

E ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY



November 8, 2016

UNC BOARD OF GOVERNORS STRATEGIC PLAN PUBLIC FORUM: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Elizabeth City State University participated in a UNC Board of Governors Strategic Plan Public Forum on November 3, 2016 with 71 attendees. Attendees consisted of civic leaders, business community, faculty, staff, students, trustees, and alumni. The written comments and spoken comments from that event were synthesized and compiled by Elizabeth City State University staff and the executive summary of the themes, key issues and remarks are reported below.

1) ACCESS

- Technical growth because youth are technology driven. Extend broadband Wi-Fi to all citizens in rural areas at an affordable price. Open broad band service to the community.
- Access higher education by increasing early colleges. There are not enough funds for early college programs that help students become prepared for college.
- Partnership with community college systems and local government
- Chart measures for measuring students' progress for each entering class to track their progress from enrollment to graduation date.
- Program and scholarships that will help students meet standards of other competing institutions from the UNC System.
- Support system for 'first-time' students' assistance with paperwork and mentoring upon entering college.
- A junior college for students to feel more encouraged applying to higher institutions.
- A transfer program for junior colleges to align with the UNC System requirements to remove the turf between community college and public institutions
 - There is a need for individual agreements for community college transfers
 - Change of culture in the process at institutions and technical schools.
- Signature programs – Change distribution of funding in UNC System to bring additional resources and staff to Elizabeth City State University.
- SAT remediation programs that assist with the cost, tutoring for high school students.
- Admission requirements are different between districts, based on the district expectations. The scale of intelligence for admittance to universities through standardized testing needs to be changed so students do not feel discouraged. Reinstating incentive grants to promote enrollment.
- Increase enrollment radius to include Virginia- utilizing students in Virginia to market ECSU and increase admissions.
- Why do people want to work in the UNC system – Online self-paced and self-assessment programs for employees at the university.
- ECSU Marketing strategy methods need improvement to reach a wide range of students. ECSU need to develop an appeal or distinction that will attract students.
- Make education at ECSU appealing by offering attractive majors/minors – We have to make education from ECSU appealing to other schools in the UNC System. We need to focus on trends to attract students from other counties and states.
- Promote positive and influential stories about individuals at ECSU, and ECSU as a whole.
- Accredited programs offered online. ECSU has the potential and talent to focus on reaching out to the entire state and nation. Programs are in demand that can attract more people for increased enrollment. A university that has programs online can attract distance learners by making it affordable. Online project can spread the target market of ECSU. Technology needs to be improved by starting a program to bring talent from other states and countries.

Comment Cards

- Need a seamless process of moving students to community college to university. Make university accessible to every high school graduate or GED recipient to attend university of their choice.
- Board of Governors should open ECSU to more out of state students and remove the recruitment cap on enrollment.
- What major barriers is the university experiencing? What is the biggest opportunity that is yet untapped?
- A good number of students are not college ready due to lack of information regarding college careers. Emphasis needs to be placed in middle schools with access to information available so students can begin the college ready process. They are already taking pre-algebra by that time anyway. College ready students need to know the application process, financial aid process, feedback and enrollment process when they arrive. We raised the UNC system GPA/SAT scores but put nothing in place to cultivate/nurture students across the state who might not be able to meet the new standards which has directly impacted access.
- The current admissions standards may prohibit some students from access to UNC system institutions. It is time to revisit. Financial resources are needed to assist students. Stronger partnerships with community colleges. Not just to enable students to have a seamless process. It needs to be genuine. Some students need ECSU yet we must turn them away because of MAR. Students who may choose ECSU may never choose another institution but it does not mean that they would not be successful at another institution.
- Very important to have access in a Tier I area. Grants and financial aid packages need to be extended to anyone thinking of attending ECSU. This would encourage everyone to attend and offer greater access. Need to determine why students are choosing other universities and are willing to be on waiting lists. Should waiting list students be offered spots at other UNC universities?
- Improve student access by getting students involved in the admissions process by visiting our prospective high schools to recruit.
- Extend broadband/wifi/internet access to all citizens, particularly in rural areas, which will impact affordability and efficiency, as well as student success. Create expectation of lifelong learning.
- Needs to be more consideration for rural areas that may not have internet access and possibly even enough teachers. Figure out how to make education accessible to them.
- Public school districts which are university feeders shall foster strategies for under-represented college students that enhance their self-esteem and that celebrate success in academic settings. Gender roles and stereotypes shall be directly addressed to enhance socialization and adjusting to new identities.
- Don't need to just market cookie cutter image of what college material looks like. This can be done by helping to include and encourage all students to come and to think about college being for them.
- Non-traditional students more access to programs. What about looking at 8 week sessions instead of semesters for this type of student? More students involved in early college with dual enrollment. With NC New Schools program ending, the new process is too much for rural schools and those who try to partner with them. The process is also very competitive. Why aren't funds made available to four year universities?
- Stronger relationship with K-12 schools to help students plan.

