

UNC Strategic Planning-Vision Forums

Social Research Lab at the
University of Northern Colorado

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Social Research Lab
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

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The *Social Research Lab* (SRL) of the *University of Northern Colorado* prepared this report at the request of *The University of Northern Colorado’s President’s Leadership Council*. All identifying information has been removed and identified data is stored securely at the SRL only. The SRL is dedicated to assisting individuals and organizations in all stages of data collection and analysis.

Any questions about this report and/or inquiries about specific data should be directed to Executive Director Josh Packard at josh.packard@unco.edu or 970-351-3385.

Executive Summary

Overview

The following report provides a summary of the findings from a series of facilitated forums and an online survey that was administered to participants of the university community. President Andy Feinstein and Provost Mark Anderson conducted the forums and led voluntary participants through a series of questions designed to guide discussion about the future vision of the University of Northern Colorado (UNC). Campus forums were held between September 10, 2019-September 18, 2019. The forums and survey were designed to gather thoughts and opinions from various groups to assess themes that will be used to build the future vision of UNC. The groups included: Undergraduate students, Graduate students, Faculty, Staff, Alumni, Friends of UNC (Community members and partners), and Others.

Demographic information on the next page is separated by the self-selected role titles, groups listed above, of all participants. No other additional demographic information was collected. Roles were defined, and participants were divided in the space during forums to allow for the unique perspectives of each group to emerge without influence from other groups during the forums.

How to Read this Report

This report is broken down into three primary sections: Executive Summary (includes Demographics and Guiding Questions), Overall Emerging Themes, and Findings. The Overall Emerging Themes section includes the seven primary aggregated themes, with specific sub-themes, all of which will be used by the President's Leadership Council (PLC) to develop UNC's Vision Elements. The Findings section of this report is divided into the seven primary

themes and sub-themes, with specific findings as they pertain to the demographic groups.

The Findings section summarizes all data collected from the forums, group conversations held off campus in addition to the scheduled forums, and the survey. All comments were individually data-entered by the Social Research Lab team and assigned keywords during data entry. The analysis team further refined the keywords and categorized them, creating a uniform coding system that all team members could replicate. The team then analyzed keywords for frequency. Those with the highest frequencies became a primary theme. Sub-themes were determined by noting the keywords that emerged in conjunction with the primary theme and with higher frequency but that did not rise to the frequency of a primary theme. Findings are organized thematically, with sub-themes and quotes that support the themes. Additionally, themes rose to the level of primary significance if they appeared in more than one group and more than one time within the groups. Sub-themes are included and expounded upon to demonstrate the robust depth and multiple facets of each theme. Themes were repeated throughout multiple objectives, in addition to being noted by more than one group, multiple times.

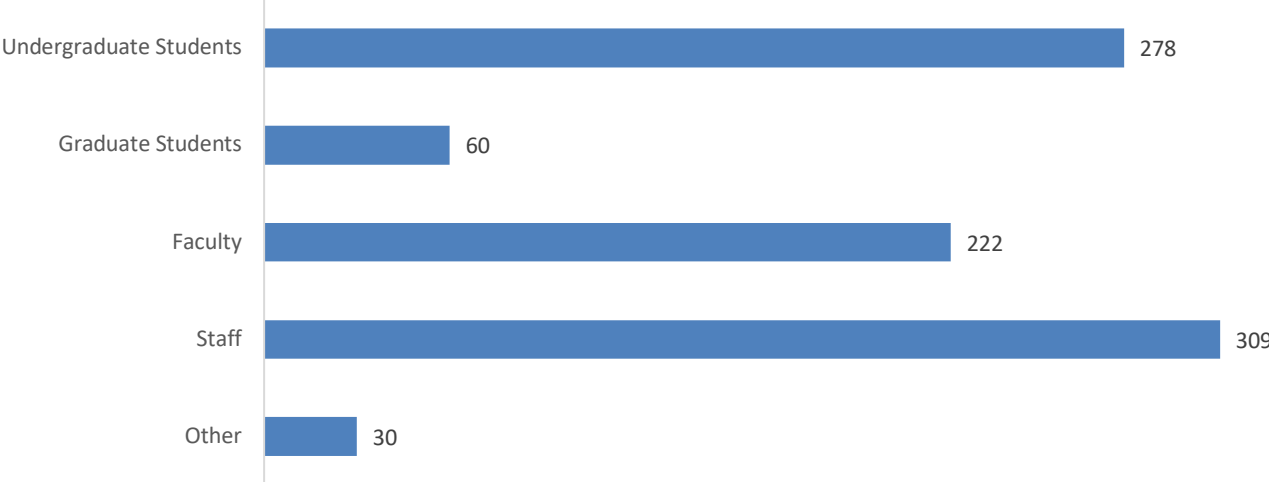
Quotes are included if there was a statement written by a participant that summarized the essence of the theme. All data is aggregated in a separate set of documents. Roles, identifying information and indicators of status were removed from quotes to protect participants' anonymity. Quotes are lightly edited with punctuation and context, particularly where lists and phrases were the given responses.

