedback from each committee in February



2. Circulate for campus and faculty feedback in March and April



3. Incorporate feedback, where appropriate, into a redline for review and vote



4. Revise current regulation to align with revised policy and provide detailed guidance on program review and approval metrics (Summer)



# Institutional and Faculty Assembly Feedback

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- Account for professions that are critical to society but difficult to quantify on a salary-based ROI analysis and for the non-monetary benefits of a university education.
  - This draft specifically makes this a consideration for the Board's process for new programs *and* for the campus-based program reviews.
  - It requires the UNC System to "take a broad view of state needs that ... includes the contributions graduates make to the health, well-being, economic prosperity, and quality of life in the state."

# Institutional and Faculty Assembly Feedback

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- Protect the role of faculty in the program review process/more clearly delineate chancellors' authorities.
  - This draft give crystal clear authority to chancellors to take action based on the results of the institution's academic program reviews.
  - At the same time, it requires institutional policies to provide for shared governance with faculty for the program reviews being required.

# Institutional and Faculty Assembly Feedback

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- We received commentary regarding the seven-year cadence of the review cycle, both that it was too long and too short.
  - We propose keeping seven years as a standard, but giving the President authority to issue guidance deviating from it. That guidance might include:
    - Allowing for longer review cycles for institutions with many academic programs.
    - Allowing programs that already substantially perform this review for an accreditor or professional licensing board to remain on that cadence.

# Institutional and Faculty Assembly Feedback

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- We received comments regarding the burden of complying with the new requirements, particularly the reporting requirements.
  - Staff has begun to study our existing academic reporting requirements to present findings and recommendations to the Board in the fall of 2024.

# Institutional and Faculty Assembly Feedback

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- We received numerous comments regarding data sources and methodology, including concerns about out-of-state graduates.
  - Staff looks forward to collaborating with institutions and faculty regarding these topics through the Regulation which we intend to accompany this Policy. Our philosophy for the data sources and methodology is:
    - They should be transparent and replicable by institutions and faculty.
    - They should focus on metrics that our institutions can influence.
    - They should be one aspect of a holistic review.

# Questions



## AGENDA ITEM

A-3. Implementation Update on Return on Investment ..... Andrew Kelly

**Situation:** Americans are increasingly skeptical of the value of higher education, especially young adults of college-going age. Some observers believe this skepticism has contributed to recent declines in enrollment, which has in turn put pressure on colleges, universities, and public university systems to prove (and improve) the return on investment associated with degree and credential programs. At its November meeting, the Board of Governors reviewed the results of a two-year study of the return on investment (ROI) associated with nearly every degree program in the System commissioned by the General Assembly. That report, the associated dashboards, and transmittal letter from the Board of Governors were submitted to the General Assembly in November.

**Background:** In its transmittal letter to the General Assembly, the Board of Governors outlined a set of actions to be taken by the Board, the president and System Office, and the chancellors of each constituent university in response to the report's findings. Those actions include an immediate review by chancellors and other university leaders of low-ROI programs, the provision of machine-readable program-level datasets, a review of academic policies related to program approval and review, and development of data-sharing agreements with state and federal agencies. The transmittal letter also noted that the General Assembly would receive a follow-up report on proposed actions by April 24, 2024.

Additional materials will be available day of in hard copy as well as uploaded to BoardEffect by the close of the meeting.

**Assessment:** The committee will receive an update on actions and review a copy of the transmittal letter to the General Assembly.

**Action:** This item requires a vote by the committee.

University of North Carolina Board of Governors  
University of North Carolina System  
223 S West St, Suite 1800  
Raleigh, NC 27603

April 22, 2024

Dear Senator Berger and Speaker Moore:

As a follow-up to our Return on Investment transmittal letter dated November 20, 2023, the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina is pleased to provide an update on actions that have been taken since the original submission of the ROI report. As background, the ROI study was conducted by Deloitte and partners in accordance with N.C. Session Law 2021-180, § 8.17. Our proposed next steps outlined in the November 2023 transmittal letter included:

- Review of program-level results and development of improvement plans for low-ROI programs
- Modernization of academic program approval and review policies to include ROI measures
- Take steps to ensure consistent collection and publication of key ROI metrics.

We are pleased to inform the General Assembly that we have taken the proposed actions. Below is an overview of progress-to-date.

#### **Review of Program-level Results and Development of Improvement Plans for Low ROI Programs**

All 16 UNC Institutions included in the ROI study have submitted to the UNC System Office a detailed review of their low-ROI programs (i.e., any academic program that did not result in a positive lifetime ROI for students) that included an outline of campus efforts to improve the ROI of each program. Institutional program reviews included an overview of key ROI drivers, additional data and information regarding program performance, and a proposed improvement plan including a timeline for action. The UNC System Office assembled a review panel of staff from multiple divisions to review university submissions and, if necessary, request revisions or proposed follow-up.