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- The university is in a rural community on the coast of NC, so there is plenty of access on campus or online.
- Reaching outside of NC, especially to minority students to increase diversity. Increase ability to bring in more Hispanic people from outside the state.
- Paying taxes is something that every North Carolinian is obligated to do. However, I find it odd that many tax payers are unable to send their children to a UNC campus due to admission standards that far outpace the poor schools those students previously attended. For that reason, I believe that there should be at least one to two UNC schools that every student can attend.
- Provide access for virtual collaboration with other UNC campuses to provide diversity in learning styles, exchange of information and ideas.
- Should provide continued training to K-12 teachers since the students feed into the UNC system.
- Partnerships with community colleges. Ask seniors in high schools if they are going to college, if not ask why. Knowing this information can help you better provide access. College ready course in high school to help with admissions and financial aid. Sliding admission scale based on the area.
- UNC faculty and internet based technologies. By combining the two assets UNC may extend access to the other institutions. Provide UNC world class faculty conducting classes on the internet. This could improve access and introduce higher education to remote and underserved areas of NC. Use pop up campuses to serve remote areas.
- Expand dual enrollment options for high school students beyond community colleges to include UNC institutions.
- Transfer credits need to be transferrable to all schools in the UNC system. Standardized GE requirements.
- Retrieve data from past and present and see what has worked, maintain it and put in place affordable and achievable goals. Teacher education.
- Enabling online access to courses, because sometimes the geographical distance is the access barrier.
- Allow some areas of southeastern Virginia to be part of ECSU's territory.
- Getting students on college campuses so they can see the possibilities.

2) STUDENT SUCCESS

- Resources and counseling in high schools should help students meet standardized testing requirements.
- College Ready – The process of students transitioning from high school to college.
- Measuring upward mobility- ECSU needs to measure students upward mobility to measure the mobility of a student success versus no education
- Signature programs – Change distribution of funding in UNC System to bring additional resources and staff to Elizabeth City State University.
- Work force ready- Intelligence, training and work ethics and personal skills for interviewees- Students need to demonstrate the overall skills for professional success in the workforce.
 - Create interview situations such as mock trials to assess and develop skills
- The twenty-one counties that we serve- ECSU for every student in the twenty-one counties- We have to be an institution that serves the 21 counties that is accessible by students of all demographics by promoting diversity.
- Students need to determine their long term goals upon entering the university.

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- Programs that support and help students discover and define their long term goals in college. Upon entering students need to think about their long term goals while attending college.
- Expose students to organizations to encourage student success such as the Thurgood Marshall College Fund and HBCU connect

Comment Cards

- Development of collaborative student success models that may be utilized across campuses and in partnership with community colleges.
- Make sure departments take close look at course outlines and update them. Update course offerings for degree programs.
- Integrate extra course materials into courses. Reevaluate course catalogs to ensure that students are not taking unnecessary courses.
- While many schools are evolving in ways that students are taught and are learning, I feel that some things are being forgotten. Critical thinking and the ability to take knowledge and apply it to any part of life is, in my opinion, lacking within school systems. Without these skills, how can students gain success? Also, it needs to be understood that all students learn differently, and regardless that this generation is more technology based. Students still need that old-fashioned learning too. For students in humanities, remember that critical thinking is crucial for them and that it is important for their success.
- Have more prepared teachers to prepare students of tomorrow. I am a biology major at ECSU and I can honestly say I have been here in a classroom where the whole class has never passed a test or anything or struggled to understand the material. I understand college is more independent, but at the same time it is about the support system. I have witnessed my classmates transferring due to the low educational experience and preparation for graduate schools. I just want a better education so I can be ready for graduate school.
- Degree attainment cannot be achieved by creating preparatory education systems (community, technical) college that mirrors and can be applied to four-year degree.
- Help students set relevant goals dependent on degree.
- Change how we train teachers. Engage students to lead their education rather than spoon feeding them. K-12 teachers need to be able to work with technology in their classrooms. They teach in an environment that is student centered in their own education. Be relevant to what is now and always with an eye on the future—change is constant.
- Be in existing offices and high schools with faculty that could support class members and mentor high school students to be college ready.
- Developmental education in high school to prepare students to enter college. SAT prep classes. System wide resources with costs that match enrollment level.
- Due to family issues students often take a break from school for personal problems. Instead of four years, it can take six. Could the measurement be changed to year enrolled instead of start to finish?
- Ensure that every educational program is offered across all campuses. Make all online classes available to students within the whole UNC system.
- When speaking about the university make it clear that it can be difficult, but that this institution will help you make it through.

