

Task Forces Report

Theo Kalikow, Interim Provost

Katrina Rodriguez, Vice President for Campus Community and Climate

Stephanie Torrez, Assistant Vice President for Student Academic Success

Corey Pierce, Associate Dean, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences

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Executive Summary of Common Themes

In fall 2018, Interim Provost Theo Kalikow convened three task forces charged with recommending strategies for improving student outcomes, reducing equity gaps, realigning student affairs functions, and discontinuing, restructuring, and adding new academic programs. Over 170 faculty, staff, and students served on 18 committees across the three task forces: Academic Portfolio, Student Affairs, and Student Success. This document provides an overview of the 18 committee reports, revised organizational charts, a master action plan, summary reports from each task force, and campus feedback on the committee recommendations. More information about the work of the task forces can be found at www.unco.edu/president/advisory-groups/task-force-committees.

Common themes emerged across the 18 committees; however, there were a small number of issues where conflicting perspectives were presented that will need to be reviewed by senior leadership to determine a decision. Common themes and issues to be determined are summarized below.

Common Themes

- Mission clarity, strategic planning priorities, and performance metrics
 - UNC's mission should be revisited to ensure it is responsive to the current environment and future direction of the university.
 - A strategic plan is urgently needed to provide a framework for making decisions about programs and services, organizational structure, resources, cost savings, and investments.
 - Student success performance targets were recommended, and these should be adopted or revised; however, there are other performance targets that will need to be identified through the strategic planning process.
- Institution-level infrastructure
 - New organizational charts need to be developed for Academic Affairs and Student Affairs based on the decision to establish a division of Student Affairs. Both divisions' organizational structures should align with the institutional mission and priorities and maximize operating efficiencies.
 - Investments in core infrastructure need to be prioritized and funded (e.g., student academic support; data analysis, assessment, and evaluation; employee training and development; technology, etc.). This will necessitate reassigning or reducing personnel in some areas to ensure UNC has the faculty and staff needed in mission-critical areas related to the university's student success goals.
 - Employment policies and procedures related to hiring, staffing, compensation, and onboarding employees need to be standardized and centrally administered through Human Resources.
 - Policies for making decisions about academic and student affairs program development, continuation, and elimination need to be established and consistently followed.
- Data
 - A formal organizational structure for supporting institutional needs for higher level data analysis (inferential statistics, merging data sources, modeling) should be created, which would reduce the use of outside consultants and vendors such as EAB.
 - Access to and transparency of data need to be improved and standardized to ensure employees have the information needed to develop, maintain, and evaluate programs and services.

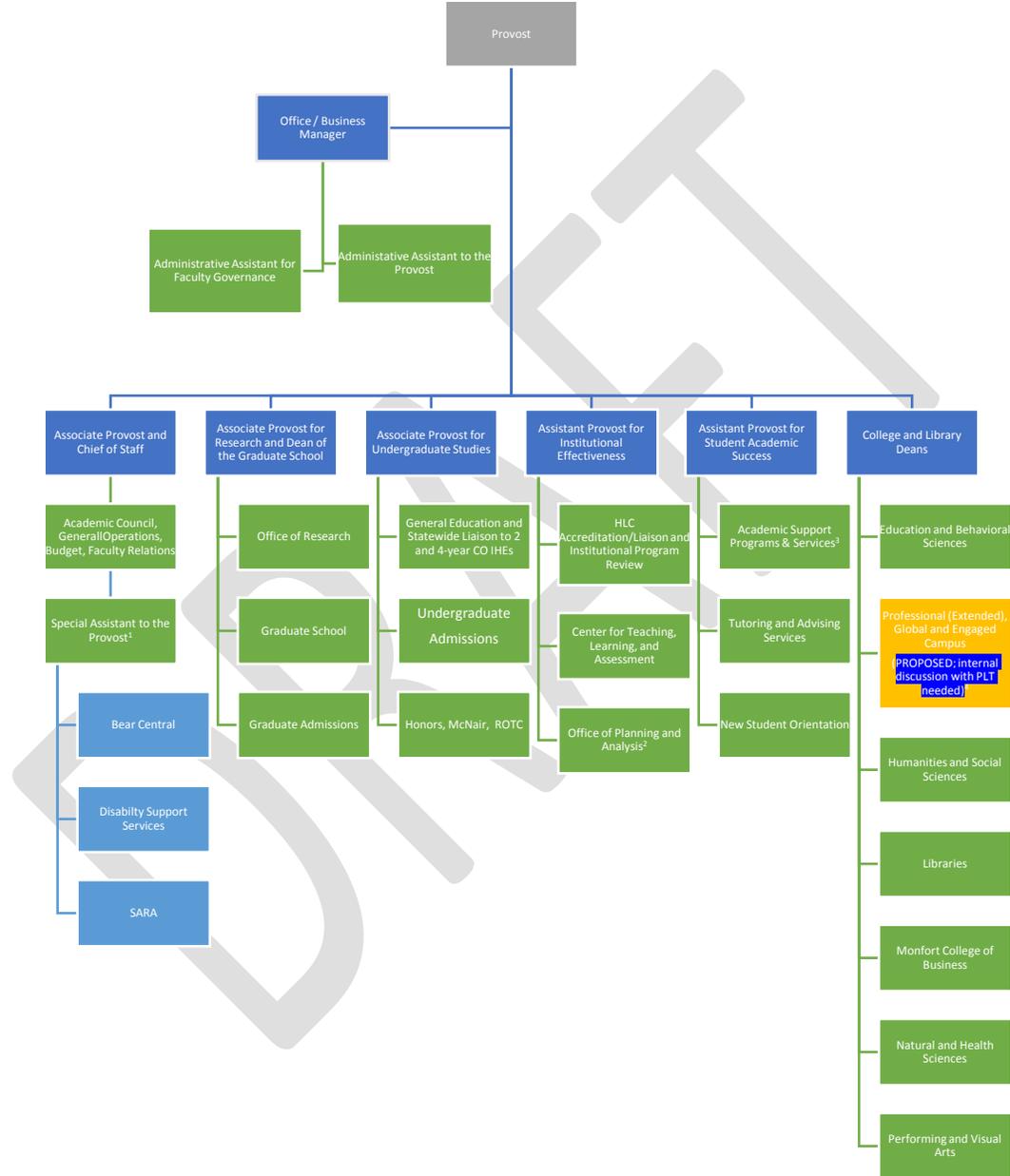
- Student outcomes
 - Institution-level decisions need to be made regarding the type of educational experiences (in and out of classroom) UNC is committed to providing. Expectations for all programs and accountability measures need to be clarified and implemented (e.g., to what extent are academic and student services programs responsible for addressing active learning, institutional learning outcomes, career readiness, high impact practices, equity-minded practice, effective advising, etc.?).
 - UNC must establish an effective advising model, invest in advisor training, implement consistent advising practices, regularly monitor and evaluate effectiveness, and address workload and evaluation issues related to advising.
 - UNC should invest in new and/or increase the use of current technologies for early identification of at-risk students, communication with students, delivery of support services to distance and local students (including mental health services), and tracking student outcomes.
 - UNC must develop, enhance, and connect curricular and co-curricular opportunities that increase students' sense of belonging, particularly students identified as at-risk for persistence and graduation.

Issues to be Determined

- As noted in the Student Affairs narrative summary report, there are several units and functions that could be organizationally housed under Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, or elsewhere within the institution. Examples include student academic success (advising, new student orientation, tutoring, etc.), faculty and staff development, and compliance related functions (Title IX, Disability Support Services, etc.). Survey feedback suggests a wide range of perspectives as to whether these functions should be placed under Student Affairs or Academic Affairs, and there are also differing opinions between personnel and leadership within the two units.
- The Student Affairs summary report also includes a rationale for combining Campus Community and Climate with Student Affairs. Similar to opinions about the organizational structure, there are varying perspectives in support or opposed to this decision.
- Although the guiding principles for the task force work emphasized a focus on serving first generation students and students from other marginalized groups, feedback from the survey suggests that there is not a campus-wide consensus on this focus. A decision will need to be made regarding how much and how publicly UNC wants to emphasize a focus on educating traditionally underserved students and the potential costs and benefits of making this a key part of our mission, planning, and communications with stakeholders.

Academic Affairs Org Chart

(Shows reporting units only; functional responsibilities not associated with dedicated FTE are not included.)



NOTES:

The overall change in the Academic Affairs organizational structure reduces the number of direct reports to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs from 20+ to 13 direct reports. The recommendation to reduce the number of reports to the Provost was part of the HLC report during UNC's last accreditation visit but has been slow in coming.

*University College would be completely eliminated from UNC's structure. Most programs have already been redistributed into academic units across campus. Remaining units such as Honors, McNair and ROTC would fall under the purview of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies.

**Upward Bound a pre-collegiate TRIO program currently housed in University College would be moved to CCSA because it is primarily a student affairs/access type function and aligns with a Campus Climate and Student Affairs mission.

