UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA
A SYSTEM OF HIGHER LEARNING

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University of North Carolina School of the Arts participated in a UNC Board of Governors Strategic Plan Public Forum on October 20 with 62 attendees. Attendees consisted of faculty, staff, students, a Chancellor Emeritus, members of the Board of Visitors, the Board of Trustees and the Foundation Board. The sign-in sheets are included as an appendix to this report. The written comments and spoken comments from that event were synthesized and compiled by Michael Rothkopf, Lauren Whitaker and Wade Wilson and the executive summary of the themes, key issues and remarks are reported below.

1) **ACCESS**

How can UNC system build partnerships with K-12 schools to create pathways to higher education?
- Increasing numbers of students arrive unprepared for the "rigorous learning experiences" of a University education. "Is remediation the new norm?"

- Promote arts and sciences (STEM to STEAM) in K-12 to better prepare students for higher education and for careers
- UNC should provide opportunities for high school students to attend undergraduate classes free of charge for elective credits.
- Advocate for increased emphasis on college planning and guidance counseling
- Two high school programs that are part of the UNC system (UNCSA and Science and Math) can be valuable resources in building partnerships with secondary schools

UNC system must advocate for teacher resources
- Increased teacher pay is critical to building a qualified pool of educators
- UNC should reinstate scholarship programs for teachers with a commitment to teach in the state following graduation
- Better support for recruitment marketing and outreach is necessary

2) STUDENT SUCCESS and Innovative Educational Strategies (suggestion)

UNC should promote STEAM education instead of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math)
- Critical thinking, communication, collaborative problem solving skills are more important to employers than technical skills
- "Nothing is more important than the ability to read, to speak, and to think critically and creatively, in order to build a population of solution seekers."
- Please don't focus too narrowly on technology. Technology changes constantly, and it is the other skills (critical thinking, problem solving) that ensure students will continue to master ever-changing technology."

Use flexible but well defined measurements of student success
- Artists often transition to careers before attaining a degree. A job in the field of study is also success.
- Success is not always measured by the numbers on an entry-level paycheck.
- "How can the UNC system leverage its size and expertise to help smaller campuses with data analysis that will improve student success?"

More support for admissions and recruitment will result in better qualified students who have a greater chance for success.

More support for teaching and learning centers to meet increased student needs.

3) AFFORDABILITY AND EFFICIENCY

Cuts in state appropriations make affordability a challenge, particularly for small campuses, where the economy of scale does not work in our favor.
- "We can't build new dorms with a debt service fee. With 1300 students, it just won't happen."
- "How can this school get what it needs to run? Dorms, maintenance on campus, faculty lines?"

- "As a high school student, I'm terrified of paying for college next year. My parents make too much money for me to really qualify for financial aid. I wish the UNC system would look more at how much a family spends to live vs. how much a family makes."
- "Improve affordability with state resources rather than implementing a cap on tuition and fees."

Increase support for securing private funding
- Scholarships for students from low-income families and under-served populations
- Increase funding for HBCUs
- Consider proposal for free education in public institutions

Incentivize innovation as it relates to new sources of revenue, and encourage entrepreneurial campuses
- "This is a significant component of the Reliability Centered Maintenance methodology"

Clarify "equal or higher quality" – equal to what? Higher quality than what?

Efficiency is hampered, rather than improved, by state regulations and restrictions, particularly in the areas of purchasing, construction and hiring. Operational flexibility is crucial to efficiency.
- Policies and practices imposed by the state should first be vetted by practitioners in the field.
- Efficiency is not one-size fits all. "What works for the Department of Revenue might not work for the universities, and what works for Fayetteville State might not work for UNCSA."
- "State regulations require a lot of staff time that could be better used in educational programs and activities."
- Improve Office of State Budget and Management continuation budget process to include funding opportunities for technology replacements so that cost is not passed to students.

4) ECONOMIC IMPACT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Expand emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) to include Arts (STEAM)
- The arts and entertainment are a $700 billion industry, larger than transportation and construction
- Arts are one of the nation's largest exports
- Arts education and training will fuel the creative economy of the future

Consider economic impact at all levels: neighborhoods, cities, regions, states and national
- Create policies that encourage students to build roots in our communities, and within the state.
- Work with General Assembly to reinstate tax incentives for film industry and other emerging technologies
- Create jobs for UNC graduates

Faculty and staff workloads correlate to the level of community engagement.

Community engagement is crucial to a university that has integrity. Mission-driven jobs, rather than profit-driven jobs, add value to society

Regarding continuous improvement in research …and effective commercialization of technologies" – How can UNC guard against corporate influence in the curriculum? How can UNC make sure non-commercial disciplines are not neglected?

5) EXCELLENT AND DIVERSE INSTITUTION

The diversity of the student body should be reflected at all levels of the institution, including faculty and boards.
- "There is not one African American member of the Board of Trustees."
- Salary is a key issue in recruiting and retaining excellent and diverse faculty and staff who create excellent and diverse institution
- Student voices must be heard.

Eliminate duplicate programs among campuses to increase support and create "premiere" programs
- Example: film schools in Wilmington and UNCSA

Promote inclusivity and equality
- "Diversity here seems to be confined to race and class. Until HB2 is repealed, the UNC system will be prevented from real diversity. Repeal is not within the BOG/GA purview of course, but perhaps those bodies may wield some influence with the General Assembly."

6) OTHER ISSUES TO CONSIDER –

The brand of UNC needs to be refreshed. Who are we, what makes us unique.

- "What is our special sauce?"
- Improve the image of the UNC campuses: nicer learning facilities, better landscapes.
- "It's not going as well as some want to believe."

Focus on health and wellness, especially mental health

Focus on incentives to keep UNC grads in the state after graduation
- Example: film incentives