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- Are the ECSU students prepared to enter the workforce? I had the opportunity to conduct mock interviews for the ECSU business school's graduates and I found that many would benefit from more rigorous guidance earlier in their college career. They need to be very articulate in selling their strength attributes.
- We have student successes. We need to communicate that loud and proud. Utilize the students to share their own successes to potential students.
- Broaden our definition of success to include educating the hand, heart and minds of students.
- Students can be successful when they have access to all that they need.
- This community needs qualified successful individuals to move this area forward. We need quality programs to provide leadership for the future. Well trained teachers are so important to NC. Why is ECSU ranked last as a university?
- The community stakeholders need a formal way to become a part of the life the institution through regular forums like these.
- ECSU needs to do better job of developing critical thinking skills with students. Need better base education. Most students are not prepared for the job market. A 4-year degree at ECSU is equivalent to a 2-year education at another institution.
- How are graduates doing at finding jobs? Do employers come here to seek graduates on a broad scale?
- The 15/16:1 student/teacher ratio should be a standard maintained if at all possible throughout the UNC system. Upward mobility and career readiness need to be implemented by better programs to teach interview skills, interpersonal skills, work ethic, and oral and written professional skills.
- Success is defined in many ways. Graduation is not the only measurement. Four years for some, will be six years for others. Enrollment may be a measurement for others.
- Pre-screen student interest and aptitude to maximize their success rate. Make sure the input matches the forged goals. Monitor success and intervene early when it is not working. Create AVID program for every middle/secondary school student. It works, C/D students turn around, are successful, and aspire to learn and do learn.
- Student success in post-secondary institutions often is derailed, not by academic performance, but by psycho-social and interpersonal challenges. Mentors and caring role models can help students navigate the complex institutions which are bureaucratic and complicated and set up unnecessary obstacles to student success.
- Standards need to be raised.
- An individual advising center, separate from the faculty.
- Provide access to the best professors and faculty across the state, offer incentives for recruitment to rural area, housing allowance or flex time.
- Provide appropriate technology for each major.
- Consider faculty needed for small schools such as ECSU in areas of education. Although we are a small school, the development needs expert faculty to be successful and competitive. Equity is hinged on giving what is needed to achieve success at ECSU.

3) AFFORDABILITY AND EFFICIENCY

- We need to reach all demographics in the twenty-one North Carolina counties.
- Measure efficiency at ECSU- Data that supports the education offered at ECSU and what it means to educate students. The data should be a supplement for the university.
- Middle class students have issues with funds to pay for a college degree. We have to provide opportunities for students to feel financial secure and understand student debt.
- Describe the tuition costs offered at each UNC institution.
- Financial opportunity for out-state students- Create more financial resources for out of state students.
- Out of State Students- NC Promise program which looks at lifting the cap or lowering out-of-state tuition.

