The State of the University
2018 Snapshot
“No state has had a closer and more essential relationship with its institutions of higher education than North Carolina. The story of this state, especially the rise of modern North Carolina, is the story of its institutions of higher education.”

– UNC System President Margaret Spellings
A Message from the Chairman and the President

Dear Friends:

The state of the University of North Carolina System is strong. Known as a world-class teaching and research enterprise, the System propels this state forward by empowering students, driving innovation, and enriching North Carolina’s communities. It’s an impact that will only grow in the years ahead.

Guided by the UNC Board of Governors’ ambitious Strategic Plan, *Higher Expectations*, and 17 institution-specific performance agreements, we are expanding opportunity for all North Carolinians, ensuring delivery of an education as free as practicable, and producing the ground-breaking research and highly trained workforce the state needs to move forward.

One year into our strategic plan, it’s time to evaluate where we are. To track our progress and hold ourselves accountable, we’ve developed this snapshot of where we stand on key metrics and have launched an online data dashboard showing the UNC System’s annual progress towards our Strategic Plan’s goals.

We encourage you to check out the dashboards at www.northcarolina.edu/strategic-planning to learn more about the advances we’ve already made in all 100 counties to build a higher education system that works for every North Carolinian.

As a System, the best is yet to come. We’re focused on providing opportunity for North Carolinians, growing our role as a public institution serving the public good, and pulling back the curtain to increase accountability and transparency in our work. By embracing change and empowering our institutions, we’re confident the UNC System will continue to serve this state as a “Mighty Engine” of growth and innovation.

Regards,

Lou Bissette,
Chairman of the UNC System Board of Governors

Margaret Spellings,
UNC System President
FACT: The UNC System is enrolling and graduating more students from low-income backgrounds than ever before.
In 2016-17, our graduating class included more than 16,200 North Carolina undergrads who had received a Pell Grant at some point in their college career, an 18 percent increase over the graduating class in 2011-2012.

- In the 2015-16 academic year, the UNC System enrolled 65,709 undergraduate students who received a Pell Grant, ranking us among the top 10 public university systems in the country in low-income student access.

- The UNC System ranks 10th in the country in the percentage of Pell Grant recipients that graduate within six years when compared to the public universities in other states.

- The U.S. Department of Education has identified UNC Charlotte and UNC Wilmington as being among 13 four-year colleges that have significantly expanded access to low-income students.

- The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ranks 4th among public universities in Pell Grant graduation rates, and NC State University ranks in the top 30 nationally.

- Five of our institutions—Elizabeth City State, Winston-Salem State, North Carolina Central, North Carolina A&T, and Fayetteville State—ranked in the top quartile of 2,200 institutions nationwide in a national study of economic mobility.

- The UNC System has expanded opportunities for students from all over the state to transfer from the North Carolina Community Colleges, leading to a 30 percent increase in NC Community College transfer student enrollment over the past five years.
FACT: Graduation rates in the UNC System have improved dramatically over the past five years, and we continue to be a national leader in student success.
Our five-year graduation rate increased from just over 60 percent (61.6%) in 2012 to 68.2 percent in 2017. That is a 10.7 percent increase as a System.

- Nationally, North Carolina ranks in the top 10 when it comes to six-year completion rates among students who started at a public, four-year university.

- Thanks to the increase in graduation rates, 2,000 more students who started college in 2012 graduated within five years than would have if graduation rates had remained flat.

- Of the students who transfer to the UNC System as juniors, 70 percent graduate within four years.

- The University of North Carolina at Greensboro has been identified as a national leader in closing achievement gaps. The U.S. Department of Education identified UNCG as one of 13 public institutions that excel in access and success. UNCG has also narrowed the gap between black and white students, having improved graduation rates among African-American students by five percentage points between 2013 and 2016.
FACT: The University of North Carolina System remains one of the most affordable public university systems in the country.
This coming year for only the third time since 2000, in-state undergraduate tuition will not increase at any of our institutions. Thanks to NC Promise, which will lower tuition to $500 a semester at Elizabeth City State, UNC Pembroke, and Western Carolina in 2018-19, the average in-state tuition across the UNC System will actually go down in 2018-19.