Demographics

The forums and survey were administered between 9/10/2019 to 9/18/2019 and forums were well-attended. Data collection was completed on 9/19/2019. Demographic data is an aggregate of all forums, the survey and meetings held with stakeholders. (Total N=899)

Demographics Charts

Number of Participants by Role Designation



Guiding Questions (Objectives)

The following objectives were defined by the President’s Leadership Council and sent to the Social Research Lab during the development of the project scope. The survey was created to address the objectives and asked multiple questions to assess each objective. The guiding questions (objectives) were the foundation that led to the findings section, which is organized by the primary themes and sub-themes.

Obj. 1	What 3-5 words or phrases should define UNC in 2030?
Obj. 2	What are the 3-5 most important things we can do to ensure the success of future UNC students?
Obj. 3	How do we take advantage of emerging trends affecting higher education?
Obj. 4	What three changes could we make now that would have the greatest positive impact on the future of UNC?
Obj. 5	What should we do well that our competitors are not?

Overall Emerging Themes

<p>1</p>	<p>Focus on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund cultural centers AND additional resources • Focus on populations that we serve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HSI (Hispanic Serving Institution) ○ First Generation ○ Non-traditional students ○ Students with disabilities • Follow through with actions and respond to incidents • Repair past harms/recover from past trauma
<p>2</p>	<p>Financial Solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student scholarships • Competitive salaries/investing in faculty salaries • Tuition management • Focus on retention • Provide more accessible forms of aid • Offer services to increase financial literacy for students
<p>3</p>	<p>Community Identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve city and university relationship - engagement and outreach • Develop ties with the states, high schools, greater community
<p>4</p>	<p>Innovation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology • Teaching and education • Outreach-marketing, promotion
<p>5</p>	<p>Student-Centered Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility with requirements • Relevant student life programming • Career readiness • Holistic support/resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Academic ○ Mental health ○ Increasing life skills ○ “Bear” necessities for living (food, housing, etc.)
<p>6</p>	<p>Faculty/Staff Support and Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher-scholar model • Staff Development opportunities
<p>7</p>	<p>Clarify Identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNC’s identity - be authentically UNC - not comparative • Define UNC’s teaching/learning vs. research identity

Findings

1. Focus on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Participants from all groups stated that UNC should focus on increasing diversity, equity and inclusion on campus. While participants acknowledged that efforts exist to achieve this objective already, they also noted that efforts should persist, and even become more prevalent. Participants offered suggestions to achieve this objective. In addition to being proactive about diversity, equity and inclusion, participants stated that efforts should be made to understand the damaging impact that past incidents have had and to repair past harm. In addition to creating inclusive spaces, the campus needs to recover from past trauma.

“Create a welcoming and inclusive campus climate.”