Comment Cards

- Ensure that we are not treating students as customers. This can be done by making sure that we are not running our institutions as fortune 500 companies. Allow educators to run institutions, not politicians. Make university services as simple and not complex as possible so that students don't get caught up in the mechanics of getting and staying in school, and will instead focus on education.
- Have more precise processes and procedures for processing and handling materials.
- More scholarship and grant opportunities to smaller schools.
- The Board of Governors should always ask whether an institution already has the resources when requesting funds from the General Administration reserve or from the General Assembly. Certain universities make tougher choices than others. Whether it is strategic direction or faculty recruitment and retention, our decisions and options at ECSU are limited. An initiative or new program at Chapel Hill or NCSU may be able to be funded from within.
- Cost of SAT.
- Price of program directly affects the student's decision on whether to choose an institution. Too much variation between UNC schools, there should be more continuity in pricing.
- Tuition that is affordable to every North Carolinian.
- More students would go further with their education if they could afford it. Some are at a place financially where they may need help but cannot get it. They make too much, but not enough to fund their education.
- There needs to be a better staff in financial aid. Students should not stress about trying to get cleared two days before classes start. Financial Aid plays a large role in the reasoning behind declining enrollment.
- Make college affordable to every high school grad, GED recipient and continuing education person that want to take advantage of it. It will only make our state and nation stronger.
- By lowering the tuition costs the BOG are devaluing the college education, where most students should incur debt.
- How is ECSU doing financially? What decision criterion is used to add or eliminate different programs of study? Can Elizabeth City as a community help ECSU in any way to grow?
- 90% of HBCUs or public school students require some type of federal aid. With continuing budget cuts how do we make it affordable? Grants and scholarships are out there. They are available. How do we share that information? Build mentoring programs to help find them, apply and earn scholarships and grants.

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- Money needed. While funds are available, students and parents need additional assistance to navigate the enrollment process. Many parents and students don't know what questions to ask, therefore, they will not be successful.
- ECSU is affordable. That is not the problem. Maybe lower interest loans available to students.
- Reduce costs not just find more money to match increased tuitions.
- Many students come from poorer families that are financially challenged. Taking time out to attend college instead of working to support the family is difficult for many students.
- Planning seems to be lacking in \$1000/year tuition, will lead to inefficiencies.
- Public transportation for the region to and from the universities.
- Provide access to real scholarship opportunities to students with different economic backgrounds.

4) ECONOMIC IMPACT

- Scholarships and grants opportunities need to be equally distributed to all tier counties.
- STEM Majors - There needs to be project based learning for students.
- Community contact through internship programs/collaboration from partnership with the county government.
- Marketing strategy to encourage students to pursue a higher education from institutions and the desire to understand the changing nature of the world and workplace
- Student-directed projects that help the community from research from social problems and finding solutions. Real world project that impact the community. Universities need to make a commitment on the Real World Projects to impact the community.
- We need to create and utilize programs of study to accomplish community goals.
- Increase the amount of internships by collaborating with surrounding business and communities.
- Professors need to create programs where students make prototypes for enhancing the surrounding communities.

Comment Card

- Need to more equitably allocate the scarce resources for capital improvement. The communities all need to work together.
- Partnering with cities and townships to provide internships. Viking day in different cities.
- Access to internships and placed based learning. Require community service as a graduation requirement.
- Encourage businesses to come to campuses and participate in student training and curriculum development discussions.
- UNC System needs to increase support to the smaller schools and could afford to do that by reducing the amount of overlap of GA and OHR. Too many duplications.
- The community should be more involved with the university. The other UNC institutions can use resources in the community, but ECSU is limited to what is on campus.
- The state should concentrate on STEM education and ensure that all K-12 students have broadband access. They are more likely to attend college.
- How do the university and Elizabeth City work more closely together to facilitate each other's growth/missions?

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- Lack of marketing of ECSU across the community. There does not seem to be an all-out embrace between and among university and city leaders. We need to do more community relations events and involve more community leaders in university activities.
- Community service should be a graduation requirement for all UNC campuses.
- This university has a major impact on this area. A qualified workforce is needed for this area to grow. Our area is dependent on this university. As quality students graduate our area will grow and economic benefit will be felt.
- Goals 2 and 3 are excellent ways to help small cities and rural counties address the growing and more complex world of local governing. Look at the number of intern programs, targeted undergrad/grad civic support projects, directed research via grant for government institutions on specific issues. May need legislation.
- It will be devastating for some people if they cannot go to college. Why can't the transfer process from one institution to another be seamless?
- Leadership opportunities can help students develop. Job shadowing will show students the intricacies of a career and provide a role model. Co-ops and summer work programs help students see the bigger picture. Service learning opportunities are critical to students to see their roles in society and how they can give back.
- Stronger focus on community and job needs.
- Successful universities make successful communities. The current substantial economic impact of ECSU on the community can be increased as ECSU becomes more successful. UNC may be able to assist with continued efforts and expanded efforts to make ECSU more successful.

