

The University of North Carolina Board of Governors held a public comment session on January 13, 2017, in conjunction with its regularly scheduled meeting. Below are responses to topics raised during that session.

Faculty Retention and Employment Practices

During the January Board of Governors meeting the board adopted the UNC Strategic Plan Definitions, Goals, Metrics and Targets. One of the goals is that “The University will systematically focus on recruitment, retention, and development of the most talented and diverse workforce possible at all levels over the next five years.” More on the strategic plan, including information on metrics, can be found [here](#).

STEM Education

STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education is a valued part of the University, and is a focus of the Strategic Plan. Specifically, by 2021-22, we will “increase the number of credentials (including, but not limited to: bachelor’s, master’s, doctoral degrees, and post-baccalaureate certificates) awarded in the fields of health sciences, STEM, K-12 education, and other emerging regional workforce needs by an aggregate of 25% over 2015-16 levels.”

Training of Emergency Medicine Residents

The UNC system has renewed dedication to providing quality doctors and healthcare to the state of North Carolina. As technologies continue to advance, the university system is dedicated to making sure its medical and health science students are receiving training in emerging innovative and ethical practices. At the January meeting, the Board of Governors had a focused discussion on the state of healthcare and medical education in North Carolina. Materials from that discussion can be found [here](#).

Academic Freedom

The UNC system is committed to academic freedom. The Board of Governors has stated its commitment in Chapter 100.1, Section of 601 of The Code titled “Academic Freedom and Responsibility of Faculty,” which states:

1. It is the policy of the University of North Carolina to support and encourage full freedom, within the law, of inquiry, discourse, teaching, research, and publication for all members of the academic staffs of the constituent institutions. Members of the faculty are expected to recognize that accuracy, forthrightness, and dignity befit their association with the University and their position as men and women of learning. They should not represent themselves, without authorization, as spokespersons for the University of North Carolina or any of its constituent institutions.
2. The University and its constituent institutions shall not penalize or discipline members of its faculties because of the exercise of academic freedom in the lawful pursuit of their respective areas of scholarly and professional interest and responsibility.

Undocumented Students

In recent months, there has been much concern and discussion about the future of undocumented students studying and living at colleges and universities across the country, specifically those eligible for the federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policies enacted in 2012. DACA policies were meant to offer some measure of certainty to young people who were brought to the United States as children by their parents or others.

The University of North Carolina welcomes and supports all students who earn a place in our public universities. The University cannot control federal law or national policies, but we can affirm our commitment to being a welcoming, supportive, and safe environment for all students.

Affordability and State Funding

The North Carolina State Constitution directs that the benefits of the University of North Carolina and other public institutions of higher education be extended to the people of the state free of expense, as far as practicable. Affordability has been and will continue to be a consistent focus of the University - one of the goals of the UNC Strategic Plan is to “offer education of equal or higher quality than currently provided at a cost that is both consistent with the State constitution and attainable to students and families in North Carolina”. For more specific data on affordability, view the Affordability and Efficiency Benchmark II document presented at the September Board of Governors meeting.

https://www.northcarolina.edu/sites/default/files/affordability_benchmark_ii.pdf