The actions taken on the above Policies were reviewed and approved by the Board of Governors for inclusion in the UNC Policy Manual following the May 2024 Board of Governors meetings.

The entire UNC Policy Manual is accessible at: https://www.northcarolina.edu/apps/policy/index.php
Equality Within the University of North Carolina

The University of North Carolina reaffirms its longstanding commitment to the equality of opportunity in education and employment as a core value, and the Board of Governors repeals Section 300.8.5 of the UNC Policy Manual, Policy on Diversity and Inclusion Within the University of North Carolina, and Section 300.8.5[R] of the UNC Policy Manual, Regulation on Diversity and Inclusion Within the University of North Carolina, and supersedes them with the following policy:

I. Purpose. The law of North Carolina defines “The University of North Carolina [as] a public, multicampus university dedicated to the service of North Carolina and its people.” Its mission prescribed by law is to “discover, create, transmit, and apply knowledge to address the needs of individuals and society.” G.S. 116-1. Accomplishing the former—addressing the needs of individuals—requires that each be treated as an individual deserving of dignity and inclusion. The University shall continue to ensure that diverse persons of any background, from North Carolina and beyond, are invited, included, and treated equally. Diversity means the ways in which individuals vary, including, but not limited to, backgrounds, beliefs, viewpoints, abilities, cultures, and traditions that distinguish one individual from another.

II. Nondiscrimination in Employment Practices & Educational Programs and Activities. The University of North Carolina’s employment practices and provision of educational programs and activities shall continue to comply with federal and state law prohibiting discrimination and harassment of members of protected classes, including, without limitation, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.

III. Ensuring Equality of All Persons & Viewpoints. The University of North Carolina shall continue to comply with the requirements of G.S. 126-14.5 and -14.6 and Section 300.5.1 of the UNC Policy Manual, Political Activities of Employees, including, without limitation, their protections of the equality of all persons enshrined in Article I, Section 1 of the North Carolina Constitution and the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, their prohibitions on compelled speech in hiring, professional advancement, and admissions, and their requirement that State employees respect the dignity of others. This policy further extends the nondiscrimination requirements for State government workplaces outlined in G.S. 126-14.6 to university-led student orientations, training, or activities.

IV. Commitment to the Freedom of Speech & Expression. The University of North Carolina shall continue to protect the freedom of speech and expression enshrined in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article I, Section 14 of the North Carolina Constitution, and this policy shall be implemented consistent with and subject to those protections. Indeed, the University of North Carolina shall continue its proud tradition of pursuing and embracing the most vigorous, open, and thoughtful exchange of ideas as that objective is enshrined in Section 1300.8 of the UNC Policy Manual, Policy on Free Speech and Free Expression Within the University of North Carolina System.
V. Maintaining Academic Freedom. The Board of Governors reaffirms that academic freedom is a prerequisite to maintaining and strengthening a world-class university. The University of North Carolina shall therefore take no action that would limit the right of academic freedom in its faculty’s pursuit of teaching, research, and service, subject only to the institutional tenure policies as contemplated in Section 602 of The Code, as well as applicable law.

VI. Commitment to Student Success & Employee Wellbeing. The University of North Carolina’s commitment to equality of all persons includes a commitment to equality of opportunity for all students that enroll in a constituent institution and for all employees that serve the University. Campuses shall ensure that qualified students of all backgrounds are welcomed, included, and supported in their pursuit of a degree or certificate and that employee wellbeing remains a priority. Campuses shall continue to implement programming or services designed to have a positive effect on the academic performance, retention, or graduation of students from different backgrounds, provided that programming complies with the institutional neutrality specified in Section VII of this policy and/or other state and federal requirements.

VII. Maintaining Institutional Neutrality. Every employing subdivision of the University in both its organization and operation shall adhere to and comply with the strictures of institutional neutrality required by G.S. 116-300 (3a). Accordingly, no employing subdivision or employment position within the University shall be organized, be operated, speak on behalf of the University, or contract with third parties to provide training or consulting services regarding: matters of contemporary political debate or social action as those terms are used in Section 300.5.1 of the UNC Policy Manual; any prescribed “view of social policy” or “political controversies of the day,” as those terms are used in G.S. 116-300 (3) and (3a); or in furtherance of the concepts listed in G.S. 126-14.6(c)(1)–(13). The foregoing prohibition shall have no effect on employing subdivisions or employment positions tasked with ensuring compliance with federal or state law nor shall the foregoing prohibition affect University efforts to abide by the commitments to the freedom of speech and expression and academic freedom described in Sections IV and V of this policy, respectively.