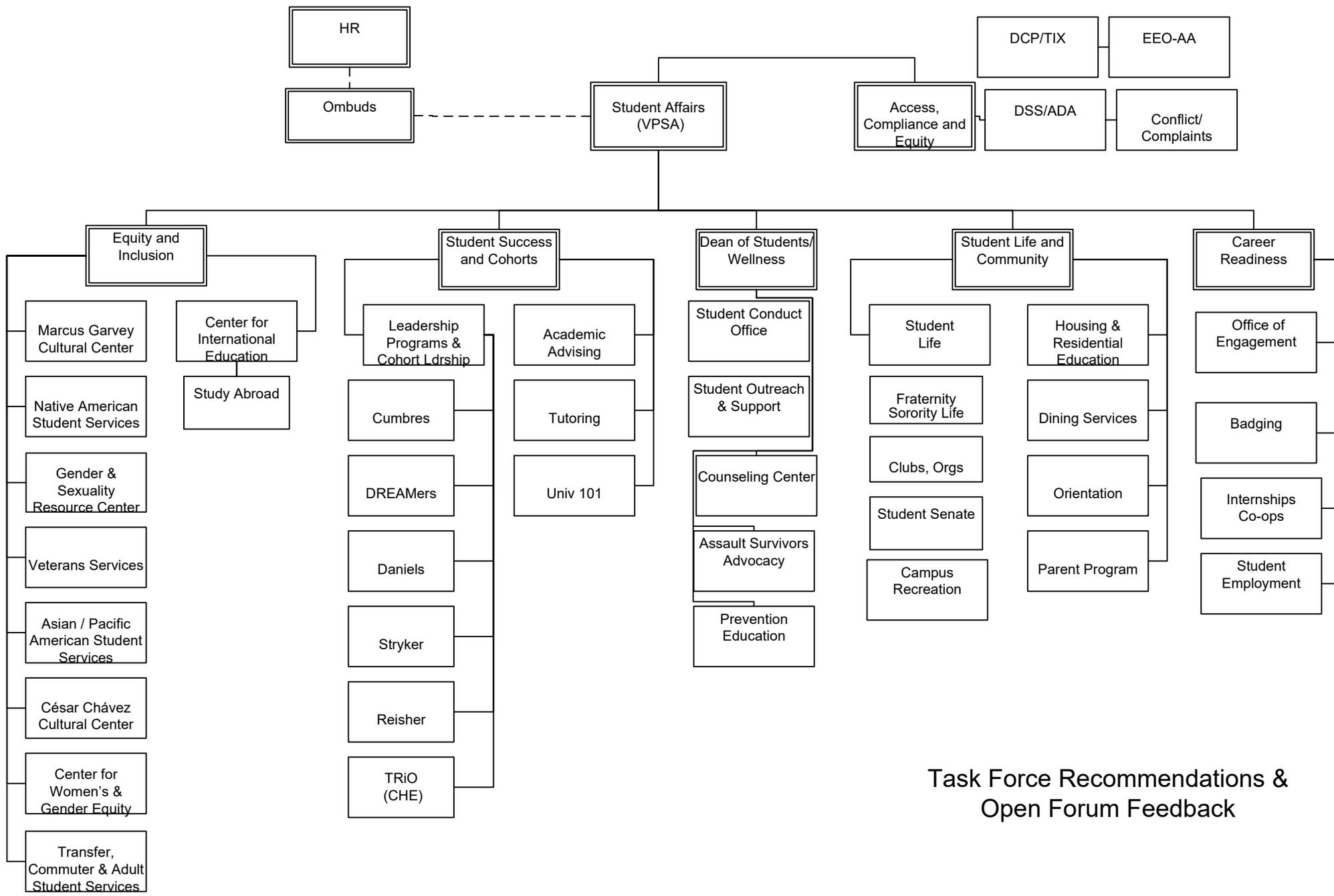
¹ Bear Central, DSS and SARA are all essential functions of UNC and are all governed by federal and state regulations. These units would report to a Special Assistant to the Provost (note: DSS would be moved from CCSA to AA because it primarily serves an academic support function and is related to compliance).

² Office of Planning Analysis would be a new unit achieved through a combination of existing FTE in Assessment and reassigning FTE from other units and dollars from the cessation of the APS/EAB partnership.

³ Includes CHE, Student Athlete Academic Success, LEAP, and similar programs.

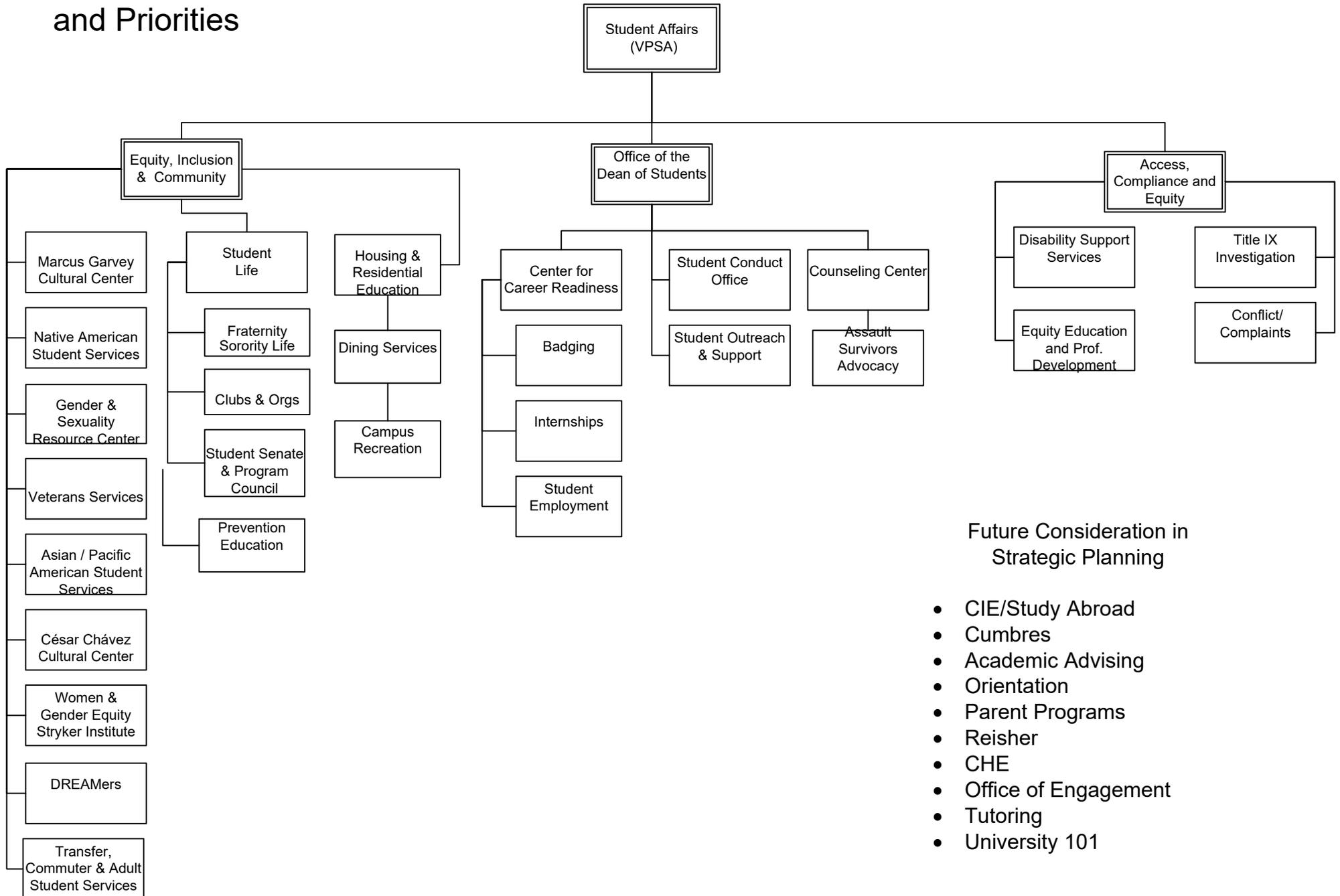
⁴ Professional (Extended), Global and Engaged Campus would become a college. Extended Studies would have a focus on professional development and non-degree granting initiatives. International studies currently serving 300 students or less across campus, would focus on expansion, inclusive of professional development associated with international initiatives, Intensive English Programs as well as traditional international type programs (study abroad, international student exchange, and faculty led study abroad). The proposed new college will be inclusive of community and civic engagement.

NOTE – titles are based on the following definition: Associate Provost titles are reserved for individuals who have previously held T/TT faculty assignments. Assistant Provost titles are for people who have the appropriate credentials and experience but who have may not held T/TT faculty assignments.