“As a smaller campus, we have a really unique opportunity to emphasize inclusive, diverse, and personable campus climate and community.”

“Foster diversity and inclusion on campus.”

“Making students of color important, hiring: more people of color, hiring: people who care about the job and ALL students, holding admins, profs, and TAs accountable to saying n-word, respecting pro-nouns, respecting first language, hiring: more POC in administration, power differentials, equity and inclusion trainings with certification.”

Sub-theme: Fund cultural centers AND additional resources

Participants suggested allocating additional funding toward the centers that exist on campus already. In addition, participants suggested that UNC should create funding for additional

resources that will support all students, particularly students of color.

“I think making sure we retain students is important. Recruiting students is great, but once they are here, if they do not feel supported they will leave. With that being said, offering more services for students of color, where they can feel welcomed and supported is important. If we want to be a Hispanic Serving Institution we need to make sure we are offering resources besides one cultural house to serve these students.”

“HSI, diverse in thought and people, transparent responses, color inclusion more than cultural centers.”

“Intentional/structured pro dev that focuses on creative inclusive space (offices commons, classrooms, clubs, etc.) invest in staff time and tech to get this to folks; embrace tough conversations and controversy (come together in dialogue over disagreement) how do we prepare students, faculty, and staff to engage and embrace this (academic freedom, first amendment); balance equity and inclusion with thought and opinion (learning community, students, faculty, and staff to/from each other)”

“Support and promote cultural centers.”

“Continue to support the 7 cultural centers on campus--these make UNC welcoming.”

“Provide robust non-educational programs (cultural centers, student groups, sports, reasons for students to stay at school, want to be here besides academics).”

Sub-theme: Focus on populations that we serve

When asked to share what three changes could be made now to have the greatest positive impact on the future of UNC, participants from all groups stated that UNC should focus on the

unique populations that are served on campus already. Specifically, participants suggested that UNC focus on becoming an HSI (Hispanic Serving Institution), increase support for first generation and non-traditional students, and make disability/ability part of the conversation about inclusion. These populations were mentioned in conjunction with other questions but arose significantly when participants were asked about changes to be made.

“Sell UNC as an affordable institution that serves first-generation, Hispanic, and other marginalized student populations (and make it true).”

“Intentionally recruit and SUPPORT students with minoritized identities and don't tokenize them. I believe that eventually we will become an HSI, but that is something we should actively pursue.”

“Build infrastructure - we want to be an HSI, but many faculty and staff are lacking basic understandings of student needs and require a lot of training around identity-informed support. We harm minoritized students every day and if we try to recruit more of them the harm will only rise if faculty, staff, and other students are not committed to inclusion and receiving adequate training to do better.”

“We should be louder and more vocal about our diversity and inclusion and be a university that walks the walk (HSI).”

“Being the school for (we are already great at this): first-gen students, teaching, nursing, PVA, business, sports exercise: be better at telling OUR story; HSI: win our city, be the go-to school for our HS students, everyone graduates (equity gaps) (to do this, we faculty need all staff and training on working with all students, equity and inclusion training for all, utilize the summer).”

“Capture and become choice for dwindling populations-Hispanic Serving Institution, First Gen, Transfer and Returning.”

Sub-theme: Follow through with actions and respond to incidents

Participants acknowledged that some action has been taken to create a more inclusive campus. Several stated that UNC has been more verbal about being inclusive, but that action needs to support the claims. This includes a public response to incidents in addition to clarifying what UNC stands for.

“We can say that we are diverse until we are blue in the face, but we need to follow-up with actions that celebrate that diversity.”

“Listen and respond to students.”

“Respond to hate crimes, transparency, we are safe here, you are safe here, culture of society.”

“Addressing problems that happen on campus/Greeley: holding students accountable for their actions.”

“Make sure their [students'] voices are heard, and that action is being taken place. Recognize that there is a problem, take the time to hear what students have to say, make investigation where they have to be taken, showing the resources there is on campus.”