VIII. Reporting Requirement. Prior to September 1, 2024, and again on or before September 1 annually thereafter, the chancellor and the director of student affairs, or equivalent officer, of each constituent institution of the University of North Carolina shall certify in writing to the president that the constituent institution fully complies with the University’s commitment to institutional neutrality and nondiscrimination required by law and this policy and shall describe in substance the actions taken to achieve compliance. The chancellors’ certifications shall also include a report on reductions in force and spending, along with changes to job titles and position descriptions, undertaken as a result of implementing this policy and how those savings achieved from these actions can be redirected to initiatives related to student success and wellbeing.

IX. Exceptions for Student-led Organizations. Student-led organizations may use university facilities and receive student activity funding notwithstanding any speech or expressive activity by such organizations that would otherwise violate Section VII, provided that such use and receipt of student activity funding may only be granted to student-led organizations pursuant to the written policies or regulations of each constituent institution for use of university facilities and resources.

X. Effective Date. This policy is effective upon its adoption.
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 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.

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

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

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 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.
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;

xiii. any other consideration relevant to the need for the program.

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 prioritize 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 society;

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 1, 2025.

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 31, 2026.

v. A review made for another entity, including but 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
made for another entity partially satisfies section V(A)(ii) of this policy, the institution may supplement that review so that it 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.
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.
Policy on Minimum Eligibility Requirements for Undergraduate Admission for the University of North Carolina System

I. Purpose. The University of North Carolina (UNC) Board of Governors has, since 1988, established minimum requirements for undergraduate admission to any constituent institution. These requirements serve to provide a common set of minimum standards to be considered for admission as an undergraduate student. Completion of these standards does not guarantee admission to any UNC System institution or program of study. Exceptions and special considerations to these minimum eligibility requirements are provided in Sections 700.1.1[R], 700.1.2[R], 700.7.1, and 700.7.1[R] of the UNC Policy Manual. Any constituent institution may set admissions requirements that exceed the minimums established in this policy upon the approval of their board of trustees.

II. High School Diploma. All students should hold a high school diploma or its equivalent.

III. Minimum Course Requirements. The following courses must be completed at the high school level, although those courses may be completed at an earlier time (e.g., middle school).

A. English: four course units emphasizing grammar, composition, and literature.

B. Mathematics: four course units in any of the following combinations:¹

1. Algebra I, algebra II, geometry, and one unit beyond algebra II; or
2. Algebra I, algebra II, and two units beyond algebra II; or
3. Common core math I, II, and III, and one unit beyond common core math III; or
4. Integrated math I, II, III, and one unit beyond integrated math III; or

¹Students applying to the University of North Carolina School of the Arts must only complete three mathematics courses in order to be eligible for admission.
S. NC Math 1, 2, 3, and one unit beyond NC Math 3 identified as meeting the 4th level mathematics requirement for admission to UNC System institutions.

C. Science: three course units, including at least:

1. One life science unit (e.g., biology, ecology, zoology); and

2. One non-life science unit (e.g., astronomy, chemistry, earth science, environmental science, physical science, physics); and

3. One laboratory science unit.

D. Social Studies: two course units, including one unit in U.S. history.²

[For students applying for first-time (freshman) admission to constituent institutions through the 2024 spring semester.]

E. Two course units of a language other than English.

[For students applying for first-time (freshman) admission to constituent institutions after the 2024 spring semester.]

E. Two additional academic courses from English, mathematics, science, social studies, world languages, or computer science. (Note: these courses should be selected in alignment with a student’s academic and career objectives. Completion of two sequential world language courses is recommended.)

F. Applicants who require special consideration: Constituent institutions shall develop a policy for evaluating applications from students who have not completed all minimum course requirements and shall at least include provisions addressing students with a documented Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan. The institutional policy shall be approved by the board of trustees in accordance with regulations promulgated by the president.

IV. Recommended Courses. While the minimum course requirements serve as the cornerstone of the UNC System admissions policy, students are encouraged to pursue a challenging and rigorous high school curriculum aligned with their academic and career objectives. Completion of the minimum course requirements does not guarantee admission to any individual UNC System institution. As such, students should consult with their high school counselor regarding additional courses recommended by individual UNC System institutions. Additionally, students should:

A. Consider taking the most rigorous courses available at their high school that they can successfully complete.

B. Ensure to complete an academically challenging course load in their senior year, even if they have completed the minimum course requirements.

²An applicant who does not have the unit in U.S. history may be admitted on the condition that at least three semester hours in that subject be passed by the end of the sophomore (second) year.
V. High School Grade Point Average and Standardized Test Scores. Students must meet either the minimum high school grade point average (GPA) or standardized test score in order to be considered for admission. All applicants for admission, except those exempted by current UNC policy or regulation, must submit a standardized test score, even if they satisfy the minimum eligibility requirement through the high school GPA. All applicants for admission, except those exempted by UNC Policy or regulation, must meet the following criteria for admission.