Task Force Recommendations & Open Forum Feedback

2019-2020 Structure and Priorities



Future Consideration in Strategic Planning

- CIE/Study Abroad
- Cumbres
- Academic Advising
- Orientation
- Parent Programs
- Reisher
- CHE
- Office of Engagement
- Tutoring
- University 101

Master Action Plan

Action Topic	Action Steps	Related Reports	Start Term	Responsible Unit	Cost Implications
Mission	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review and revise institutional mission to clarify the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which UNC intentionally serves FG, marginalized, and academically underprepared UG students Determine the type of educational experience UNC is committed to providing, including extent to which active learning, common first year experiences, equity-minded practice, and career readiness will be institutionalized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Active Learning -Career Readiness -Equity Minded Strategies -First Year Experiences -Liberal Arts Core -Student Data Analysis -Student Affairs Vision, Mission, Values -Student Success Vision 	Fall 2019	President	TBD
Strategic Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a new strategic plan for the university that will inform organizational and resource decisions for the next several years including but not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose and future direction of Extended Campus Development of new academic and student support programs Investments in existing academic programs and student support services Student success metrics and peer/aspirant institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Active Learning -Career Readiness -Extended Campus -First Year Experiences -Liberal Arts Council -New Programs -Peer Benchmarking -Student Affairs Report 	Fall 2019	President	TBD
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Develop division-specific strategic plans for guiding decisions at the division, college, and program levels. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement program and college-level goals and strategies for reaching student success targets. Determine the approaches and initiatives to be developed and implemented in Student Affairs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Peer Benchmarking -Student Data Analysis -Student Affairs Report 	Fall 2019	Academic Affairs and Student Affairs	TBD
Organizational Structure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Develop revised organizational structure for Academic Affairs to include the following: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Active Learning -Academic Program Support 	Spring 2019	Academic Affairs	Cost Savings

Action Topic	Action Steps	Related Reports	Start Term	Responsible Unit	Cost Implications
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-establish Undergraduate Studies with an Associate Provost • Change reporting line for Extended Campus Executive Director to direct report to the Provost • Establish Office of Institutional Effectiveness • Establish Center for International Education as a separate unit from Extended Campus • Adjust for creation of new Student Affairs Division • Address adequacy and equity of administrative support across Colleges and for the Liberal Arts Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Extended Campus -Liberal Arts Council -Peer Benchmarking 			
	<p>2. Finalize and implement new organizational structure for Student Affairs to clarify the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Units that should remain with current organizational placement and which should be housed in Student Affairs • Operational efficiencies that can be realized by reorganization into Student Affairs division • Develop a strategic plan for the division 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Student Affairs Inventory and Organizational Structure -Student Affairs Vision, Mission, and Values -Student Affairs Narrative Summary 	Spring 2019	Student Affairs	Cost Savings
Academic Portfolio	<p>1. Develop and implement recommendations for the academic portfolio including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a committee to make recommendations for graduate program continuation and restructuring. • Implement the action plan as outlined in the report from the Undergraduate Program Discontinuance and Restructuring committee. • Finalize the recommendations for revising the Liberal Arts Core curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Graduate Programs -Liberal Arts Core -Undergraduate Program Discontinuance & Restructuring 	Spring 2019	Academic Affairs	Cost Savings
Business Operations	<p>1. Increase campus-wide efficiencies and improve business operations by implementing the following action steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a campus-wide committee to begin implementing the action plan recommended by the Academic Program Support committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Academic Program Support -First Year Advising -Gateway Course Success 	Spring 2019	Finance & Administration	Cost Savings

Action Topic	Action Steps	Related Reports	Start Term	Responsible Unit	Cost Implications
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign Human Resources to develop and deliver a centralized onboarding and off boarding process for employees and to move from a paper-based leave process to using the existing software functionality. Increase program-level access to data and publish dashboards for tracking student success outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Liberal Arts Core -Peer Benchmarking -Student Data Analysis -Student Success Data Strategy -Student Success Vision 			
	<p>2. Improve practices in Academic Affairs including but not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate current course scheduling practices and make recommendations for improvement. Revise academic program review to align with metrics developed by Graduate and Undergraduate committees for program discontinuance and restructuring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Academic Program Support -Graduate Programs -Undergraduate Program Discontinuance and Restructuring 	Summer 2019	Academic Affairs	Cost Savings
Student Support	<p>1. Increase student academic support services to better reflect the needs of the students UNC admits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a revised advising model Begin implementing the operational recommendations for improving advising. Convene a standing committee for the oversight of gateway courses and implementation of the committee's action plan. Invest in additional resources for academic success in the areas of advising and learning assistance programs. Expand and improve faculty development offered through the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning relevant to student success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -First Year Advising -First Year Experience -Gateway Course Success -Undergraduate Program Discontinuance and Restructuring 	Spring 2019	Academic Affairs	Investment
	<p>2. Coordinate and deliver co-curricular opportunities that support student success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue current active learning activities but do not expand until a strategic plan is finalized. Create a web-based equity and inclusion hub with resources for faculty and staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Active Learning -Career Readiness -Equity-Minded Strategies -First Year Experiences 	Fall 2019	Academic Affairs and Student Affairs	TBD

Action Topic	Action Steps	Related Reports	Start Term	Responsible Unit	Cost Implications
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defer decisions about recommendations from the Career Readiness and First Year Experiences committees until a strategic plan is finalized. 				

Academic Affairs Report

The Academic Affairs Report consists of three sections. Section 1 addresses the recommendations of the seven committees from the Academic Portfolio Task Force. Section 2 provides similar information from the Student Success Task Force. Although Student Academic Success is a sub-unit within the division of Academic Affairs, a second task force with an explicit focus on student success was convened due to the urgent need for improving student outcomes related to retention, persistence, and completion. Section 3 provides a more detailed discussion of an action plan for improving student success outcomes that integrates the Task Force recommendations with information emerging from the Huron Strategic Enrollment Management initiative and ongoing work led by the AVP for Student Academic Success.

Section 1: Academic Portfolio Task Force Committees

The Academic Portfolio Task Force consisted of seven committees:

- Academic Program Support
- Active Learning
- Extended Campus
- Graduate Programs
- Liberal Arts Core
- New Program Development
- Undergraduate Program Discontinuation and Restructuring

This report summarizes the primary recommendations emerging from these committees along with recommendations for action steps to be initiated.

Academic Program Support

This committee identified improvements to a variety of business practices that extend beyond Academic Affairs. Recommendations in this report address logistical and operational support and efficiencies and are not dependent on larger institutional mission and strategic planning decisions. Some recommendations are connected to those in other committee reports (e.g., recommendations regarding data access and integrity).

Action Steps

1. Convene a campus-wide committee (including members of the task force) to begin implementing the following aspects of the action plan outlined in the report immediately in spring 2019.
 - Audit of university forms and associated procedures to eliminate duplication of effort
 - Design, update, and revise procedures
 - Audit hiring forms, evaluate processes, and determine appropriate organizational staffing assignments
 - Explore common tasks and options for shared staffing
 - Review and recommend improvements to official function and travel processes
 - Make recommendations for improving curriculum workflow process
2. Assign to Human Resources the following activities:
 - Develop consistent procedures for onboarding and training new employees and off-boarding departing employees

- Implement existing software functionality and eliminate current paper forms for leave approval and tracking
3. Within Academic Affairs, implement the following aspects of the action plan:
- Address adequacy and equitability of staffing in the Colleges
 - Evaluate current course scheduling practices and make recommendations for improvement

Active Learning

Action on expanding and institutionalizing active learning is dependent on a larger, institution-wide decision about the type of experiences UNC will commit to offering to students.

Action Steps

1. Operational and strategic recommendations from this report should be folded into future mission and strategic planning initiatives and will provide a strong foundation for those efforts. In the meantime, continue current efforts but do not expand these until a decision on institutionalizing active learning is made through the strategic planning process.
2. Defer any new investments tied to these recommendations (e.g., digital credentials) until a strategic plan is in place with one exception. UNC should fill the currently vacant Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies because the current solution of parceling out responsibilities among several administrators is not sustainable.

Extended Campus

This report included both strategic and operational recommendations. With the departure of Nancy Rubin, some of these may need to be put on hold until a new person is hired.

Action Steps

1. A decision about the mission of Extended Campus should be connected to the larger institutional mission and strategic plan and should be included in those planning processes.
2. Some operational recommendations should be implemented immediately, including the following:
 - Change reporting line of Executive Director to direct report to Provost
 - Separate the Center for International Education from the Extended Campus
 - Research the issues identified related to optimization (i.e., balance of full-time faculty and adjuncts, student satisfaction assessments, best practices in enrollment coaching and advising, effectiveness of outsourcing and partnerships)
 - Develop faculty compensation plan
 - Improve consistent application of policies across campus.

Graduate Programs

The recommendations outline a process for making decisions about graduate programs and include establishing a working group to make final recommendations about program continuation and restructuring by the end of fall 2019.

Action Steps

1. Immediately convene a working group of graduate faculty, college deans, graduate students, staff, and administrators to implement the recommendations outlined in the report.

2. Beginning no later than spring 2020, initiate revision of academic program review to align with new metrics resulting from this committee's recommendations along with those from the Undergraduate Programs task force committee.

Liberal Arts Core

This committee worked collaboratively with the Liberal Arts Council, UNC's faculty governance body responsible for the Liberal Arts Core (LAC), and developed recommendations related to the LAC curriculum, administrative support, and future refinements. Most of these recommendations can be implemented immediately.