Sub-theme: Repair past harms/recover from past trauma

Participants noted that the campus is still healing from past trauma and needs to continue to take action to repair from past harms. A student leader shared that UNC needs to be aware that the campus is currently and consistently safe for white students, but students of color continue to question whether they belong. Many participants echoed that efforts to create a place of belonging was a high priority for the future of the campus.

“The university has failed to acknowledge the equity gap properly. UNC has a habit, which is similar to politics, of lumping every person together as one. Expressing that a rising tide lifts all boats. But what if some have holes in their boats? What if some are adrift on rubble? What if some have no boats at all? How will these individuals be lifted?”

“Hold faculty accountable for poor performance-specifically, harassment and bias-related behavior that harms our students directly.”

“We need transparent leadership - hiding things from staff, faculty, and students only harms everyone [even more].”

“Protect students that hold marginalized identities!”

“Hold staff accountable for wrong-doings.”

Overall, responses suggest that participants overwhelmingly feel that diversity, equity and inclusion should be a primary focus for UNC.

2. Financial Solutions

Finances are a persistent and ongoing conversation at UNC. These forums included more suggestions, opinions and feedback to continue those conversations. Participants made a number of suggestions and highlighted what they believed should be priorities with regard to finances that will help shape the future of UNC. Financial solutions and suggestions for students, staff, and faculty were a focus at the forums and in the survey.

*[To ensure the success of future UNC students:]
“financial stability of UNC” “financially sustainable”*

Sub-theme: Student scholarships

Participants believe that UNC should focus on providing more accessible scholarship opportunities for students. All groups mentioned this suggestion and it was brought up multiple times during various questions.

“Find more opportunities for scholarships!”

“Make UNC accessible/ affordable/ supportive/ accommodating (scholarships)”

“Perhaps offer scholarships for student employees in lieu of a bi-weekly paycheck as a form of some sort of salary.”

“Making sure the students get scholarships. I know UNC is struggling financially, but scholarships are very important to the students in any and all departments.”

“More kids are going to be attending college in the future. It is UNC's responsibility to help those kids by providing scholarship opportunities to ALL students, allowing on campus jobs to be less of a focus on work study, and to provide a safer environment around campus and within Greeley.”

Sub-theme: Competitive salaries/investing in faculty salaries

This sub-theme arose in response to many of the questions and was primarily suggested by faculty and staff. Students agreed with the need for UNC's financial solvency but did not volunteer suggestions regarding salaries.

“Develop a funding model to keep faculty and staff salaries competitive.”

“Support current faculty. We are extremely under compensated and it makes it sometimes challenging to justify staying here rather than going elsewhere.”

“Increase faculty pay to compete with other universities - it's difficult to keep good faculty here when their salary is so low.”

“Salary parity and equity internally and across higher education.”

“Offer competitive salary packages to staff/faculty; offer an outstanding education for a lower cost than other colleges/universities.”

Sub-theme: Tuition management

Despite acknowledgement that UNC is among the less expensive options in the state of Colorado, participants suggested that more efforts be made to make tuition more accessible to the populations that are served at UNC. Others made suggestions to draw in populations that we are not currently serving by keeping tuition costs lower.

“Lobby the state legislature to provide more funding, so that tuition costs can be lowered.”

“Lower tuition. Students are demoralized with so much debt.”

“Consider other tuition models to recruit non-residential students.”

“Find ways to lower tuition without undermining student resources.”

“More ON-LINE programs that are the same tuition base as being on campus to draw students in for a lower cost ON-LINE option.”

“Keep tuition/fees affordable so students aren't saddled with mountains of debt.”

