

# MEMORANDUM

**TO: Allen Huang, Provost**



**Academic Affairs**

**FROM: Joe Alexander, Dean**

**DATE: May 15, 2006**

**RE: Initial Enrollment Management Objectives for Academic Plan**

Allen, the accompany information represents the efforts of our enrollment sub-committee to craft some preliminary objectives as part of the UNC academic planning process. Upon review of this information you will note that by no means have we reached consensus on a set of final objectives. However, we have reached agreement on a draft set of targets that we all believe should continue to be refined and shaped as we move further into the planning process.

I am encouraged at the overall levels of university commitment housed within this sub-committee, not to mention these individuals' institutional wisdom. We are making progress and are excited about the prospects of continuing to move our institution forward through this process.

JFA/ja

cc: Mark Anderson (UL)                      Becky Barnes (Registrar)  
Keiko Krahnke (MCB)                      Lesley Compagnone (Univ. Advancement)  
Chris Downen (Admissions)              Donni Clark (Financial Aid)  
Rene Oya (OMA)                              Kelli Parmley (OBIA)  
Jenna Bradfield (Student)                Tobias Guzman (Housing & Residence Life)  
Joe Alexander (Acad. Affairs)              File

## **Background—Enrollment Planning**

The following is an attempt to frame some of the more salient themes that emerged from the initial meetings of our enrollment management sub-committee. It is intended to set the proper context for some of the objectives that have been identified at the outset of our planning activities. While we have made initial progress in bringing together a variety of diverse perspectives and important functions from within the university, we have also found our assigned task of suggesting definitive institutional enrollment objectives to be incredibly challenging in the absence of further guidance and direction on some key questions. It is the committee's hope that we are still early enough in the planning process as we enter this summer that additional research and insights from various internal and external sources will help transform these initial objectives into targets that are more clearly justified through market, programmatic, and budgetary realities. With those caveats in mind, we are beginning to identify some key themes that should assist the steering committee in framing some of their discussions and deliberations.

### **The UNC Vision?**

In order to set meaningful and achievable enrollment targets it is important that there be a well articulated vision for UNC. At present, the committee remains unclear on precisely what that vision is or should be. What type of university does UNC desire to be in 10 years? Where should it position itself as an institution that is distinctive from other Colorado institutions, as well as its more geographically dispersed peers? What type of student body would be reflective of this vision and thus should be pursued in terms of student recruitment?

### **Establishing a 5-Year Planning Process and Annual Update**

In order to link planning to budgeting, to coordinate responsibilities for recruiting and admissions occurring outside of admissions (e.g. international students, athletics, graduate students), guide the priorities and operational work in many of the academic support areas (e.g. advising, residence life), UNC needs to establish, at minimum, a 5-year enrollment plan that is widely publicized. Because planning is an on-going process, it should be updated and discussed regularly—as opposed to every five years. To borrow a popular management quote from Peter Drucker, “Plans are nothing...planning is everything.” There is tremendous value that can be derived out of the planning cycle itself, which should be structured around an annual process—especially in this critical area of enrollment management.

An initial suggestion where there is already clear agreement within our committee would be to re-establish an enrollment management committee with representation from key academic and administrative campus areas where student recruiting and retention is a priority. Several colleges/universities use this format, but it would ultimately need to be shaped by the new AVP for Enrollment and Access.

### **Pricing and Financial Aid Strategy**

At several key junctures in the budget process, it was clear that UNC needs to establish a pricing and financial aid strategy that is consistent with factors such as program demand,

cost, quality, and the recruiting plan. Increasing minority students or out-of-state students may be entirely possible, but the specific pricing and financial aid strategy necessary to make that possible needs to be researched and clearly defined *prior* to implementation.

### **Impact of retention and graduation rates**

UNC has much room for improvement in the area of student retention rates and must improve retention rates if graduation rates are to be improved. However, one significant question posed at this juncture is how much of our increase in enrollment and FTE do we desire from new incoming classes versus increases that can be achieved through better student retention? Both university enrollment management research, as well as history within the business world, clearly suggest that retention of existing customers is far less costly than the recruitment of new ones.

### **Residence Hall and Classroom Capacity**

Our ability to increase enrollment, whether it be through substantial increases in retention and quality, or through increased admissions and yield activity, is dependent upon our ability to house students and ensure adequate classroom facilities for purposes of scheduling. At present, UNC residence hall facilities are near capacity (96% are freshmen), and given our current time zone structure for courses, the general sense is that we are approaching capacity in facility usage as well. Taking on additional students would require adding courses in alternative time zones and perhaps making freshmen the exclusive priority for housing. Also to be considered are the additional instructional costs (not insignificant) that will be needed from academic affairs to offer the necessary courses for enrollment increases, not to mention increases in other student support areas as well.

### **The Relative Freshmen/Transfer Mix**

UNC traditionally has admitted a significant proportion of transfer students (including Spring admits), yet in general, most transfer students who come to UNC have not completed a 2-year degree (a critical indicator of retention and graduation success) and likely require a different type and level of support outside the classroom. Additionally, as UNC makes progress with freshmen retention and continues to admit the same proportion of transfer students, the competition for upper division classes will also increase. What is the desired, proportional relationship between transfer and freshmen student segments? How do we ensure that our admissions standards for transfer students are on par with our freshmen quality requirements? How do we collaborate with key community college leaders to ensure that transfer and articulation are seamless and that we are encouraging larger proportions of students with 2-year degrees to select UNC for their upper-division coursework?

### **Graduate Program Capacity**

Enrollment growth at the graduate level is likely desirable. However, should growth be limited to areas with existing capacity (increase our marketing and admissions efforts) or does UNC desire growth from additional programs? Additionally, who is responsible to actively recruit students? If it is faculty, has this been made explicit?

## **Extended Studies**

How does desired growth in Extended Studies relate to the vision for UNC and our current university mission? Should growth in this area be limited to existing programs (expansion) or are there critical areas to develop additional programs and what mission specific criteria do we use to do that effectively?

## **UNC Enrollment Planning Objectives (2007 – 2011)**

### Objectives:

1. Increase total undergraduate enrollment by 5% over the course of 5 years.  
Accomplished through:
  - Increased retention of continuing students by 5% over 5 years.
  - Maintain the total number of freshmen recruited annually.
  - Maintain the total number of transfers recruited annually.
  - Increase the proportion of incoming non-resident freshmen by 5% over 5 years.
2. Increase the total graduate enrollment by 5% over the course of 5 years.
3. Increase the quality of incoming freshmen over 5 years as follows:  
Accomplished through:
  - Average CCHE index of entering freshmen increased from 104.9 to 107.4 (.5 annually through decreasing window admits and increasing non-resident freshmen; also should consider increasing university minimum requirements from 94 to 96 and using window to regulate quantities).
  - Average composite ACT of entering freshmen increased from 22.2 to 22.7 (.1 annually).
4. Increase the quality of incoming transfer students as follows:
  - Average transfer GPA from 2.93 to 2.98 (.1 annually).

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*\*The above objectives are highly dependent on the addition of new resources and a comprehensive plan for key units (e.g., admissions for recruiting, financial aid for scholarships, academic affairs for additional classes offered). Committee holds strong views that without additional resources, most of the above targets are not attainable.*