While the Deloitte report found that 93% of academic programs in the UNC System resulted in positive ROI, the campus reviews of low ROI programs produced some key insights:

- *Low enrollment in low ROI programs* – Low ROI programs also tend to have low student enrollment. Only 3% of undergrads and 5% of grad students were enrolled in a low-ROI program. Some of the improvement plans indicated that lower enrollment is by design, as universities have already consolidated, discontinued, or ceased enrolling new students in some programs on the list. Additionally, as noted in the next section on Academic Program Review and Approval, Board revisions to university policy will require more regular and consistent campus-level review of academic programs and the inclusion of ROI metrics in the System's Biennial Program Productivity Review.
- *Innovative ideas to increase post-graduation earnings* – Institutional responses demonstrated a commitment to increasing post-grad earnings in low-ROI programs through innovations including



micro-credentialing and certificates (aligned to labor market demand); embedding career services into curriculum requirements; and improving industry and employer relationships within North Carolina.

- *Inability to measure wages of out-of-state graduates limits understanding of ROI*—Each campus response cited the limitations of excluding out-of-state graduates from the ROI calculation—a restriction inherent in the wage data from the NC Department of Commerce used in the Deloitte study. In some cases, half or more of the graduates of a program flagged as low-ROI migrated out-of-state after graduation. A potential partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau could provide necessary data to fill this gap (see below).

### **Modernize Academic Program Approval and Review Policies to Include ROI**

In Spring 2024, the Board of Governors revisited its Policy on Academic Program Planning (400.1) to more directly require that universities, the System Office, and the Board continuously assess the alignment between the state’s needs and our academic program portfolio. As a result of these reforms, measures of employer demand and ROI have been specifically added to the criteria by which new program proposals are evaluated and the productivity of existing programs is assessed. The revised policy also calls on system universities to review every academic program at least every seven years to identify programs in need of improvement or discontinuation.

At the April 2024 Board of Governors meeting, the joint committee on Education Planning, Policies, and Programs and Strategic Initiatives passed a revision to Policy 400.1. Full Board of Governors approval is expected in its May 2024 meeting. The key elements of the policy revision include:

- ***Assessing State Needs*** – On a biennial basis, the UNC System Office will conduct a review of state workforce needs to identify critical skills and occupations and compare the System’s academic program portfolio to those identified needs;
- ***Program Development and Approval***—The revised policy clarifies the two routes by which new academic programs can be proposed to the Board of Governors—needs identified by the System Office and needs identified by individual campuses—and augments the criteria by which such proposals shall be evaluated to include projected post-graduation success and return on investment. The revised policy also allows for expedited review of proposals that are aligned to acute labor market needs;
- ***Enhanced Biennial Productivity Review*** – The Board of Governors will continue to engage in biennial reviews of the productivity, quality, and efficiency of the System’s academic degree programs as required by NC G.S. § 116-11(3). However, the new policy ensures that future productivity reviews will include measures of the return on investment associated with each degree program. The first productivity review under the new policy will be presented to the Board in Spring 2026;
- ***Academic Program Reviews*** – At least every seven years, UNC System Chancellors shall review all academic programs and take appropriate action, including expanding, contracting, or eliminating the program..

**Require Consistent Collection and Publication on Key ROI Metrics**

Lastly, to support continued assessment of labor market outcomes and return on investment, the System Office has established a Memorandum of Understanding with the North Carolina Department of Commerce to share, on an annual basis, the quarterly wage and employment data of UNC System students which will be used to assess post-graduation outcomes, inform program review processes, and develop and update ROI metrics. This annual sharing of wage and employment information will enable the System to move beyond the questions asked in the Deloitte report and to more regularly engage in assessments of the value of academic program offerings.

System Office staff have also resumed discussions with the U.S. Census Bureau about participation in the Postsecondary Education Outcomes (PSEO) initiative, which would enable the System to measure the earnings of graduates who leave the state. Considering the priority the General Assembly has attached to this effort, and the limitations identified by our UNC institutions regarding out-of-state earnings data, we trust and expect that the System will have the support of the NC Department of Commerce to participate in the PSEO initiative.

Lastly, we are pleased to announce that the UNC System Office – as a reflection of its dedication to continuing the work started by the General Assembly’s ROI study—has secured a philanthropic grant from Arnold Ventures for more than \$500,000 over two years. The funding will be used to augment the System Office’s capacity to collect and analyze wage data from NC Commerce, to gain access to additional sources of data on post-graduation employment and wages, and to assist partner campuses in developing program review metrics and processes that are reliable and replicable. Support will also be used to evaluate the impact of the Board’s ROI-focused efforts on campus decision-making and student outcomes.

###

Thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on this important effort to continue our proud legacy of providing the most valuable public higher education in the country.