Action Steps

1. Recommendations regarding curriculum revisions, policies for transitioning students between the current and new curriculum requirements, and LAC assessment should be referred to the Liberal Arts Council with a spring 2019 deadline for finalizing decisions in these areas.
2. As part of the FY20 budget process, Academic Affairs should include locating resources for administrative support for the Liberal Arts Council. Academic Affairs should consider options for providing support for communication, data analysis, and assessment that are cost neutral.
3. Reinstatement of the Learning Communities should be part of a larger strategic plan for student success and should be included as a consideration in future institutional strategic planning. Although the recommendations regarding LAC Learning Communities state these can be implemented with minimal resources, more analysis needs to be completed as to the actual costs for full implementation, student interest and demand, and where strategic investments can be best employed to achieve student success goals.

New Program Development

This committee provided both strategic and operational recommendations, with the latter closely tied to strategic decisions.

Action Steps

1. Strategic decisions about the development of new programs are dependent on decisions about institutional mission and strategic priorities. The recommendations in this report should be included in future strategic planning and connected to decisions about the student experience and the purpose of Extended Campus.

Undergraduate Program Discontinuation and Restructuring

Similar to the Graduate Programs committee, this report outlines recommendations for developing metrics for making decisions about academic programs, including the adoption of a cost model developed by staff in Finance and Administration. The action plan provided by this committee includes recommendations for determining metrics as well as program improvement. All of these recommendations assign responsibility to deans and the provost, and some also include department chairs. Some recommendations from the report are consistent with or aligned to those from other committees (e.g., Gateway Courses).

Action Steps

1. Implement the action plan outlined in the report beginning spring 2019 with final recommendations for program discontinuation or restructuring provided to the provost and president by the end of fall 2019.

2. The recommendation regarding DWF rates should be attached to continuing work with Gateway Course Completion (Student Success Task Force).

Section 2: Student Success Task Force Committees

First Year Advising

The recommendations from this report focused primarily on operational improvements related to timelines, access to student information, communication, advising tools, assessment, and advisor training. The report does not explicitly address larger strategic questions regarding advising at UNC; however, some recommendations could be considered in the development of a strategic advising model at UNC: campus-wide early alert system, additional support for students who do not succeed in the first year, and possibly creating meta majors/guided pathways as an option for students. Section 3 provides a plan for developing a strategic advising model.

Action Steps

1. Many of the recommendations are operational, and the appropriate units at UNC should begin implementing these immediately, as they will be needed regardless of any revisions to UNC's current advising model.
2. The AVP for Student Academic Success should continue working with the colleges during spring 2019 to develop and implement a revised advising model and strategic advising goals related to the student success outcomes metrics recommended by the Peer Benchmarking committee.
3. Improving advising should be an area of investment if UNC is to achieve the student outcomes recommended by the Peer Benchmarking committee.

First Year Experiences

This report contained recommendations for a variety of strategies for improving students' first year experience at UNC. These include reestablishing LAC learning communities, addressing financial literacy, increasing capacity to address student mental health needs, supporting a sense of belonging, creating intentional learning outcomes for student employment, and expanding the number of students completing University 101.

Action Steps

1. The diverse array of topics and recommendations presented by this committee further highlight the need for an institution-wide strategic plan that explicitly addresses the type of experience UNC commits to providing for students, including any common experiences for all students.
2. The recommendations for supporting students at risk of early departure (mental health services, financial nudges, University 101) should be considered as part of a larger strategic plan for supporting at-risk students.
3. Recommendations related to LAC learning communities, sense of belonging, and student employment should be folded into the larger institution-wide strategic planning that needs to occur.

Gateway Course Success

This report provided recommendations for improving student academic outcomes in gateway courses (i.e., 100-200 level courses with 20% or higher DFWI grade rates). The recommendations address structural, instruction, coordination, and student support areas essential to improving student outcomes. See section 3 for additional discussion of strategies for improving outcomes in 100-200 level courses.

Action Steps

1. A standing committee responsible for ongoing coordination and oversight of gateway courses should be established and charged with implementing the action plan outlined in the report.
2. This committee should report to the AVP for Student Academic Success and should coordinate with other campus units as appropriate to the recommended action steps.
3. Improving Gateway Course Success should be considered an area for investment in the resources needed to use data for identifying and monitoring individual at-risk students, providing professional development for instructors, and increasing the availability of learning assistance programs and services.

Peer Benchmarking

This report provided recommendations for a set of peer and aspirational institutions UNC should adopt for benchmarking student success outcomes. The report also includes a recommendation for student success performance targets and additional recommendations for data infrastructure needed to support the attainment of those targets.

Action Steps

1. UNC should implement the recommendations from this report regarding the adoption of the peer/aspirant institutions.
2. UNC should adopt the student outcomes performance metrics recommended in this report and use these to inform decision making about strategic investments in student academic support services including advising, learning assistance, and data support and analysis.
3. Academic programs and colleges should develop goals and strategies related to the performance targets, including accountability measures.
4. UNC should develop publicly available performance dashboards for sharing and monitoring progress.
5. UNC should establish an institutional effectiveness office to work collaboratively with Institutional Reporting and Analysis Services to monitor and track progress, conduct impact analyses and research, and develop predictive models needed for decision-making about services and programs.

Student Success Vision

This report outlines the institution-wide need for a consolidated vision for student success and a strategic plan that is aligned to this vision. The report emphasizes that student success cannot be the job of a single individual or unit, the need for creating a shared understanding of what it means to be part of the UNC community, and the importance of aligning institutional enrollment goals with student success outcomes.

Action Steps

1. UNC should address the development of an institution-wide vision for student success in a review of the mission and development of a strategic plan.
2. Strategies for introducing new employees to UNC's mission and vision should be adopted.
3. Opportunities for collaboration and clarification of roles and responsibilities between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs should be pursued.
4. A vision for student success should include the needs of all students, including graduate and transfer students.

Section 3: Action Plan for Student Academic Success

Improving Undergraduate Student Success Outcomes

“Adopting an action strategy based on ‘programs’ can send an unintended message that only those directly involved in them are responsible for student success. Ironically and unintentionally, this perspective may actually discourage widespread internalization of this responsibility in the form of a student-centered culture.” ~AASCU (2015). Student success in state colleges and universities: A matter of culture and leadership

Summary Report Context

President Feinstein has identified student success, specifically improving four and six-year graduation rates, as one of three crucial areas of focus for the future success of UNC. To ensure enduring institutional commitment, adoption, and accountability, the priority areas in this summary report require active engagement and leadership from within Academic Affairs with support from the President’s cabinet. A 2016 *Inside Higher Ed* opinion piece stated that higher education needs to abandon a paradigm that expects students to be **college-ready** and instead invest in being **student-ready** institutions (White, 2016ⁱ). We know that many of our students are not college-ready. The priority areas of investment discussed in this report address becoming a student-ready institution, especially since the composition of the student body is not likely to substantially change. In addition, the priorities presented are well aligned with the Colorado Department of Higher Education’s (CDHE) Colorado Rises masterplanⁱⁱ and Colorado Momentum projectⁱⁱⁱ. **UNC will need to be very thoughtful and intentional about not cutting services or staff that are essential to improving retention and completion. The student success metrics guiding these recommendations are aspirational and provide context for making budgetary decisions about where to invest resources; however, these targets should not be the basis for establishing annual budgets.**

UNC’s current state of student success is important context for understanding the work that will be needed to attain the desired student outcomes and is central to informing the plan for moving forward. In comparison to a peer group identified through the task force initiative, UNC ranks near the bottom for first-year retention, in the bottom half for 6-year graduation rates, and in the middle for 4-year graduation rates^{iv}. Looking to the peer group for evidence that the proposed 2025 student success targets are realistically attainable, there are three aspirant institutions that are meeting or exceeding the recommended goals for retention and graduation rates. While none of the peer or aspirant institutions identified have eliminated URM or Pell gaps, there are peers who have reduced gaps to as low as 2%.

Table 1: 2025 UNC Student Success Metrics

Metric	2025 Goals	Most recent rate	Cohort
First-time, full-time retention rate from first-fall to second-year	80%	71%	F2016
First-time, full-time 4-year graduation rate	40%	31%	F 2013
First-time, full-time 6-year graduation rate	60%	48%	F2011
Pell Gap, 6-year graduation	0	9 % gap	
URM Gap, 6-year graduation	0	9% gap	

The aspirant institutions provide evidence that the success metrics are reachable, but the growth necessary to reach these goals will require a profound change in practice and culture beginning with the entering 2019 undergraduate cohort. Success begins with our admissions decisions and continues throughout the student life-cycle. Students with high school grade point averages below 3.00 are retained at only 60%, yet the yield rate for these students is historically higher than that of students with stronger academic performance in high school. Initial data on the incoming class of 2019 suggests that fall enrollment will include a larger percentage of lower-academically prepared students than the 2018 cohort. While a new strategic enrollment plan may eventually result in changes to the composition of entering first year cohorts, strategies for improving outcomes need to be aligned with the needs of students UNC currently enrolls.