Sub-theme: Focus on retention

Participants noted that UNC is clear about what should be done to increase recruitment efforts, for the most part, but that retention efforts of current students, staff, and faculty appear to be a low priority. Participants suggested that retention efforts will help make more money for the institution and that making tuition and other resources more affordable would increase retention. Participants regarded retention as both a financial solution and a reason to find financial solutions. Retention comments were not entirely about finances, as participants noted that retention creates and can be created by fostering community and belonging. All groups talked about focusing on the retention of people in their own group in addition to addressing retention of people in the other groups (ex. students suggested focusing on retaining faculty).

“Focusing on retention and closing equity gap.”

“Retention: community that allows students to feel a sense of belonging in addition to safety and resources for threatening situations.”

“Focus on retention-Increase faculty pay to compete with other universities - it's difficult to keep good faculty here when their salary is so low.”

“Invest in the retention of our faculty and staff - morale is extremely low right now, and

employees need to feel like they are also a valued asset of the university.”

“Recruitment is difficult, but I'm talking retention at this point. Faculty morale has been quite low recently. While tuition dollars are a priority during a time of fiscal strain, faculty need to feel like the university is invested in them.”

“We should focus on getting the students here that belong here (and keeping them here if that's what's best for them).”

Sub-theme: Providing more accessible forms of aid

In addition to suggesting that tuition rates be managed, and more scholarships be made available, participants suggested that different types of aid be made available. Aid should be able to cover more than just tuition and should be available through channels that do not harm the institution. Participants also indicated that access to financial aid is inhibited by misinformation or absent information, and that the process for finding aid should be more transparent and accessible overall.

“Offer sound financial aid to make a solid education affordable so students don't have to work more than part-time to pay tuition and living costs - more scholarships, and lower costs of housing and dining hall.”

“Provide more paid positions on campus that are NOT only for work study students.”

“Be transparent about cost of attendance and offer more financial aid.”

“Inform students how to get free/reduced \$\$- where to go to apply.”

Sub-theme: Offer services to increase financial literacy for students

All groups suggested that more resources be made available for students to get information and education to increase their financial literacy. Beyond the overview that is required when students get loans, participants suggested classes and mentoring from staff and alumni about money-related topics that will set students up for future success instead of crippling debt.

“Do our programs offer out-of-class experiences to support economic mobility?”

“Offer financial literacy programs around debt and earning potential.”

“Incorporate financial literacy and career preparedness into standard curriculum/advising.”

Overall, responses suggest that financial solutions should be a focus for UNC. Specifically, efforts should be made to be more competitive, financially secure and accessible.

3. Community

Participants shared that UNC needs develop strong relationships and establish its place in the community. Many participants suggested that UNC work on improving the relationship with our immediate and surrounding communities, in addition to forming strong partnerships with the state and local high schools. There was tremendous support for existing partnerships.

Sub-theme: Improve city and university relationship - Engagement and outreach

Participants believe that the future of UNC requires the consistent and ongoing relationship development with Greeley. Participants agree that a significant part of UNC's identity is connected to the community, including Greeley's agricultural roots, artist community, and student population. Many participants clarified that UNC should focus on recruiting beyond Greeley's primary demographic. However, UNC's identity is intrinsically linked to that of the surrounding community, so UNC should embrace that in positive and inclusive ways.

"Improve the downtown Greeley/UNC connection to make the university a more attractive place for prospective students."

"Relationship with the Greeley Community-Town and Gown. There are many opportunities here to further collaborate. The City and the Chamber of Commerce are excited for opportunities to do so. The financial incentive for both the community and university are numerous."

"Create, maintain and improve external relations to make UNC/Greeley a college town."

Sub-theme: Developing ties with the state, high schools and greater community

In addition to the suggestions that UNC and Greeley could improve their partnership relationship and collective identity, participants believe that connecting to the state, high schools, community colleges and greater community would be beneficial to the future of UNC. There was a significant amount of approval for the Aims2UNC program, which was mentioned by multiple groups in multiple questions. Participants believe that this is a good model for how UNC should be utilizing the community and forming partnerships. There were numerous mentions about these types of partnerships.

