East Carolina University

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
A SYSTEM OF HIGHER LEARNING

November 21, 2016

East Carolina University participated in a UNC Board of Governors Strategic Plan Public Forum on November 17, 2016 with approximately 140 attendees. Attendees consisted of faculty, staff and students. 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 ECU Staff members and the executive summary of the themes, key issues and remarks are reported below.

1) **ACCESS**
   - Increase contact with community colleges to connect with students desiring a four-year degree
   - Increase funding for assistantships and self-help positions to minimize student debt
   - Increase outreach to high schools, especially underfunded school districts
   - Partner with NC public schools (K-12) to increase students' readiness for college
   - Develop programs to boost Latino and Spanish-speaking student enrollment, including the creation of a position for Director of Latino Affairs
   - Connect veterans to resource officers in Veteran Affairs
   - Allow each institution to set tuition and fees based on regional markets
   - Reduce emphasis on test scores in the admissions process

2) **STUDENT SUCCESS**
   - Remedy the perception that students must graduate in four years to be successful
   - Focus on student mental health issues, including medication and stress management, in counseling centers and freshman seminar courses
   - Maintain and seek to reduce class sizes
   - Broaden the bridge and summer venture programs between high schools and the University
   - Reach out to nontraditional and first generation students who may not consider a college education
   - Emphasize courses in the Humanities, as well as a well-rounded curriculum, focusing on writing and critical thinking skills
   - Require all students to study a foreign language, fostering a global campus community
   - Increase the opportunity for undergraduate research
   - Craft learning experiences that align with contemporary skills and values, including scholarship of engagement and community service

3) **AFFORDABILITY AND EFFICIENCY**
- Increase the amount of student self-help positions
- Increase financial aid opportunities, especially for students unable to qualify for PELL grants
- Increase summer course offerings, which will improve graduation rates
- Create a unified UNC System library, including access to core facilities across institutions
- Reduce the number of universities statewide to reduce redundancies and inefficiencies within the UNC System
- Allow students to enroll in courses across the UNC System

4) **ECONOMIC IMPACT**
- Increase teacher salaries in the state in order to recruit and retain students interested in education
- Reward faculty for service learning projects and scholarship of engagement
- Seek common goals between the UNC System and the Community College System
- Focus on quality of life in our local communities and the connection to our school system
- Focus on workforce development in the context of University research
- Focus on a positive and sustainable relationship with the environment
- Hire foundations officers who seek out strategies of successful institutions
- Develop multidisciplinary research opportunities for faculty and students to work with community partners on local issues, such as water quality, income inequality, and disaster preparedness
- Develop a Public Service Corps for students to participate in during a gap year and still receive college credit, allowing them to work in and for local communities, developing leadership, analytic problem solving, and communication skills

5) **EXCELLENT AND DIVERSE INSTITUTION**
- Aspire for diversity in student populations and faculty
- Establish operational excellence centers at every institution
- Establish Women's Resource Centers at every institution
- Establish interdisciplinary centers, encouraging knowledge building and communication between disciplines and institutions
- Increase the amount and affordability of study-abroad programs

6) **MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES**
- Critical need for additional resources from the state level to fund our plan and goals
- Allocation of release time for researchers to reflect the interest and value in research
- Development of a reward system that honors the individuals, not just the institution
- Reconnect public education with the actual public, providing inspiration, guidance, and resources for local and community issues and priorities