The recommendations presented in this summary report are vitally necessary for establishing a foundation from which UNC can begin to improve student success outcomes. The summary was informed by the task force recommendations, initial work with Huron Consulting, and 20+ years of designing, delivering and assessing academic support programs that have resulted in notable retention, persistence, and graduation rates for populations considered underserved, underrepresented, and/or underprepared. Recommendations directly related to the Colorado Momentum project and Complete College America (CCA) 'game changer strategies' are noted with an asterisks.

Recommendations for Immediate Action and Investment

A long history of flat retention rates has proven UNC will not reach the desired improvements in retention, persistence, and graduation measures without an intentional and coordinated effort. To realize enduring change in culture and practice, success principles must be infused throughout the curricular and cocurricular enterprise. Meeting the ambitious student outcome targets will require a complete institutional commitment to change. **Immediate and substantial improvement** is recommended in academic outreach and advising, gateway course success, and data analytics. Details are presented in the summary below as it relates to the three main success goals of retention and graduation.

Objective 1: Improve Fall to Fall Retention Rate from 71% to 80%

Key results

- Increase first fall UNC GPA
- Increase retention from fall to spring
- Reduce the fall to fall retention gaps for Pell and underrepresented minority students
- Increase fall to fall retention rate*

Key Actions

- **Restructure the advising model to provide proactive outreach to students in their initial terms of enrollment.** UNC consistently loses 30% of an entering cohort from first fall to second fall. Up to an additional 10%+ of a cohort is lost in the next 3rd to 5th terms. UNC needs to immediately improve the structure, strategies, and accountability systems for supporting the advising needs of entering students. Proactive advising is needed if we are to meet the ambitious fall-to-fall retention goal.
 - Reorganize Major Exploration & Academic Probation (MEAP) to become the Student Outreach & Academic Resource office (SOAR). SOAR will provide proactive advising*

and academic intervention for priority populations. Of the 40% of first generation students enrolled last year, only 12% were part of a wraparound support program geared toward the needs of first generation students. In addition, UNC does not currently provide any proactive support for the significant portion of students enrolling with high school grade point averages below a 3.00, and these students have been historically retained at lower rates. The reorganized SOAR office will address a gap in existing support for first generation students through services such as workshops modeled after the Cardinal First program^v. It will also provide customized academic coaching and other supports for students with high school grade point averages below 3.00. SOAR will continue to provide academic advising for exploring (undeclared) majors, probation advising for exploring majors, informational sessions for all students placed on academic probation, and administration and coordination of the academic appeals committee.

- Formalize college-based advisers/success teams focused on the success of 1st and 2nd year students. The college-based advisers/success teams will provide proactive advising* as a supplement and support to faculty advising efforts. There is local evidence of the value-added impact of providing students with both a professional and faculty adviser in their initial terms of enrollment. For example, the College of Performing and Visual Arts has seen great improvements in reducing time-to-degree^{vi} with the addition of a Music adviser who meets with every music major in addition to their meetings with a faculty adviser. The college-based advisers/success teams will also be responsible for monitoring first-year student progress* and providing support (in collaboration w/faculty advisers) for students in their college who are placed on academic probation. Other key areas of focus for the advising teams include participation in DWF and early alert/midterm grade campaigns and connecting students to relevant resources available across campus. As college advisers, they will serve as an LAC resource to students and faculty and assist students in initiating their individual graduation plans, which students will continue to develop with their faculty adviser. To ensure consistency and maximize efficiencies related to training, college advisers will report to the college dean (or designee) with a dotted line to the AVP for Student Academic Success.
- **Invest in improved gateway course success outcomes by implementing the recommendations of the gateway course success* task force committee.**
 - Implement a gateway course success council focused on improving 100-200 level course outcomes.
 - Implement professional development focused on student success in classrooms (e.g. high impact teaching practices, equity-based teaching practices, active learning, etc.).
 - Scale Learning Assistance Programs (LAPs) to meet the undergraduate student need. Invest in program improvements and service capacity of existing LAPs (e.g. tutoring

services, supplemental academic instruction, writing center, DSS, and math lab) to fully meet the demand and known needs of the undergraduate student body.

- Increase gateway course completion within the first year.*
- **Organize a data analytics infrastructure and approach to improve UNC's ability to use institutional student data for decision making about academic success programs and services.** Nearly 20% of the task force recommendations across all 18 committees addressed a need for both improved access to data and the capacity to use data more effectively.
 - Infrastructure and approach should provide mechanisms for monitoring students at-risk for early departure and associated interventions.
 - Invest in the underlying analysis needed to identify the key predictor variables for retention, including equity gaps, at the program and college levels.
 - Provide data to inform program and college-level success targets, accountability, and persistence and progress dashboards.

Objective 2: Improve the 4-Year Graduation Rate from 31% to 40%

Key results

- Increase the percent of students who enroll in 15 or more credits each semester or 30 each year*
- Increase the percent of students who are making timely progress toward degree completion
- Increase faculty participation in professional development focused on student success in the classroom
- Reduce four-year graduation gaps for Pell and underrepresented populations

Key Actions

- **Provide students and faculty support on relevant policies that impact time to degree.** Financial aid and other policies frequently change; therefore, one of the responsibilities of college advisors will be to maintain knowledge on current policies and then serve as a resource on those policies for faculty and students.
- **Increase opportunities for faculty to engage with students on topics relevant to their discipline.** One of the benefits of restructuring advising to include college advisers/success teams is that it reduces some of the administrative advising burden from faculty so that they can focus more on conversations with students about careers after graduation, connections to internships and other experiential learning opportunities, and entry into graduate school.
- **Use data more effectively.** Invest in the underlying analysis needed to identify the key predictor variables for time to degree that could be used to inform decisions about program delivery and outreach to students.
- **Establish college success targets and action plans related to time to degree.** The targets will need to be informed by additional analysis, including a look at equity gaps, at the program and college level to pinpoint opportunities for action and improvement.

- **Take proactive steps to address campus climate issues that impede student progress toward degree.** Provide sufficient resources to cultural centers, diversify faculty and staff, and provide training and accountability on issues related to equity and inclusion.

Objective 3: Improve the 6-Year Graduation Rate from 48% to 60%

Key results

- Increase the percent of students who enroll in 15 or more credits each semester or 30 each year*
- Increase the percent of students who are making timely progress toward degree completion*
- Increase faculty participation in professional development on promoting student success in the classroom
- Reduce four-year graduation gaps for Pell and underrepresented populations

Key Actions

- **Promote re-enrollment of students who depart.** Universities that have invested in re-enrollment campaigns have been successful in improving their completion rates. Implement proactive outreach to students who stop out after the 4th year.
- **Use data more effectively.** Investigate institutional practices that may create unintentional barriers to completion (e.g. course scheduling, course enrollment patterns, course registration holds, etc.). Investigate enrollment patterns of Pell and underrepresented students to identify trends and opportunities to improve institutional practices.
- **Implement a strategic enrollment management plan.** Align financial aid packaging to address the financial needs of students throughout the student-lifecycle.
- **Invest in resources needed to address mental health needs of students.** Align staffing in mental health support services to the needs of UNC students, provide faculty and staff with resources for working with students with mental health needs, and investigate options for online resources and support.
- **Take proactive steps to address campus climate issues that impede student progress toward degree.** Provide sufficient resources to cultural centers, diversify faculty and staff, and provide training and accountability on issues related to equity and inclusion.

ⁱ White, B. (2016, March 21). The myth of college-ready student. *Inside Higher ED*. Retrieved from <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2016/03/21/instead-focusing-college-ready-students-institutions-should-become-more-student>

ⁱⁱ Link to CDHE master plan: <https://masterplan.highered.colorado.gov/executive-summary/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Colorado Momentum project- College Complete America <https://completecollege.org/event/colorado-momentum/>

^{iv} See peer benchmarking action team's final report for comparative data.

^v Cardinal First program events <https://www.northcentralcollege.edu/cardinal-first/cardinal-first-events>

^{vi} UNC College of Performing and Visual Arts 2018 Summary <https://arts.unco.edu/pdf/college/pva-summary-2018.pdf>

Student Affairs Report

Introduction

In 2000, the Division of Student Affairs and all the units reporting to the division were disbursed among other administrative units within the university. To date, the functions of student affairs remain disbursed; yet, realignment with a few units have occurred over the years. Throughout this time, collaboration and intentional coordination of our work was key to accomplishing student affairs work. However, different division heads, with different goals and outcomes and units scattered throughout the university provided a compromise to the “how” and “why” of student affairs. Also, over the past two decades, students have changed (needs, expectations, learning) and there has been an adjustment to how students view going to college as well as what they expect from their curricular and co-curricular experience. It is time for UNC to re-think how we do the business (art and science) of serving students. This includes preparing them to graduate in a timely fashion, creating experiences to live lives filled with meaning and purpose all within the context of our evolving diverse student population. Based on the changing times, it is incumbent upon UNC to view student affairs work from a systems-thinking perspective and integrated approach. Support areas servicing students need to be realigned within a re-invented Division of Campus Climate and Student Affairs in service to the academic mission of the university with consistent priorities, goals, and ways of operating.