"Strategic partnerships w/Aims and Greeley community"

"Internal and external UNC marketing, AIMS connections, schools, chamber of commerce"

"Leverage Aims to UNC and other CC's to add micro-credentials for professional network"

"Collaboration programs-Aims2UNC-articulation agreements, K12"

"Outreach dual enrollment at local/regional neigh schools, similar to Aims 2UNC"

"Continue to look for ways to make it easier for students to succeed at a reasonable cost. Aims to UNC is a great start, but are there other community colleges we could have the same type of alliance?"

"Build relationships with local businesses to create programs for non-traditional students (their employees) incentive programs with businesses who may cover portion of tuition for their employees to ensure quality training for those on their payroll. These programs could include traditional classes in the evening, hybrid programs, etc. Online learning isn't always the best for non-traditional students, but this population is vastly overlooked at UNC. We could be a model for non-traditional students"

*looking to build skills in the areas we specialize
(building the programs we already do well).*

Overall, participants believe that a major key to the future strength and success of UNC is to foster and leverage the community and the things that make the story unique.



4. Innovation

Participants had many suggestions to encourage UNC to design a culture of innovation and creativity. Innovation is necessary for organizations to grow and change. Participants agreed that there are major areas where innovation should be encouraged and supported. Technology is an obvious place to innovate, but participants also had a number of ideas about how to innovate with a teaching and education focus as well as how to reach UNC's audience.

Sub-theme: Technology

Technology is often the first thing that people note when thinking about innovation. In the case of UNC, innovative technology suggestions included (but are not limited to) a functional app, user-friendly systems that help students navigate complex processes, and centers where student-owned technology can be offered and repaired. Many participants suggested that technology should just be "up to date" and "more innovative."

"Be deliberate about the use of technology in classroom, rather than responding as needed."

"Technology is key. Professors who understand technology is also critical. It is embarrassing that some classrooms on campus still have chalk boards! This is a 19th century technology. (Don't believe me, go visit Candelaria Hall.)"

"Meet the needs of today's students; incorporate technology without losing relationships; make sure training is needed for current and future workforce."

"Care about what we as students care about, including better Wi-Fi and technology."

"Kepner technology should be everywhere!"

"Focus on the advancement of technology."

Sub-theme: Teaching and education

Participants suggested that UNC focus innovations in the areas that it has strength, such as teaching and education. Participants suggested developing partnerships to support teaching and education innovation and offered that the campus has room to improve innovation efforts overall.

"Really embrace our role as a "Teaching Institution" by collaborating with local districts to provide summer programs for local teachers who need credits for licensing, by continued collaborations with feeder institutions like Aims, and by expanding research and innovation projects related to the areas we do well (like teaching)."

"UNC should be leader in teaching innovation."

"Lead in innovation and research. Focus on the strong points and amplify that. Education, medical, technology, and sports."

"Innovation in education- integrate of disciplines teaching org class- i.e. English and anthropology and chemistry."

"Mix size, innovation and history as teachers' college to be THE classroom to look to (classroom to the workforce and community-teach, spread love of arts)."

Sub-theme: Outreach-marketing, promotion

Participants shared that outreach and marketing should be student-centered and specifically focused on the needs of UNC's unique population. Additionally, participants want innovative marketing strategies that reflect the positive qualities about UNC and the people UNC serves.



“Marketing: You are not a # at UNC.”

“Marketing specifically to non-traditional students.”

“Improved marketing of resources.”

“Showing/marketing our resources: (cultural centers) as part of the community, stop trying to take away centers and the studies.”

“Tell folks who we are: Marketing”

“Tell our story. Why us? Why here? Why Greeley?”

“Marketing - raising awareness of what makes us unique and special.”

“Advertising to a wide variety of students and emphasizing how great UNC is. What we are doing right now is not working based on enrollment numbers and the number of kids that leave after their first semester/year. We need to rethink how we are marketing to the Colorado locals and out of state students to bring enrollment numbers up.”

