



FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO
OCTOBER 1, 2010
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INTRODUCTION/RATIONALE

Senate Bill 10-03 grants Colorado institutions of higher education greater flexibility in setting tuition, while ensuring that institutions provide protection for low and middle income students.

Beginning in FY 2011-2012, those governing boards seeking increased flexibility are required to submit five-year financial accountability plans (FAPs) to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) for review and approval. Increased flexibility, for the purposes of this document, is defined as seeking to increase tuition rates for undergraduate students with in-state classification by more than nine percent per student or nine percent per credit hour over the tuition rate for the preceding fiscal year.

SB 10-03 requires that institutional governing boards, at a minimum, include the following in the FAP:

- A. The percentage rate increase for tuition;
- B. The manner in which the governing board shall ensure that access and affordability for enrollment of low and middle income students will be preserved, taking into account the availability of federal, state, institutional, and private monies;
- C. Measures the institution will take to reduce student debt load, including the amount of institutional funds the governing board will allocate to need-based financial assistance;
- D. How the institution will address the needs of underserved and underrepresented students;
- E. Assurance that operational flexibility provided in statute will not reduce the Level of service and quality.

Following submission of a FAP, the CCHE will have 90 days to review and either approve or deny the governing board's request for a tuition increase. In approving the plan, the CCHE may approve the request for two years and make the approval for the subsequent three years conditional on the governing board's success in implementing the plan. If a plan is denied, the governing board may submit an alternative plan to the CCHE in accordance with the adopted timelines. Once approved, FAPs become part of the CCHE annual budget recommendation to the Joint Budget Committee.

The CCHE will provide an additional opportunity for adjustments to approved FAPs should there be a significant change in budget projections based on the spring (2011) forecast. CCHE will not accept new FAP's during this time.

KEY DATES FOR FY 2011-2012

- CDHE public release of FAP template to institutions: **July 30, 2010**
- Governing Board/Institution Submission of FAPs to CCHE: **August 2, 2010-October 1, 2010**
- CCHE analysis/negotiation of FAPs: **August 20, 2010-October 29, 2010**
- CCHE adoption of final FAP recommendations: **December 4, 2010**
- Submission of CCHE recommendations to Joint Budget Committee: **December 10, 2010**
- March, 2011: **The CCHE will provide an additional opportunity for adjustments to approved FAP's should there be a significant change in budget projections based on the spring (2011) forecast.**

ASSUMPTIONS

1. Through this process, governing boards are requesting the authority to raise tuition up to the stated maximum declared in this FAP. It is understood that governing boards will make final tuition setting decisions during their normal budgeting process. Approval of this FAP is not an indication of final tuition rates at any given institution.
2. FY 2007-2010 institutional data are utilized in this template for the purposes of establishing baseline metrics. The CCHE will update metrics annually.
3. Data sources used to establish baseline data include Student Unit Record Data System (SURDS) and Budget Data Book (BDB).
4. The CCHE has established key dates to comply with SB 10-03 statutory requirements.
5. Governing boards/institutions will address agreed upon common metrics outlined in this template but may also provide additional data and narrative to support strategies employed by their institution(s) to ensure accessibility and affordability for underrepresented students including, at a minimum, low and middle income, first generation, and ethnic minorities during the period outlined in the FAP.
6. If applicable, list below any additional institutional/governing board assumptions utilized in the development of this FAP:

SECTION I: PROCESS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE FAP

Describe the consultative process used to develop the FAP. Include information on advisory committee meetings, public hearings and any other forums held on campus to discuss the tuition plan. Please also describe how the development of the FAP speaks to your institution's role and mission.

The development of the FAP was an extension of UNC's internal financial planning process which is part of overall university planning. Our approach to financial planning includes a rolling three-year enrollment and financial plan that serves as the basis for annual budget decisions. For purposes of the FAP, we expanded our financial plan to the required five-year timeframe. Significant milestones include:

July 2009	Cost containment measures including voluntary separation incentive plan implemented.
Fall 2009	Potential cumulative state funding (FY11-FY16) loss of \$14 million identified for planning purposes. Campus-wide discussions held about revenue generation, cost containment and operational changes.
January 2010	FY11-FY13 enrollment projections prepared by cross-functional academic and administrative team.
Spring 2010	Undergraduate and graduate enrollment management strategies including recruitment, retention activities, discounting and student support services updated. Presentation to Board March 2010.
March/April 2010	Parameters and assumptions for multi-year financial planning discussed with campus-wide leaders including student leadership.
July 2010	Five-year (FY12-FY16) enrollment projections developed by cross-functional academic and administrative team.
August 2010	Financial planning parameters (FY12-FY16) developed by cross-functional academic and administrative team. Tuition and discounting pricing strategies reviewed.
September 2010	\$5 million target set for sustainable costs savings to be identified by reinvention of our operations.
September 2010	Five-year (FY12-FY16) Financial Planning Scenarios, including various tuition and discounting rates, discussed with Board of Trustees. Additional discussion with campus-wide leaders including student leadership.
October 2010	FAP based on UNC's financial plan submitted to DHE.
Fall 2010	Report and analysis of data on admissions, yield, retention, discounting, etc. to be reviewed and used to revise pricing, discounting and financial planning.

The FAP is based on our internal financial planning that is firmly grounded in UNC's role and mission, summarized as providing students access to an exemplary teaching and learning community. Our promise to students is to give them a university experience that is more than just an accumulation of credit hours, an experience that includes research, graduate programs, community involvement, and complementary services essential to student success. The FAP provides pricing and discounting data for resident undergraduates and also includes data with a broader perspective, since serving resident undergraduate students is not an isolated activity. The diversity and integration of the whole student population, as well as

the breadth and depth of both undergraduate and graduate programs, affect the resident undergraduate experience.

SECTION II: REQUESTED TUITION INCREASE

Please detail the governing board/institution requested tuition increase (or range of increases) beginning FY2011-12. Include (based on five-year projections):

- *Year-to-year dollar amount/ percent increase per credit hour for resident students*
- *Differential tuition amounts (if applicable)*
- *Tuition window adjustments(if applicable)*
- *Net expected revenue projections*

The tuition allocation model currently approved by CCHE includes a reduction of state funding for UNC of \$5.8 million in FY12, which represents 14.2% of UNC's current state funding. This cut, combined with the FY11 reduction of \$3.5 million, equates to a 20.9% loss from our FY10 funding level. In light of these significant reductions, UNC is requesting average undergraduate resident tuition increases of 15% in FY12 and FY13 and 12% in FY14.

UNC's internal financial planning process includes a five-year projection of revenues and expenses (Appendix I, page 1) that incorporates tuition rate increases as shown in Tables 1 and 2. With regard to undergraduate resident tuition rates, these increases would still place UNC's tuition below most of its peers (Appendix I, page 2).

For simplicity's sake the percentage and dollar increases reflected in Table 1 and Table 2 are shown as a single number (e.g., 15%). These represent the average increases for any given year and correspond to an overall total tuition revenue projection. In other words, the 15% increase for both FY12 and FY13 is an average rate increase that would result in 15% growth in annual gross revenue (before discounting). In addition to this rate-based revenue growth, UNC is projecting undergraduate enrollment increases of 2% that result in additional revenue. It is our intent to continue to differentiate tuition pricing consistent with UNC's mission, differential costs, demand, the needs of our students, and market research. While tuition would increase 15% on average, the increase for individual students could vary depending on their major and program level, the number of hours they take, and their financial need. For example, a student majoring in interdisciplinary studies-elementary teaching might see an 8% increase, with the increase for students in programs such as business and natural sciences being closer to 20%. Pricing strategies have been regularly discussed with the Board of Trustees since 2004, when a comprehensive tuition pricing study, presented to the Board, resulted in UNC's first program-based differential tuition rates (Appendix II).

While the state's investment in public higher education appears to be targeted at the production of undergraduate credit hours, we remain committed to providing students with a comprehensive university experience. We know this means that our pricing will have to be more strategic. We will continue to differentiate prices by academic program and by masters vs. doctoral level. We will consider differentiation by upper and lower division for undergraduates and changes to our "free credit" window. Annual decisions about these strategies will be made by our Board based on our continuously improving analysis of program costs, student needs, and market research. Table 3 reflects projected tuition rates for our undergraduate academic programs that are currently priced differentially.