We believe every member of the faculty and staff are teachers, and responsible for the success of students. Student success is defined as graduating with knowledge and skills that are integrated into the learner’s self so that they can be applied in the student’s future work, family, and community life. We believe we have a responsibility to address social mobility of individuals and families through an anti-poverty mission. We believe our purpose is to address the life barriers that keep students from being successful - these include their health & wellness; lack of connection and relationships; housing and food insecurity; and inequity. We believe by focusing on the needs of students with marginalized identities all learners benefit.

We believe in our role as educators. Co-curricular programming is essential to the general education of students. It is an opportunity for applied and reflective learning. We take a curricular approach to our work that is connected to the institutional learning outcomes.

We believe in the human need to be connected to others. Learning happens within the context of building relationships and community. Students thrive when they know they matter to someone. We believe our work is delivered through care for the individual and a holistic view of the student and the system in which they belong. We believe our role on the campus is to facilitate a caring community. We believe being good stewards of our resources is the foundation on which we operate. Students trust us with the investment of their money to provide an experience that will prepare them for the world of work and community leadership. Good stewardship of money, facilities, and human resources mean we can provide the best possible experience at the lowest possible cost—which allows students to graduate with less debt and greater social mobility.

The following narrative provides an interim and emerging business plan for the formation of Student Affairs at the University of Northern Colorado. The business plan approach is an effective means of defining the newly formed division goals and the requisite steps to reach them. Also, the purpose, vision, and ways in which the division will operate are included. It also serves as a blueprint for the division explaining objectives to the campus, current and future employees, families, students, and prospective donors. To begin, the plan calls for merging the existing Campus Community and Climate division with Student Affairs. The purpose for this is to keep the institutional focus on campus climate

while also performing the functions that support student success. We desire an institutional priority to be on improving the climate of the campus and removing equity gaps. To keep the focus, and make headway, there needs to be the focus at the cabinet level. Although the division focus is on students, the equity and climate work is for the entire campus. The training, development, and goal-setting for the whole campus (including faculty) will be under the leadership of this division. The proposed name reflects this intentional focus: Division of Campus Climate & Student Affairs (CC&SA).

Our Why: Mission, Vision, and Values

To best summarize what the division will do and be for UNC, the following “elevator pitch” communicates the most important aspects of the division and its services:

We support students in the co-curricular environment and provide an experience that inspires students academically, intellectually, personally, and emotionally. With the diversity of our students in mind, we use a career readiness approach and social justice framework while fostering a culture and climate of care.

Moreover, creating the foundational aspect of an organization consists of determining “The Why”. In 2009, Simon Sinek presented his thought model known as the Golden Circle (the why, the what, and the how) of organizations. Also, he delivered a riveting TED Talk and subsequent best seller book titled: *Start with Why*. The premise of his talk and book focus on the need for organizations to begin the organizational journey with understanding the ‘why’ of the organization--not the how or what; but simply why. The following represents collective work of understanding the why of student affairs at UNC:

Mission

Through a social justice lens, the Division of Student Affairs exists to enhance student learning through a diverse array of purposeful services and learning opportunities leading to graduation and career readiness.

Vision

The UNC Division of Student Affairs co-creates an inclusive Community of Bears that transforms the attitudes, skills, knowledge, and practice of all students while challenging and supporting them to lead lives of impact and social change. The division engages every student, holistically, to become equity-minded, career-ready graduates through caring and transparent leadership.

Equity Statement

The Division of Campus Climate & Student Affairs at UNC is active, intentional, and forward thinking in its approach to working with students while promoting social mobility. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are embedded in our work as a community. Social Justice Education is at the core of our collaborative practice.

Values

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------|
| ●Intellectual Freedom | ●Integrity | ●Inclusion |
| ●Equity | ●Well-Being | ●Belonging |
| ●Transparency | ●Learning | ●Identity |
| ●Balance | ●Caring | |

Organizational Structure

We have provided three options for organizational structure. Each will offer the opportunity to move forward to meet the desired institutional and division outcomes. And each comes with strengths and weaknesses. Consistent in all three—there are offices that do work that is for the entire institution, not only focused on students, and have missions that have to do with compliance. Title IX, Disability Support Services, and the suggested Ombuds position all should report directly to the Vice President. We are also suggesting that business / administrative support services for the Division be centralized as a way of reducing cost.

It is important to note not every box in the organizational chart represents an office, department, or even a full FTE. In some cases, the boxes denote functions that are important to visualize where they belong.

There are several offices that we know an argument can be made as to whether they belong in Student Affairs or Academic Affairs. Orientation, Advising, Trio, first-year experience initiatives, cohort scholarship programs, Career Services, the University Center, Campus Commons, and Disability Support Services are all such departments/offices. We made decisions guided by who has the expertise, and philosophically what we believe as we try to close equity gaps and improve student success.

Strategic Impact/Outcomes:

The overall strategic impact for the CC&SA division is best defined as “addressing what matters with insight and innovation” (Brown, 2013). With this guiding statement, the division will work to graduate students with social mobility that have demonstrated growth in knowledge, skills, and abilities through a seamless learning environment whether they are a residential student or online learner. Specific outcomes are as follows:

- a. Students will report an understanding of institutional learning outcomes and skills related to career readiness through their interaction with the Student Affairs curriculum and badging/credentialing system.
- b. Students will create an integrated (curricular & co-curricular) plan for graduation that helps them see the path to career readiness and what beginning, intermediate, and advanced skills look like.
- c. Students will report understanding no matter what their major that they need both soft and hard skills to gain employment that will lead to social mobility—they will understand that social mobility means that they are graduating with knowledge & skills that are integrated into who they are with the least amount of debt possible.
- d. Students who report barriers to completion, i.e. food security, safe housing, mental/physical health problems, student conduct/behavior problems, discrimination will be connected to resources to support their success.
- e. Students will report an understanding of social justice, privilege, equity, and know how this impacts their lives as individuals and their future careers and work within a community.
- f. Students will report that they feel a sense of relationship and community amongst their peers.

- g. Students will report that they can identify a mentor who is a faculty or staff member on campus.
- h. Students will report that they understand the role that personal wellness or well-being plays in their overall success as a student and in their future lives.
- i. Students will report a positive UNC climate no matter what identities they hold.
- j. Students will report that the university structure is easy to navigate and find resources. They will have access to resource and referral information 24/7 through enhanced technology use (i.e. Website, social apps, artificial intelligence; mobile apps)
- k. There will be a reduction in the number of students who report they leave the institution because there is nothing to do in Greeley through an intentional partnership with the City of Greeley for increased engagement/entertainment options.
- l. Students will report a high level of satisfaction with university facilities, amenities, and food options; as well as report a high perceived value for the money they invest in student fees, tuition, room & board.
- m. Students and support people/families will report high levels of satisfaction with the services with whom they interact.

As crucial as outcomes are for students, the Division of Campus Climate & Student Affairs also has strategic results related to business operations and employees. These are as follows:

- a. UNC employees who work in the Division will understand a unified strategic plan and their role as educators.
- b. After training / organizational development opportunities, UNC employees will understand the expectations around the Culture of Care for students. The skill sets around a Culture of Care include equity & social justice; restorative justice/ mediation skills; listening skills; referral / brief counseling; customer service/de-escalation; and facilitation skills.
- c. All UNC staff will define their role as “educator” and understand how they connect to student success.
- d. UNC professional staff will be expected to understand curricular approaches to the work of Student Affairs, 21st-century pedagogy, as well as assessment methods to determine outcomes.
- e. Staff will report an improved work experience through the implementation of a Culture of Care, unified development opportunities, and evaluation processes.
- f. Staff with marginalized identities will report increased feelings of support and inclusion / there will be a reduction of staff departure.
- g. Redundancy of resources will diminish by combining areas, centralizing business/ administrative skills, and reducing or reallocating FTE to support a narrow set of goals and outcomes.
- h. All staff will understand that UNC’s brand identity will become focused on career readiness, social mobility/reduction of poverty in the State of Colorado; equity, inclusion, and social justice. Relationship, size, community, and inclusion are elements of the brand that will continue. We will continue to be known as THE research institution that best serves and support students with marginalized identities—and have the best outcomes (smallest attainment gaps) in the state.
- i. Campus Climate & Student Affairs staff will understand the importance of fundraising and grant-writing in improved outcomes with students and will be trained to be successful in these areas.

- j. CC & SA staff will understand that business acumen and stewardship of resources are a foundation of good work for students.
- k. Staff will articulate a sense of pride in the work they do, the facilities and services that are provided.
- l. Staff will report satisfaction with the quality of supervision they receive.
- m. Staff will report high levels of employee engagement.

Making the Business Case

The following are a list of issues needing to be addressed. These issues are organizational issues and can be considered impacting aspects of student success and reaching our collective potential.

Resource Scarcity

With resources becoming scarce, there is increasing competition to move positions & programs forward from an individual department or division perspective, rather than collaborating and deciding what the institutional priorities are.

