

**2025 CERTIFICATION & REPORT**  
**EQUALITY WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA**  
**DRAFT AS OF AUGUST 26, 2025 (for subcommittee review)**

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 300.8.5<sup>1</sup>.

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

- I. I certify that North Carolina Central 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:

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

### **Personnel**

With the closure of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, the positions of two Coordinators and one Director were eliminated and reallocated to the newly established Office of Student Development and Support. The total salaries in the amount of \$174,772 have been redirected to advance the new office:

- Student Engagement Coordinators: 2 @ \$46,350 = \$92,700
- Director: \$82,072

This strategic realignment ensures that resources are concentrated on initiatives designed to strengthen student well-being and improve retention.

### **Additional Savings Reallocated to Student Success**

\$45,000 in Student Activity Fee funds previously allocated to the former Office of Diversity and Inclusion were eliminated.

\$45,000 has been reassigned to Student Development & Support, enabling expanded programming focused on student access, success, retention, and well-being.

- 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:

#### **Communication Approaches via Physical Wayfinding and Webpage**

All wayfinding signage related to initiatives previously supported by the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion has been removed, and consistent communication related to the change in order to comply with policy has been communicated to all stakeholders.

The spaces for the LGBTQA Resource Center and Intercultural Center have been converted into Student Wellness Lounges, administered by the Student Development & Support team. These redesigned spaces provide students with opportunities to lead, learn, and connect across multiple aspects of well-being.

In February 2025, in response to guidance, the University reviewed nearly 900 webpage entries for use of terms diversity, equity and inclusion. From this review, modification and/or removal was initiated by division, departments and/or initiative leaders to ensure that language used was inclusive and student success focused. An additional review was conducted in early August 2025, with specific focus on pages referencing race and gender were undertaken for deeper review to ensure compliance with policy. A process of periodic spot-checking for review has been initiated and is led by the Office of Communications and Marketing and staff including the web content manager.

### **Course Requirements**

In accordance with the directives issued by the Board of Governors and UNC System related to removal of DEI course requirements, a comprehensive review was undertaken by the faculty, deans and provost. The resulting review identified thirteen (13) courses across the following programs: Social Work (undergraduate), Higher Education Administration (graduate), Education (undergraduate), Counseling (undergraduate), and Nursing (undergraduate). As is customary across higher education, program requirements are informed by accrediting bodies and licensing agencies. As such, course waiver requests were submitted to the UNC System Office for approval in continuing to offer the courses, as removing them would jeopardize the licensing/career opportunities of students within the programs and consequently impact enrollments in programs the institution has been successful in growing and graduating students from. Course waiver requests were subsequently approved by the UNC System Office.

### **Strategic Planning Process Focus on Overarching Student Success**

In the development of the Strategic Plan initiated during Spring 2025 and launched in June 2025 after Board of Trustee approval, NCCU's five year strategic plan known as Soaring to New Heights: Vision 2030, all goals and objects are focused broadly on student success for every student with specific focus on UNC System performance metrics for all students which include Four-Year Graduation Rate, Undergraduate Degree Efficiency, First-Year Debt, Transfer Debt, Average Earned Credits Per Year, Education Expenses Per Degree as well as student well-being.



### **Professional Development in Wellness**

The staff working within Student Development & Support are pursuing professional development and certifications in wellness-related areas to enhance their ability to support student health, resilience, access, and engagement.

### **Campus Centers**

NCCU has traditionally maintained both a Women's Center and Men's Center. While on its face, both appear gender-specific, each provides programming and support for all students with a specific focus on equipping students with the skills and sensitivities necessary to ensure that all students' well-being is prioritized on campus and off. Despite the broad focus of each entity in meeting the needs of all students, campus leadership is continuing consideration, training, and benchmarking with other UNC system campuses to ensure that campus approaches are in compliance with federal and state regulations. Proactive guidance has been sought to ensure that continued service from these offices for all students is acceptable.

### **External Funding for Scholarships and Programming Support**

In response to UNC System guidance and federal regulations, NCCU undertook a process of reviewing fund agreements as it relates to scholarships and programmatic funding support. Staff within University advancement, Scholarships and Student Aid, and the NCCU Foundation were trained on policy changes so that as they engage with donors and external stakeholders, the University remains in compliance with regulations.

In early Spring 2025, the University was presented with an opportunity to apply for the HBCU Takeoff initiative as a potential sub-awardee of the University of Southern California, which had received funding from ECMC. In late spring 2025, the University was notified of the award of a \$75,000 grant from the program, which has a specific focus on supporting student success for men of color. The University has undertaken a painstaking process of considering whether to accept the award as it seeks to remain in compliance with the UNC System equality policy. At issue is the fact that institutional data shows that men of color lag in academic achievement within the institution, just as they do in national statistics. Providing focused support for this group of students will ultimately benefit the entire student body. Due to staffing limitations, it is inefficient to apply interventions only to a subset;

therefore, any solution must be implemented institution-wide. This approach not only addresses a longstanding challenge but also helps the institution achieve its broader performance goals.

Despite this consideration and rationale, the University reached a decision to decline the funding due to the narrow scope and restrictive terms of the grant and how they place the University at risk of non-compliance with policy 300.8.5 of the UNC Policy Manual.

- 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:

Trustee Courtney Crowder (Chair), Trustee Lisa Martinez, Trustee Francesca Gary, Trustee Michael Goodman, and Trustee Farad Ali. The subcommittee met on Tuesday, August 26, at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom to receive updates on the initial compliance report submitted for 2024 and to assess and provide feedback to campus leadership regarding actions taken and included in the 2025 certification report.

The following topics were discussed in detail: further modifications of position descriptions and alignment of positions organizationally, reallocation of resources toward student success, the two phase review that was undertaken to the University's webpage, course modifications, and review of recent grant awards the University received, specifically the HBCU Takeoff grant spearheaded by the University of Southern California via funds they received from ECMC.

#### NC CENTRAL UNIVERSITY

Title: Chancellor

By: 

Name: Karrie G. Dixon

Date: 8/28/2025

Title: Director of Student Affairs

By: 

Name: Angela A. Coleman

Date: 8/28/2025