5) EXCELLENT AND DIVERSE INSTITUTION

- 25% of bond was allocated to HBCUs but only 5% was distributed to ECSU. There is need to allocate more revenue for bonds.
- We have to be aspirational, education has to be aspirational! An individual has to want to improve their lives and others. We have an obligation to serve those who cannot serve themselves. Keep the strategic plan aspirational for all students from all minorities, but those individuals who do not fit can help the system.
- Diversity – We need programs to understand the difference in cultures.
- Identify the metrics to measure workforce impact locally and nationally.
- Transition phrase from HBCU to College-honor history by not living by it or marketing only as it. The history needs to be transcending to increase the attractiveness of the town. There needs to be an understanding of university history from a cultural aspect.
- Make ECSU attractive school by contributing to the town and making the town attractive.

Comment Card

- Plan for non-traditional students to have full access to various degree programs.
- Specialized marketing to appeal to specific demographics.
- Change ECSUs name to UNC-Elizabeth City
- Grow ECSU into a multi-cultural institution based on serving local and state populations of northeastern NC and southeastern VA.

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- Staff and professors need to stay on top of the things that will directly affect students. Advisors need to help students to be guided toward the appropriate classes.
- Areas of distinction should not be limited to academic programs.
- Push to measure success of HBCUs by their mission statements, not against other institutions. Success is not dictated by how we measure up to those that we serve next to, it is measure by how well we achieve our goals.
- The path to community may not always be from high school to university. University must be excellent.
- Respect and honor the diversity found in every campus.
- Is ECSU's name consistent with other UNC affiliates? Would a change to UNC at EC improve student growth? What experience was seen at other affiliates after a name change? Is there a program that could be a better foundation for growth?
- Need to survey graduates to establish where they are coming from by county and state and to determine what the universities are doing right in these areas and how to do them better. Must change the culture across the state/globally on HBCUs being only for African Americans. We have always been open to all students and UNC can lead the way.
- The beauty of the UNC System is its diverse institutions. The mission of ECSU is different than other UNC campuses. Each campus should have the flexibility to determine what students will need to be successful.
- Excellence in education is the most important. Make sure this university turns out a quality product. This will encourage others in other areas to attend this university. Allow the best teachers in the system to teach at the university by bonuses and other perks.
- Set standards and hold people accountable, such as school safety, federal reporting, EEO. Take Gilchrist name off ECSU building. Don't reward poor performance, poor audits, under reporting crime, hiding significant serious issues, potential witness of intimidation. Create model programs for city and county schools for student interactions and activities.
- We have to be able to help students that cannot help themselves.
- HBCUs need to appeal to other populations.

6) **OTHER ISSUES TO CONSIDER**

- We need to strive to be a great university!

Comment Card

- Build and fund Upward Bound programs across the state. Bring back a program like the NYSP, National Youth Sports Programs and other youth programs that build character, academic skills, social/cultural mindset, and technical efficiencies.
- More emphasis on public safety or greater security for students. Make it the safest campus in the system.
- Create civic engagement and require it for all students. Use NCLM and county community organizations to develop scenarios for action. Include group projects. ECSU Art Department currently has program called "Change be Design" which requires freshman to interact with city downtown and create usable products or ideas for enhancing downtown.

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- At these forums, please have students speak first! They have great insight and enthusiasm for the topic. Rural communities are extremely challenged by the distance and transportation. Community colleges and universities need to collaborate.
- Timely planning and requests. Many requests for information or assistance are last minute and appear to be less than well thought through.
- Communicate! The mission should come from the top and be clearly communicated to all. Staff and faculty should be held accountable to serve that mission in all they do. An effort should be made to foster a sense of team work campus wide. Faculty and staff that resist working as part of the team toward achieving the mission may need to change teams. Creating this culture of teamwork will improve faculty and staff retention, therefore directly benefiting students. Ultimately, enrollment will grow because we are working as one cohesive unit for the benefit of ECSU.
- Improve food on campus. If the cost of a meal plan increases, then the food should improve as well. We are limited to how often we can use our meal plan. Other UNC campuses have a diverse food selection, ECSU is very limited. Why is it not uniform across institutions?