- a. What does an unhealthy competition do to institutional collaboration?

The Centrality of Student Needs

With our current organizational structure, there is no one on the President's cabinet whose sole purpose is to advocate for student needs. The VP of Campus, Community, & Climate is the closest to this type of position, but the remaining members have institutional priorities central to their roles - the institution, the faculty, the budget, the community, donors, legal issues, etc.

- b. i.e., With many student affairs functions reporting to the Provost, that position serves a dual advocacy role, and if there is a conflict between faculty and student needs – the balance is likely challenging

Inconsistency

Gaps, inconsistency, effectiveness, and efficiency are prevalent since student affairs functions report to different Vice Presidents. Differences occur in

- c. Goal setting and expected outcomes
- d. Workflow
- e. Expectations and accountability
- f. Coaching and mentoring
- g. Expectations for working with students
- h. Time in the office
- i. Work-life balance

With a senior cabinet leader, we could meet institutional priorities more effectively and efficiently. One leader, with one set of expectations, and competent "deputies" would be beneficial.

Communication

We have gaps in communication for staff. Directors are frequently missing essential information that they need to do their jobs. This is because different leaders have different views of what information needs to be shared from the executive levels to the rest of the staff.

Core Competencies

1. NASPA Core Competencies for Student Affairs professionals include:
 - a. Personal and Ethical Foundations
 - b. Values, Philosophy, and History
 - c. Assessment, Evaluation, and History
 - d. Assessment, Evaluation, and Research
 - e. Law, Policy, and Governance
 - f. Organizational and Human Resources
 - g. Leadership
 - h. Social Justice and Inclusion
 - i. Student Learning and Development
 - j. Technology
 - k. Advising and Supporting
2. When we evaluate our staff against core competencies within student affairs and competencies that we have identified as being essential for the achievement of our goals, we have some skill gaps. We recommend the following be prioritized for development: understanding of student learning; curriculum approaches to student affairs work; ability to write student learning outcomes; outcomes assessment; equity, social justice & intra-cultural competency; budget; analysis of data; strategic planning.
3. We recommend identifying a talent-pipeline in our staff from across the university—building a cohort of individuals who can develop and apply new connections between our institutional data sets and research, leadership, and technology to improve our practice and outcomes.
4. We will need to focus on capacity building of staff in these areas across current divisional lines if we are going to improve student outcomes/persistence.
5. We have hired people for key positions who do not have the essential skill sets/knowledge for their positions—this could be fine with the appropriate development/coaching of people with potential, but we currently lack time and capacity to do this.
6. We recommend we have a close partnership with the HESAL program, particularly with the Masters program. We hope that we can collaborate to have a curriculum that aligns with the goals of the Division of CC & SA and helps develop the competency of the graduate students who work within the division.

Why is the formation of this new division important at this time?

A Division of Campus Climate & Student Affairs is necessary at this point for UNC because we are not achieving desired student learning or success outcomes. If the campus wants to move forward in a strategic way to improving graduation rates, depth/ integration of learning, career

readiness, equity, and social mobility of students—a concerted, outcomes-oriented approach to the experience of students is a priority. Student success and retention is complex and interconnected. It is not as simple as improving the entry characteristics of students, implementing learning communities, or improving financial support. It is all of these things. As experts in higher education, we know students depart because they do not feel connected or cared about or “known”; we know they depart when they are sexually assaulted or discriminated against; we know they depart when they do not see a clear path to career--no matter what their major; we know they depart when they feel bored; they depart when depression, anxiety, or substance abuse get in the way of learning; they depart when they cannot afford basic needs like food, housing, medicine, and childcare; they depart when their families need them at home; they depart when they feel like an outsider in the City of Greeley; they depart when they can't find a major that is congruent with their skills and interests; and they depart when they face failure. This list is informed by data and the real interactions that we have with students who leave us, and it can go on and on. Therefore, a holistic approach to the work of student affairs is essential. We need to have staff who are able and willing to be in relationship (in community) with students, have a strong ethic of care, and are eager to be intrusive to uncover the needs for support for completion.

We will need to balance a holistic view of the individual student with a segmented approach to student populations. When we view retention and success of populations of students, different methods are required for unique communities. We will need disaggregated data to inform this work and be mindful of not neglecting the critical dimensions of creating equitable outcomes.

We also know students need to be career-ready, and that employers are reporting graduates do not have the “soft skills” necessary for success. We recognize student affairs professionals are educators and are uniquely prepared to teach these skills through curriculum, involvement, leadership, and employment opportunities. To be socially mobile it is particularly important to have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to enter the workforce. We believe that the emphasis on social mobility is particularly important because we are situated in a local community where more than 60% of school children are living in poverty. We are uniquely positioned to have an anti-poverty mission and can work to change the lives of our immediate community. We believe the entire campus should be focused on this outcome.

Our work must be rooted in equity, inclusion, & social justice because it is an essential foundation for eliminating equity gaps and improving social mobility. We have the most diverse research institution in the state; we seek to become a Hispanic Serving Institution, we are rated the most inclusive for LGBTQAI students—we want to continue this path to greater inclusion. We also recognize that merely living and attending class with students who are different from one another does not mean one will acquire skills in intercultural competence, working in diverse teams, or understand privilege and justice. We are graduating students who will work in education, business, and health care—and these skills are essential for the 21st Century employee working in a diverse global society. Our work in this area will be intentionally taught to students.

What is the expected return on investment?

Any reorganization and repurposing of resources require investment. We anticipate there will be costs (financial and time) associated with the development of employees to meet the new goals of the institution, as well as some investment in physical space, and technology. If the

institution decides to organize the first-year experience with models such as residential learning communities or colleges; mentoring programs; opportunities for mentoring, coaching & intrusive advising—some of these initiatives are labor-intensive and will require resources. We also recognize that as we move toward HSI status, we will require an increase in multi-lingual staff.

We do anticipate these investments will have a positive return on investment. A selective, research institution focused on career-readiness, equity in outcomes, a personalized community-based approach to teaching, with an anti-poverty mission focused on social mobility, and HSI status would make us unique in the State of Colorado. We do believe this would positively affect our brand positioning, as well as positively impact the depth of student learning and skill development. We believe this will positively impact student retention and graduation rates. The common adage that it costs less to retain a student than recruit a student is true. We believe a coordinated effort on improving student outcomes will have a significant positive impact on the structural deficit.

What are the risks of doing this or not doing this?

UNC has had stagnant retention and graduation rates for years. We do not believe that the solution to this problem is to become more selective. We believe our purpose in the State of Colorado is to serve the broadest portion of college-ready students to increase the number of people in the state at least a 4-year degree from a Research Institution. We realize serving a population with less preparation than the most selective institutions can be more expensive to get through to graduation. We best serve a student who may not be as strong in academic preparation, but is solid in non-cognitive variables--resiliency, leadership, grit, and demonstrated the capacity for growth. Four years ago, we conducted a pilot using non-cognitive variables to assess Window admits on their ability for success. We have not, as a campus, done any assessment of how successful these students were on our campus. We recommend reviewing our data on this group of students. If the campus does decide it needs to become more selective in order to improve student success, this could be a method used again to find students who do not appear academically qualified but have qualities that would support their success. Although we are not recommending that Admissions be a part of Student Affairs, we recognize the importance of viewing student success over the entire lifecycle of the student. Tying all these things together will yield a positive return on investment. If we change nothing dramatically, holistically, then we stay stagnant and will continue to flounder financially.

When partnering have we done our due diligence on capacity and competency to fulfill our expectations?

This plan was developed during the task force initiative with the collaboration of over 40 higher education professionals. We recognize our recommendations will require additional partnership, communication, and enterprise collaboration. To indeed build a seamless experience for students we will need to bring even more voices to the table.

We also know we do not have all the skill sets we need to move forward with a division that is committed to curriculum and assessment of outcomes, or equity-minded skill sets, for example. We do know we have dedicated staff with the capacity to learn through coordinated organizational development.

What are the potential risks that might derail implementation/execution?

We recommend the areas that have the most opportunity for liability/ legal/ compliance issues remain within the Division of Campus Climate & Student Affairs. These include the work of the Dean of Students Office, Campus Climate & Institutional Equity, Disability Support Services, Academic Advising, and Housing & Residential Education. All of these offices deal with issues of compliance or have a unique custodial relationship with students and require the expertise that comes from student affairs practitioners or those with a background in higher education administration. We have spent a long time on campus with areas that have a great deal of legal risk reporting to those without the expertise to manage the work. We feel that the new structure will change this. Even though there will be an increase in the number of direct reports to senior leaders, the overall institutional risk should be reduced because we have experienced student affairs leaders supervising the work.

Next Steps: What needs to be done?

- Scope of Implementation

It is expected that the new organizational structure is in place in the Spring of 2019. In the next phase of this process redundancies in programs, centralization of business processes, and desk audits of duties will be performed to find efficiencies. Once the new structure is in place, a full strategic plan will be developed that will move us forward in a unified direction. It is anticipated that a strategic plan could be in place for the Fall 2019 semester. A Student Affairs curriculum, organizational development model, and the badging system will take 1-3 years to develop, depending on the resources available to help with the implementation.

