

University of North Carolina Wilmington

Priority Progress Measures

Approved by the University Planning and Quality Council October 5, 2005.

Amended May 10, 2006, October 17, 2007 and November 4, 2008.

1. Improve the student-faculty ratio to 15 to 1 by 2013.

The student-faculty ratio is a universal measure of an institution's capacity not only to offer small classes, but also to sustain directed individual study, undergraduate and graduate thesis direction, senior projects, honors projects, student involvement in faculty research, and student-faculty interaction in general.

2. Improve the student-staff ratio from 10.9 to 1 in 2003-04 to 10.0 to 1 by 2010.

Non-faculty staff personnel perform indispensable services that directly affect the quality of a university. Professional staff include administrative, public service, and academic support; and non-professional staff include secretarial, skilled crafts, and service/maintenance.

3. Reduce disparities in retention and graduation rates between majority and minority student populations, and increase the proportion of student enrollments from historically underrepresented groups to achieve a critical mass necessary to enrich the education of all UNCW students.

To serve the higher education needs of southeastern North Carolina, to respond to the changing demographics of North Carolina's high school graduates, and to uphold diversity as a core value, UNCW must monitor those indicators that have historically shown gaps in achievement between traditionally underrepresented groups and the general student population.

A diverse student body is essential for enriching the education of all UNCW students. Cultural, racial, ethnic and global diversity are fundamental to the mission of the university and are essential elements of an atmosphere of openness and free inquiry upon which teaching and learning rest. The measure of diversity lies not in maintaining certain percentages of minorities or even in representing the regional population, but rather ensuring a critical mass of historically underrepresented groups to promote cross-cultural and racial understanding, to break down racial stereotypes, to enliven class discussions, to enable students to understand persons of different backgrounds, and to prepare students with leadership skills for success in an increasingly diverse workforce. The results of surveys, exit interviews and focus groups are the best ways to measure progress in diversity and to identify ways to improve.

4. Increase the freshman to sophomore retention rate from 85.7% in 2004-05 to 90% by 2011, the four-year graduation rate from 42.8% in 2004-05 to 50% by 2012, and the six-year graduation rate from 61% in 2004-05 to 70% by 2012 and to 75% by 2017.

A nationally recognized indicator of academic quality, the freshman to sophomore retention rate reflects student satisfaction with their choice of higher education institution, the extent to which the university meets students' expectations, the success of programs designed to help students meet academic goals, and the degree to which the university is viewed as a "destination" school. Freshman retention is a key influence on the six-year graduation rate, a universal indicator of institutional quality and of general student achievement.

5. Increase the percentage of undergraduates housed on campus from 23.1% in 2004-05 to 35% by 2009, with a long term target of 40%.

A strong core of undergraduate students living on campus contributes to student engagement in academic activities, interaction between faculty and students, involvement of students in campus organizations and events, a general atmosphere of learning, greater likelihood of alumni support, and a sense of campus community.

- 6. Working within the policies of the General Assembly, the Board of Governors, and the Office of State Personnel, steadily increase average faculty salaries to the peer group 80th percentile for each rank, the salaries of other EPA positions to the respective peer group 80th percentile, and SPA salaries to at least the market value for each position.***

Competitive salary and benefits are essential for attracting and retaining highly qualified faculty and staff, and for maintaining employee morale.

- 7. Increase the three-year moving average of total annual R&D expenditures from \$12.5 million in 2001-03 to at least \$20 million by 2009-11.***

Research and development expenditures are funded primarily through federal research grants awarded to faculty, with the Center for Marine Science leading the way. R&D expenditures not only measure faculty research activity, but also the capacity to offer undergraduate and graduate students opportunities for involvement in research projects with faculty, as well as facilitation of collaborative research partnerships with local industry and government and applied research that benefits regional development.

- 8. By fall 2010, increase the international student population to 3% of the total student population. Increase the study abroad participation rate to 20% of undergraduates completing UNCW degrees by 2010, and to 25% by 2015.***

To create an educational environment that prepares UNCW students to be global citizens, it is crucial to enrich the composition of the student body through international representation, and to increase students' opportunities for educational experiences abroad.

- 9. Raise significant additional endowment for diversity and merit scholarships, with a campaign to be completed by 2013.***

To be competitive with peer institutions for enrolling high-achieving freshmen, it is necessary to have substantial capacity to offer scholarships on the basis of academic merit. Simultaneously, diversity scholarships constitute a key component in the enhancement of student body diversity.

- 10. By FY 2013, increase the alumni giving rate to 15% and raise the average alumni gift amount to the top quintile among our peers.***

The alumni giving rate is a widely used measure of alumni satisfaction with their educational experience. Alumni giving is also an important source of private funding that is increasingly necessary for the operation of public institutions.