Overall, participants agreed that UNC needs to be more innovative and future-focused with regard to many different aspects.

5. Student-Centered Focus

Participants suggested that the future of UNC should be student-centered and shared a range of topics to focus on, including education requirements, student life programming, career readiness (workplace readiness) and overall holistic support. This topic was closely linked with the innovation theme, as many participants spoke of innovation in conjunction with being student-centric.

“Flexibility & innovative approaches to help students’ success (student centered work).”

“Focus on UNC’s ability to be most student-centered caring Colorado research university and Market #1’s.”

“Implement and support the active learning task force recommendations. Student-centered advising.”

“Student Centered start to finish (learning outcomes, career readiness, adaptability).”

Sub-theme: Flexibility with requirements

Participants suggested that a way to be innovative with a student-centered focus is to be creative and flexible about requirements. Participants were not advocating for less requirements, but for more innovative pathways and creative programs. Additionally, UNC should ensure that requirements match the reality of the job market.

“Steal/borrow/adopt academic pathways model to explore majors while moving through requirements to graduation-interest based, etc.”

“Make sure course content is timely and responsive to current job market requirements.”

“Evolve the online education programs. Specifically, offer some kind of video platform

for students. Also provide actual trainings in coursework requirements. Not just links to videos.”

“Allow them to follow the course/path they want. They are paying money to be here, so, for example, if they want to obtain credits for a higher degree while still an undergrad, they should be able to do that, regardless of the type of program or requirements. Provide them options and opportunities, and ask them questions consistently about what they want, what they want to change, what they need, etc. Provide required courses that are more practical, like a basic how to manage finances class, or basic how government works and the economy on a micro/macro scale, etc.”

Sub-theme: Relevant student life programming

In addition to allowing innovation and creativity with requirements, participants asked for the same with programs. Participants suggested innovative ways for support in other parts of the student experience.

“Advertise the beautiful scenery of what Colorado has to offer. Also, implement more of the outdoor activities and encourage clubs/organizations/programs to get out of town and explore the mountains during all beautiful seasons. Offer raffles for participants at certain events for a chance to win tickets to Red Rocks tickets or any other concert/music festival.”

“Continue offering services and programs to the students like tutoring, clubs, sports, etc.”

“Student Success programs including career counseling, professional conference stipends or subsidized ticket prices, protections for diversity of thought.”

“Growth in student success programs. Aiding students in considering jobs post-college.”

Sub-theme: Career readiness

Participants want UNC to offer more innovative practices and solutions for career readiness and skill development. Education should match the reality of the world that students will enter upon leaving.

“Understand the changing idea of a career.”

“Focus on career readiness, soft-skill development, job placement, career counseling.”

“Reframe and restructure majors to be keeping up with trends toward career readiness. Rename the majors, include more career preparation work, require internships, more community-based learning.”

“Capitalize and focus on career preparation and readiness in academic programs.”

Sub-theme: Holistic support/resources

Participants shared concerns about the future of support systems for academics, mental health, increasing life skills and “Bear Necessities” (SRL analysis team added creative license to the name) for living such as food, housing and health care.

“Be a holistic university that cares as much about the student's physical and spiritual/mental well-being as their academic growth.”

“Develop a holistic student support program - from recruitment to career. Right-size our programs so that we are not overextended and can provide the best service possible to the students that are here. Incorporate financial literacy and career preparedness into standard curriculum/advising.”

“student-centered/holistic approach to student life”

“Provide holistic support-prioritizing funding for on-campus support, food insecurity, mental health, the DRC, campus community partnerships (e.g. police, banner health, etc.)”

“Holistic Health-awareness of capital H Health and how it encompasses various health concerns.”

Overall, participants want UNC to be student-centered in education, student life, preparing for post-UNC life and providing resources to support the health of students overall.