- Specifically, identify who is responsible.

The Vice President for Campus Climate & Student Affairs, along with a core leadership team will be responsible for implementing the new division and developing a strategic plan that supports the university goals around becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), increasing equity & inclusion, teaching career readiness, and increasing student success.

- Who else needs to be involved and what do they need to do?

To make the change we will need to create capacity in faculty and staff around equity, intercultural competence, listening skills, brief counseling, assessment, etc. We will need a clear expectation from the President & Provost that development of all staff is expected. We will need all deans, directors, and other senior leaders to commit to require and track their staff's participation. We will need directors at the department level to develop new strategic plans that align with the new goals.

- What are deadlines and critical milestones?

We want the new Division of Campus Climate & Student Affairs to be in place by March 2019. A new strategic plan will need to be in place by July 1, 2019. With the new strategic plan, strategies for both effectiveness and efficiency will be articulated. New strategic plans at the department level should be in place by the start of the academic year.

To achieve the goals around career readiness, we are recommending a badging system. We would suggest product investigation begin immediately, with a launch Fall 2020.

- Cost Considerations

We ultimately know that what we do must both be more effective and more efficient. We will be a part of finding the solutions to the structural budget deficit. The following will be under consideration for budget reductions:

- a. Staffing: a centralization of administrative and business/budget staff
- b. Desk Audits of vacant positions
- c. Review of all vacant positions and use of existing staff to fill positions
- d. Reduction of software, subscriptions, and memberships
- e. Investigate outsourcing
- f. Review pricing structures/pricing elasticity to increase revenue
- g. Across the board 3% reduction in expenses

Assessment: How and when will we assess the project or change?

We are proposing a significant change to the organization. We have received critique from staff in the past about communication. For this to be successful, we will need to change this feedback. We will need to meet regularly with staff at all levels of the organization to check for their understanding and ask for feedback. We will need to assess the development of staff as we teach new skills. Some of this assessment will happen through individual assessment, and some will occur through the annual review process.

We also know that appealing to the staff's internal motivation for the work they do assists with change adaption. We feel that we have identified purpose and goals that are reflective of why staff enjoys working at UNC, and we intend to build on that strength.

It is important to recognize that in many ways we are asking for more (different) work that will increase stress during a time where there is stagnant pay, and perhaps decreased pay if furloughs or other measures for cost control are put in place. We are suggesting that we look at different ways to increase employee morale (i.e. Look at what start-ups are doing for their staff) to help support productivity. Regular assessment of employee morale is suggested.

The ultimate success of this change will be measured in student learning, student satisfaction, climate, persistence, alumni, and health data. We collect a wealth of data within our areas. We believe a key to improve and telling our story of success, will be a more sophisticated, regular assessment of the data that we have. Access to data across the campus needs to be improved, and training around data mining, analysis, and visualization should be provided so we can know our impact. Ultimately, the accurate measure of our integrated efforts between Academic & Campus Climate and Student Affairs will be measured in improved retention, steady growth in learning, demonstrated achievement of learning outcomes, improved graduation rates, and decreases (or elimination) of equity gaps.

Conclusion

Evolving changes have occurred within the higher education landscape. Specifically, students are more diverse, globally curious, plugged in and dialed in with a technology prowess. This emerging and evolving student culture have overwhelmingly been noticed by college and university communities across the country. UNC has witnessed these changes among various behavioral changes such as a

decrease in alcohol infractions, increase in drug, violence, sexual assault, and mental health as the most significant issues students are facing. We must assume a proliferation of topics related to how best to work with students while using sophisticated approaches to support their learning and foster engagement in campus life involves being strategic, purposeful and connected to the university mission, vision, and values. Although not having one roof to house student affairs units and initiatives is not a sole correlate to the flat (and at times declining) outcomes of retention and graduation rates of the university, there is a promise to a consolidated and streamlined approach. It is not a time to enliven the adage “doing the same thing and yet, expect different results.” There is a problem - something is inherently not working if we intentionally want to move the needle on markers of success (graduation rates, persistence, increased social mobility and elimination of the achievement gap).

Moreover, as a result of social movements and longstanding systemic issues of discrimination, racism, sexism, etc., accountability and reporting have increased, and as a result, the creation of Title IX and equity and inclusion offices has emerged. Student conduct and behavioral issues have changed over the years. Managing student behavior has required varying levels of intervention, cross-disciplinary collaboration and higher levels of adjudication sophistication.

A Division of Campus Climate & Student Affairs in and of itself is not necessarily unique. However, the ability to build a Division with clear outcomes and a curricular approach to the work from the ground-up is a unique opportunity. With our history as a state normal institution, undergraduate & graduate programs in education, business, and human service fields—we have the opportunity to build a division grounded in innovation and will serve as a living laboratory for student employees, interns, and graduate assistants.

This opportunity is also exciting for those who have worked on the UNC campus without a unified division. This excitement and momentum have already had a positive impact on morale for staff, despite the fiscal realities. The implications for positive staff morale on positive outcomes for students should not be under-estimated.

Therefore, UNC must find solutions to these and new challenges (and future ones), reimagine business processes and student services for effectiveness and efficiency, and foster systems that engage students of the 21st century. Doing so presents an enormous opportunity for the newly created Campus Climate & Student Affairs division to contribute to student success.

Resources Utilized

Books & Publications:

- Student Affairs Models and Critical Issues in Higher education
- AAC & U’s LEAP Challenge and the set of Essential Learning Outcomes
- The Economic Value of Liberal Education, AAC & U
- The Civic Case for Liberal Education, AAC & U
- The Future of Work, How Colleges can Prepare Students for the Jobs Ahead
- EAB’s Most Important Soft Skills
- College Net’s Social Mobility Index
- Fulfilling the American Dream: Liberal Education and the Future of Work
- What is College For? The Public Purpose of Higher Education
- The New Generation of College Students
- Here’s What Today’s Students Want from College

- Generation Z Goes to College
- New Approaches to Mental Health
- Ain't No Makin' It: Aspirations and Attainment in a Low-Income Neighborhood
- Tailoring Admissions
- NACE Competencies
- Are We a Student Ready Campus?
- Measure what Matters
- Immunity to Change – Kegan and Lahey
- UNC Institutional Learning Outcomes
- Learning Reconsidered
- Iowa Grow Program
- Michigan State University's Collegiate Employment Research Institute's T-Shaped Professional
- National Association of Colleges and Employers, Career Readiness Defined
- Balancing Work and Learning: Implications for Low-Income Students
- EMSA's Culture of Care Documents
- Student Engagement in Higher Education: Theoretical Perspectives and Practical Approaches for Diverse Populations
- High Impact Educational Practices
- Creating Strategic Impact – Questions of Business Strategy and Business Survival (Brown, 2013)
- What's Your Why? TED Talk (Sinek, 2009)
- Equity Scorecard Training Materials from CUE University of Southern California
- The University of Maryland Virtual Colloquium: Race on Campus
- NASPA Equity & Diversity Publications
- ACPA Equity & Diversity Publications
- The Cost of College Attrition at Four-Year Colleges and Universities
- The Power of Retention: More Customer Service for Higher Education
- WICHE: Who's Knocking at the College Door
- NASPA First Generation Student Success
- Residential Learning Community Retention and GPA Quasi-Experimental Design
- Integrated Student Support Redesign: A Toolkit for Redesigning Advising and Student Services to Effectively Support Every Student
- Defining Career Readiness and Student Success
- Demographic Shifts in educational Demand and the Rise of Alternative Credentials
- University Innovation Alliances Vision and Prospectus
- NSSE Institute Project DEEP
- Assessing Underserved Students' Engagement in High-Impact Practices
- High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter
- Rising to the LEAP Challenge: Case Studies of Integrative Pathways to Student Signature Work
- UNC Board of Trustee presentation on First Generation College Students from March 3, 2018

UNC Data Sets:

- CIRP Survey
- Map Works Data
- Stayers & Leavers Report
- 2016 Climate Survey

- Alumni Survey
- Student Conduct Data
- Student of Concern / Health & Safety Reports
- College Senior Survey
- UNC Fact Book
- Transfer Intelligence Portfolio
- CDHE Remediation Report
- CDHE Transfer Summary
- Undergraduate Exit Form
- University of Northern Colorado Office of Development and Alumni Relations
- Health Survey Data
- IPEDs Data
- UNC Organizational Charts
- UNC First Year Experience Infographic

Theory:

- Astin's Theory of Involvement
- Tinto's Revised Theory
- Bean and Eaton's Psychological Model of College Student Retention
- Swail's Model of Student Persistence and Achievement
- Seidman's Retention Formula
- Snyder's Hope Scale
- Duckworth's Theory of Grit
- Cavanagh's Theory of a Culture of Care
- Rendón's Theory of Validation
- Scholssberg's Theory of Marginality & Mattering
- Gilligan's Theory of an Ethic of Care
- Magdola's Theory of Self-Authorship
- Critical Race Theory