Sincerely,

Kirk Bradley  
Chair, Committee on Educational Planning, Policy, and Programs  
UNC Board of Governors

Mark Holton  
Chair, Committee on Strategic Initiatives  
UNC Board of Governors



# Continued Commitment & Progress on Student ROI

*April 17, 2024*

*Joint Committee : Ed Planning, Policies, and Programs & Strategic  
Initiatives*

# Context & Background

## Board of Governors November 2023 Transmittal Letter

### UNC Board of Governors Proposed Action Items:

1. Review Program-level Results & Develop Improvement Plans for Low ROI Programs
2. Modernize Academic Program Approval & Review Policies to Include ROI Measures
3. Require Consistent Collection & Publication of Key ROI Metrics

# Program-Level Review of Low-ROI Programs

## Overall Results: Strong Evidence of Value Across UNC System

Deloitte ROI Study found 93% of academic programs reported on the dashboards<sup>1</sup> had positive ROI:

	Undergrad Programs	Grad Programs	Total Programs
≥\$0 ROI	566 (94%)	285 (90%)	<b>851 (93%)</b>
<\$0 ROI	37 (6%)	30 (10%)	<b>67 (7%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>918<sup>1</sup></b>

### Tailwinds Across State, System and UNC Institutions:

- **State and System Support** - Generous state appropriations and System commitment to keep in-state tuition flat/low results in affordable tuition and fees
- **Institutional Support** – Institutional commitment to reduce time-to-degree and invest in career services

# Program-Level Review of Low-ROI Programs

## Review Process

- **UNC Institution ROI Review** - All UNC Institutions conducted a review of low-ROI programs and provided improvement plans to UNC System President (March 2024)<sup>1</sup>

Program Name & CIP Code	Add'l Contextual Info	ROI Drivers	Improvement Plan	Timeline

- **UNC System Review Panel** – UNC System Office assembled a review panel of staff from multiple divisions to review ROI responses.

# Program-Level Review of Low-ROI Programs

## KEY THEMES & INSIGHTS

### Low ROI Programs Limited to Low Enrollment Programs

Overview of Low ROI Programs			
	Undergrad Programs	Grad Programs	Total
# of Low ROI Programs	37	30	67
% of UNC System Enrollment ('19-20)	3%	5%	3%
# of Programs w/ >200 enrollment	6	0	6

#### ***Question for Consideration:***

*Is this evidence that most students show a preference for programs with positive ROI?*

# Program-Level Review of Low-ROI Programs

## KEY THEMES AND INSIGHTS (cont'd)

### Acknowledging Data Limitations

- **Earnings Data Limited to NC-Only Wage Data** - ROI analysis did not include out-of-state wage data due to data limitations.
  - Academic programs with high out-of-state earners potentially reflected as “false negative” on ROI analysis

### Out-of-State Wage Limitation on ROI Analysis (Example)

Program Name	Deloitte ROI Analysis	% of Out-of-State Completers	Salary Range <sup>1</sup>	Sample Out-of-State Employers
Materials Science & Eng (Grad Program)	-\$87K	73% MS students  44% PhDs	~\$120K/yr	Many grads migrate to CA to employers such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apple</li> <li>• Northrop Grumman</li> <li>• Intel</li> </ul>
Ops Research (Grad Program)	-\$229K	71%	~\$106K/yr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amazon</li> <li>• Volvo</li> <li>• Boeing</li> </ul>



# Program-Level Review of Low-ROI Programs

## KEY THEMES AND INSIGHTS (cont'd)

### Innovations to Increase Post-Grad Earnings

- **Industry-Aligned Program Development (i.e., Microcredentials & Certificates)**
  - **Bachelors of Art** - New Arts and Entrepreneurship Certificate offered with component to develop business-plans for creative place-making projects and enterprises.
  - **Masters in English** – Program identifies “Professional, Technical, Business, and Scientific Writing” as high ROI career pathway (>\$1M) and Technical Writing Certificate added.
- **Interdisciplinary Program Improvements**
  - **Bachelors in Pre-K Ed Prep** - Program will collaborate with School of Business to increase business and accounting coursework to widen pathway for childcare facility employees to become owners and directors
- **Deepen Employer & Industry Partnerships**
  - **Bachelors in History** - Program will collaborate with Career Svcs to establish employer partnerships with NC Museum of History & NC Dept of Natural and Cultural Resources)

# Consistent Collection & Publication on Key Metrics

## Update on Key Actions to Date

### Public CSV Files

Machine-readable files made public on UNC System website (Jan 2024)

### NC Dept of Commerce Memorandum of Understanding

NC Dept of Commerce and UNC System have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to obtain quarterly wage data on UNC Systems (including non-completers)

### New Grant to Enhance System Capacity to Measure and Improve Program ROI

UNC System has secured a philanthropic grant from Arnold Ventures (>\$500K) for a 2-yr period to augment System Office's capacity to analyze wage data from NC Commerce and obtain additional sources of data on post-graduation employment and wages.

# Questions

