



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

ECSU

UNC POLICY MANUAL 300.8.5
2025 CERTIFICATION & REPORT

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EQUALITY WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
August 29, 2025

Peter Hans, President
University of North Carolina System
223 S. West St., Ste. 1800
Raleigh, NC 27603

Dear President Hans:

The University of North Carolina Board of Governors adopted Section 300.8.5 of the UNC Policy Manual, *Equality Within the University of North Carolina*, on May 23, 2024, to reaffirm the University's longstanding commitment to equality.

As such, the chancellor and director of student affairs (or equivalent officer) of each constituent institution must certify and report annually on his or her constituent institution's initial and continued compliance with Section 300.8.5¹.

As such, I certify the following on behalf of my constituent institution:

- I. I certify that Elizabeth City State University, fully complies with the University's commitment to institutional neutrality and nondiscrimination required by law and Section 300.8.5 of the UNC Policy Manual.
- II. My institution continues to act consistently with the actions described in our 2024 Annual Certification & Report and the certifications contained there remain true, noting the following additional or modified actions, including additional savings reallocated towards student success, if any:

¹ The Equality Policy requires annual certification as to compliance and initially expected reports of savings derived from achieving compliance. It is likely that any savings achieved would have occurred in the first year and that succeeding annual certifications will identify fewer additional savings in succeeding years (because non-compliant programs, employment divisions, and employment positions should be addressed completely in the first year and remain addressed). However, in instances where campuses have determined—following the initial certification—that additional programs need to be brought into compliance with the Equality Policy, reallocated savings should be reported in the subsequent certification.

The following actions or modifications have been taken to ensure compliance. The Division of Student Affairs continues to take all the appropriate measures and actions to comply with the Equality Policy. As a result of the position eliminations and role modifications made last year, funds allocated from those roles were placed on efforts and activities that are currently being used to support student success. In the 2024 Annual Certification & Report, the following positions were proposed for hire (Director of Student Leadership and Organizations and the Director of Greek Life and Civic Engagement and the creation of Director of Student Center). However, due to University Leadership transition and the current UNC System administrative and salary cap the positions were not filled. These changes allowed ECSU to save money by streamlining operational expenses. A portion of the operations' expense savings were redirected toward student support initiatives that led to student retention and graduation rates. The savings were used in the following ways:

- Funds were used for services to expand career readiness that allowed career advisors to collaborate with academic deans and staff to focus on pipeline development for the workforce through internships, experiential learning, and co-ops;

- o Improved knowledge and access to scholarships, internships, and other resources such as Handshake and the ECSU Financial Aid program; Study Abroad, academic & entrepreneurial pitch competitions, and student travel funding support.

- o Expanded our relationship with Thurgood Marshall College Fund, Trillium, Tom Joyner Foundation, and the State Employee Credit Union (internships, student ambassador roles, travel to student professional development conferences & workshops).

- o Improved access to Kings and Queens Leadership Conference and the NASAP conference that provide students with a cohort and community building approach to networking, gaining personal & professional life skills, and preparation for career and post-undergraduate placement.

- Funds were used for the student leadership development academy (workshops and trainings), which included a focus on etiquette skills (professional and dining settings) for all students with an intentional focus on

sophomore and junior students and athletes. This ensures that students are well trained and prepared to lead their peers;

- o Enhanced the Student Leadership Academy, which is a 3-day intensive leadership workshop. It included topics on etiquette, organizational policy, budget planning and financial literacy, career development and workforce development, campus safety and protocols, mediation and wellbeing, and poise and perfection.

- Funds were used for technology upgrades to improve digital online platforms, and streamline processes for assessment and evaluation purposes. Technology upgrades included the following:

- o A new audio & visual system was installed in the student center great hall, theater, and multipurpose room, and

- o Anthology Software supporting Student Engagement activities, such as tracking attendance, student engagement, and student elections. It also included the use of the Vikings Engage app for ease of use for students that allowed us to collect data about the events.

Additionally, student center investments were made to expand the use of underutilized spaces due to infrastructure issues. This has made the space a more welcoming and cohesive working and gathering space for student collaboration amongst clubs and organizations. It has also become an additional group study space. We continue to provide ongoing support and other creative programming for the end of the year to ensure graduates' sustainability beyond their time on campus. Remaining in compliance with the UNC System Equality Policy has allowed ECSU to redirect efforts into areas that show direct contribution to measurable student success outcomes as aforementioned in Section II.

- III. To achieve further compliance, my institution has taken the following additional concrete actions towards compliance with the Equality Policy since the last Annual Certification & Report:

All institutional communications were reviewed and revised to align with the Equality Policy. Messaging now emphasizes equal treatment for all, fairness,

and nondiscrimination rather than identity-based initiatives. The institution's commitment to equal opportunity for all students, faculty, and staff without preference or distinction based on race, gender, or other demographic characteristics continues to be reinforced at a Cabinet level and communicated throughout the campus community. Employee training was redesigned to focus on compliance with the Equality Policy, emphasizing legal obligations, institutional standards of fairness, and nondiscriminatory practices. The most recent training on the Equality policy was conducted at the Faculty and Staff Institute on August 12, 2025. As a result of the policy changes related to DEI initiatives and programming university-wide training now focuses on ensuring equality for all persons, non-discrimination, workplace professionalism, and its commitment to free speech.

Additionally, the (former) Chancellor appointed a compliance oversight team which was established to regularly review policies, programs, and communications for alignment with the Equality Policy. The reporting mechanism was reiterated to faculty, staff, and students to confidentially raise concerns related to equal treatment or potential policy misalignment during Faculty and Staff Institute sessions and New Student Orientation, respectively. Quarterly reviews ensure that all institutional practices are continually evaluated and adjusted to maintain compliance.

Through these adjustments, the institution has systematically eliminated DEI-specific frameworks and replaced them with policy-driven approaches rooted in nondiscrimination, equal treatment, and merit-based opportunity. These concrete actions towards compliance with the Equality Policy since the last Annual Certification Report ensure that ECSU remains in compliance.

- IV. To further monitor and assess our compliance, my institution's Board of Trustees established the subcommittee identified below and held meetings on the following dates and locations to discuss our institution's Equality Policy compliance:

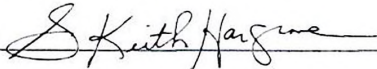
The ECSU Board of Trustees established the subcommittee on July 14, 2025. The subcommittee met on August 26, 2025, at 2:00 pm to review the Certification report. The members of the subcommittee are listed below:

James Copland
Chris Evans
Stephen Friedrich
James Gailliard
Patricia Norman
Justin Waddell (Ex-Officio)

The following topics were discussed at the subcommittee meeting:
Overview of 2024 Equality Policy Annual Certification & Report
Updates on Modifications or Actions Since the 2024 Certification & Report
Additional Resources Used to Support Student Success Initiatives
Discussion on Ongoing Communication & Compliance of the Equality Policy

**ELIZABETH CITY STATE
UNIVERSITY**


Title: Chancellor

By: 

Name: S. Keith Hargrove, Sr., Ph.D.

Date: 8/29/25

Title: Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

By: 

Name: Kevin J. Wade, Ed.D.

Date: 8.28.2025