A. For students entering in the Fall 2024 or Spring 2025 semesters:
   1. High School GPA: A minimum weighted GPA of 2.5; or
   2. Standardized Test Scores: Students are not required to submit a standardized test score. If a student does not meet the minimum High School GPA requirement, they may gain admission eligibility with a composite ACT score of 19, or combined SAT (mathematics and evidence-based reading and writing) of 1010.

B. For students entering in the Fall 2025 or Spring 2026 semesters:
   1. High School GPA: A minimum weighted GPA of 2.5.
   2. Standardized Test Scores: Students with a weighted High School GPA greater than or equal to 2.50 and less than 2.80 are required to submit a standardized test score (ACT or SAT).

C. For students entering in the Fall 2026 semester and beyond:
   1. High School GPA: A minimum weighted GPA of 2.5.
   2. Standardized Test Scores: Students with a weighted High School GPA greater than or equal to 2.50 and less than 2.80 are required to submit a standardized test score of a 17 or higher on the ACT or a 930 or higher on the SAT.

The chancellor of each respective constituent institution may, subject to the approval of the president and the Board of Governors, require all students with a weighted High School GPA of 2.80 or greater to also submit a standardized test score. The Board of Governors must grant any such approval before December 1, two academic years prior to the implementation of the requirement.

D. Chancellor’s Exceptions: Chancellors shall develop a policy for evaluating applications from students who have not met the school grade point average and/or standardized test score requirements. The maximum number of chancellor’s exceptions is limited to one percent of the total number of applicants accepted as first-time undergraduates each year, or 75 students, whichever is greater. A chancellor’s exception may be applied to the SAT/ACT minimum requirement or the high school GPA minimum requirement. The institutional policy shall be approved by the board of trustees in accordance with regulations promulgated by the president.

VI. Additional Admissions Requirements. Chancellors may identify standards for admission that exceed the minimums identified in this policy, including but not limited to, essays, letters of recommendation, and higher high school GPAs or standardized test scores. These requirements shall be approved by the board of trustees in
accordance with regulations promulgated by the president.

VII. Graduates of Cooperative Innovative High Schools (Early College). Each UNC constituent institution must offer to any student who graduated from a cooperative innovative high school program with an associate degree and who applies for admission to a constituent institution the option of being considered for admission as a first-time (freshman) or as a transfer student.

A. The constituent institution shall also provide written information to the student regarding the consequences that accompany each option and any other relevant information that may be helpful to the student when considering which option to select.

B. Beginning March 1, 2017, the Board of Governors shall report annually regarding the number of students who graduated from a cooperative innovative high school program with an associate degree and which option was chosen by those students when applying for admission to a constituent institution.

VIII. Graduates of North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics (NCSSM). Each UNC constituent institution must offer first-time (freshman) admission to any applicant attending the residential program at NCSSM. Such offer of admission shall be contingent upon the applicant:

A. Successfully completing all NCSSM graduation requirements and remaining enrolled and in good standing at NCSSM through the time of the student’s graduation. For the purposes of this policy, “in good standing” shall mean with no pending disciplinary charges or pending academic violations that could lead to dismissal as of the date of graduation;

B. Meeting the academic program requirements as outlined in Section 700.1.1.3[R] of the UNC Policy Manual;

C. Completing all application requirements established by the constituent institution by a standard public deadline; and

D. Satisfying the provisions of Section 700.5.1[R] of the UNC Policy Manual.

This guaranteed offer of admission shall apply only to acceptance to the respective constituent institutions, and shall not apply to any specific school, major, or program of study within the constituent institutions.

This section VIII. shall be effective for all NCSSM students applying for first-time (freshman) admission to constituent institutions beginning with the 2022 fall semester.

IX. Notification of Stakeholders and Educational Policymakers. The president is directed to develop plans and further recommendations to inform key stakeholders and education policymakers of the changes in requirements.

X. Other Matters

A. Effective Date. With the exception of section VI., above, the requirements of this policy shall be effective for all first-time students applying for admission at a constituent institution for any semester beginning with the 2024 fall semester through the 2025...
on the date of adoption by the Board of Governors, as defined in the various sections herein. Reference to the fall semester shall (including students who attended the institution for the first time in the prior summer term).

A-B. Report on Implementation. The president shall provide a report to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs at the February 2025 Board meeting and annually thereafter. The report shall include an analysis of admissions policies in place at other public universities along with available data on the impact of the policy on the constituent institutions.

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

C-D. 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.

*In accordance with the unique mission and undergraduate admissions process employed at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, it is exempted from this provision.*