- In 2017, North Carolina ranked 8th in the country among public four-year universities for affordability of tuition and fees for in-state undergraduates.

- Data from the College Board show that, on average, in-state undergraduate tuition and fees at UNC institutions are about 25-30 percent less than the national average across all public four-year institutions. Our affordability advantage will grow with the start of NC Promise.

- During this past legislative session, the General Assembly built on its continued commitment to higher education by fully funding enrollment growth at UNC System institutions and providing $51 million to fund students at NC Promise institutions.

- Median student debt among 2015-16 graduates of UNC System institutions was about $950 less than the national average across four-year colleges and universities.
CRITICAL WORKFORCES

FACT: The University of North Carolina is producing more graduates in science, technology, engineering, and math than ever before.
Last year, our institutions produced nearly 21,000 degrees and certificates in health sciences and other STEM disciplines. That results in a 29% increase over our 2011-12 levels.

- Our talented graduates remain in North Carolina after graduation. Nearly 80 percent of 2010-11 graduates from undergraduate health science programs at UNC System institutions were either employed in North Carolina or enrolled in a UNC System graduate program five years later.

- UNC Wilmington more than tripled the number of health sciences graduates between 2010-11 and 2016-17, growing from 213 to 655. Overall, UNCW’s production of STEM and health science credentials increased by 80 percent over the last six years.

- North Carolina A&T was ranked as the top producer of African-American engineers at the undergraduate level and second at the master’s level.

- NC State ranks sixth among public universities nationally in percentage of bachelor’s degrees granted in STEM fields, and the university also ranks fifteenth in the nation in number of underrepresented minority graduates in mathematics and statistics.

- Starting this fall, the new North Carolina Teaching Fellows program will attract fresh talent into the teaching profession by providing forgivable loans to students pursuing their teaching credentials at NC State, UNC Charlotte, and UNC-Chapel Hill.
FACT: In Fiscal Year 2017, the University of North Carolina System institutions brought in $1.56 billion in sponsored research money and licensing income, an all-time high for the System.
Research by UNC System institutions powers North Carolina’s economy. In FY2017, our institutions earned $337 million more in sponsored research dollars than in FY2012, a 28 percent increase. At a time when federal research dollars have been declining, our capacity for groundbreaking research has never been stronger.

- UNC System institutions received more than 1,500 research awards in FY17, a nearly 50 percent increase over the number of awards received in 2007. System institutions submitted a record number of proposals last year (12,432), up 44 percent over 2007 levels.

- Licensing income generated by UNC System research increased by $1.5 million between FY2016 and FY2017, a 19.5 percent increase. UNC System Institutions generated 133 US patents and 31 start-up companies in FY2017.

- UNC-Chapel Hill, the nation’s 11th largest research university, was awarded over $897 million in sponsored research in FY2017, a six percent increase over FY2016.

- Among universities without a medical school, NC State is second in the nation for commercialization agreements based on university research, and the university is sixth nationwide for research commercialization among all universities. NC State research has led to more than 950 U.S. patents and 575 consumer products.
Individually Remarkable
Collectively Extraordinary
Empowering Students, Driving Innovation, and Enriching Communities

Appalachian State University
East Carolina University
Elizabeth City State University
Fayetteville State University
North Carolina A&T State University
North Carolina Central University
North Carolina State University
UNC Asheville
UNC-Chapel Hill
UNC Charlotte
UNC Greensboro
UNC Pembroke
UNC Wilmington
UNC School of the Arts
Western Carolina University
Winston-Salem State University
NC School of Science and Mathematics

Learn more at northcarolina.edu/system
“This is what embracing higher expectations means – pulling back the curtain and letting the results guide our actions and tell our story.”

– UNC System President
Margaret Spellings