6. Faculty/Staff Support and Development

Participants emphasized that faculty and staff need support and development in addition to compensation. Some participants emphasized that UNC should be focusing on its strengths and offering development opportunities based on those strengths.

“Faculty capacity increased to meet changing student needs, support-development.”

“Increase funding for faculty/staff professional development.”

Sub-theme: Teacher-scholar model

The teacher/scholar model came up repeatedly. There is an apparent disconnect about what UNC’s teaching/research focus is and should be. Participants from all groups repeatedly mentioned the value of a teacher-scholar model and suggested that it be an integral part of UNC’s future identity. Some participants mentioned that there are unique qualities about UNC that draw professors that want to teach and develop those skills.

“We need to turn our perceived weaknesses into strengths. We are not a research 1 institution; we can be a teacher-scholar institution.”

“Explore the teacher/scholar model.”

“Continue to focus on teacher/scholar model- we want professors who want to teach more than do research.”

“Invest in teachers/scholar development: release time for development of faculty skills.”

“Strong support/awareness of research and scholarship; research (to practice) awareness across all disciplines for ALL students; creating a fun learning environment utilizing scaffolding/ mapping teacher techniques.”

“Embrace teacher-scholar model.”

“Provide students with engaged teacher-scholars who enjoy being in the classroom or field.”

Sub-theme: Offer more staff development opportunities

Participants asked that staff be given more development opportunities related to their roles and to support future endeavors.

“Investment in staff development including conference attendance.”

“Training for ALL faculty and staff on equity, inclusion, and diversity, mandated for all (replaced service expectation for faculty), if become HSI-- need training on supporting that student population.”

“There needs to be an all faculty and staff training week in the summer where everyone is required to attend. Currently, the school rarely has everyone on campus at any all-staff meeting.”

Overall, participants want UNC to support faculty/staff by offering professional development opportunities.



7. Identity

Participants shared that UNC needs to clarify and embrace its identity. Many participants suggested that UNC stop comparing itself to other institutions and focus on who UNC *actually* is and what it does best. Participants are divided on whether UNC should focus on being a teaching or research model institution.

Sub-theme: UNC's identity - be authentically UNC - not comparative

Participants shared that though it can be useful to explore what competitors are doing, UNC should focus on the unique identity of the campus and brand. Many participants offered favorable phrases that demonstrated ownership and pride of UNC and expressed that these things should define UNC's community presence.

"Focus on university identity; define our strengths and identity instead of comparison-in marketing/conversation/ attitude."

"Know our identity and be proud (student focused, small class size, every person matters)."

"Promote 'feel' of UNCO through events."

"UNC lacks an identity that encourages diversity and inclusiveness among students."

"UNC needs to become a vibrant spot on the Colorado plains where individual students are nurtured, and external stakeholders are invited to participate within the campus community in ways that generate wellsprings of potential for the surrounding area. UNC needs to become a place to which students and community members turn not just for entertainment or identity or even an education but as a source of personal strength, challenge, and (non-monetary) enrichment."

Sub-theme: Define UNC's teaching/learning vs. research identity

While many participants called for a teacher-scholar focus, others asked that UNC clarify whether it is a teaching or research institution so that it can be proficient at one or the other. Many other participants asked that UNC encourage and support research. Clarifying this focus will help with faculty and staff recruitment and retention as well as development and support for current staff and faculty.

"Reward faculty for pursuing research, for spending additional time ensuring student success. I can fund students if given the ability to pursue grants and research."

"Do not expect excellent teachers to be excellent researchers. Do not expect excellent researchers to be excellent teachers. A paired model will work best."

"Support faculty scholarship. Students will be more successful if faculty are successful scholars who can provide students with research opportunities, expert instruction, etc."

"Put more of a focus on research and highlighting research that is being done on campus to bring interest to UNC from both potential students and faculty/staff."

"Support faculty to do great research that will bring in money and prestige to the university."

Overall, participants want UNC to clarify its identity and focus efforts on developing its strengths.