Table 1

Undergraduate Tuition Rates						
	FY11 Actual	FY12 Projected	FY13 Projected	FY14 Projected	FY15 Projected	FY16 Projected
Resident Tuition (based on 12-16 credit hours)*						
Percentage Increase	9%	15%	15%	12%	9%	9%
Annual Rate Increase	\$384	\$702	\$807	\$743	\$624	\$680
Annual Rate	\$4,680	\$5,382	\$6,189	\$6,932	\$7,556	\$8,236
Student Share Per Credit Hour Rate	\$195	\$224	\$258	\$289	\$315	\$343
Non-Resident Tuition (based on 12-16 credit hours)*						
Percentage Increase	9%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%	6%	6%
Annual Rate Increase	\$1,320	\$1,031	\$1,098	\$1,170	\$1,150	\$1,219
Annual Rate	\$15,864	\$16,895	\$17,993	\$19,163	\$20,313	\$21,531
Student Share Per Credit Hour Rate	\$661	\$704	\$750	\$798	\$846	\$897

*Tuition is charged for credits 1-12 and 17 on up; annual rate is for 12-16 credit hours.

Table 2

Graduate Tuition Rates						
	FY11 Actual	FY12 Projected	FY13 Projected	FY14 Projected	FY15 Projected	FY16 Projected
Resident Tuition						
Percentage Increases	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
Resident Annual Rates (based on 18 credit hours)						
Masters	\$5,562-\$6,678	\$6,390-\$7,686	\$7,344-\$8,838	\$8,442-\$10,170	\$9,702-\$11,700	\$11,160-\$13,464
Doctoral	\$6,498-\$7,794	\$7,470-\$8,964	\$8,586-\$10,314	\$9,882-\$11,862	\$11,358-\$13,644	\$13,068-\$15,696
Resident Per Credit Hour Rates						
Masters	\$309 - \$371	\$355 - \$427	\$408 - \$491	\$469 - \$565	\$539 - \$650	\$620 - \$748
Doctoral	\$361 - \$433	\$415 - \$498	\$477 - \$573	\$549 - \$659	\$631 - \$758	\$726 - \$872
Non-Resident Tuition						
Percentage Increases	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
Non-Resident Annual Rates (based on 18 credit hours)						
Masters	\$14,202-\$15,300	\$16,326-\$17,604	\$18,774-\$20,250	\$21,582-\$23,292	\$24,822-\$26,784	\$28,548-\$30,798
Doctoral	\$16,560-\$17,856	\$19,044-\$20,538	\$21,906-\$23,616	\$25,200-\$27,162	\$28,980-\$31,230	\$33,336-\$35,910
Non-Resident Per Credit Hour Rates						
Masters	\$789 - \$850	\$907 - \$978	\$1,043 - \$1,125	\$1,199-\$1,294	\$1,379 - \$1,488	\$1,586 - \$1,711
Doctoral	\$920 - \$992	\$1,058 - \$1,141	\$1,217 - \$1,312	\$1,400-\$1,509	\$1,610 - \$1,735	\$1,852 - \$1,995

Table 3

Differential Tuition Rates						
	FY11 Actual	FY12 Projected	FY13 Projected	FY14 Projected	FY15 Projected	FY16 Projected
Differential Tuition						
Percentage Increase	9%	15%	15%	12%	9%	9%
Differential Annual Rates (based on 18 credit hours)*						
Business	\$531	\$611	\$702	\$787	\$857	\$934
Music, Music Theatre, Theatre, Dance	\$423	\$486	\$559	\$627	\$683	\$744
Nursing	\$819	\$942	\$1,083	\$1,213	\$1,322	\$1,441

*Tuition differentials are in addition to the base rates and apply only to courses within the student's major, about 60% of a student's total course of study.

Our institutional discounting has doubled in the past two years. In FY10 approximately 24% of our tuition revenue was reinvested in institutional scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students (Table 4). Undergraduate tuition and discounting (Table 5) comprise the largest portion of our tuition revenue. We will continue to increase our institutional discounting, although at a slower rate of growth. Coupled with this effort is the development of greater sophistication in our communications with students to convey the difference between the “sticker price” and discounted tuition. Our recruiters and financial aid counselors work together closely so that discounting information is provided to prospective students and parents early in the admissions process. This information is also communicated to high school counselors and community leaders who are in a position to work with prospective students and parents. As an additional means of pricing transparency, UNC will be implementing the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) net price calculator for students.

Table 4

Institutional Tuition Discounting FY08 Through FY11				
	FY08 Actual	FY09 Actual	FY10 Actual	FY11 Budget
Tuition	\$50,733,637	\$54,432,163	\$62,001,616	\$68,716,930
Institutional Scholarships	\$7,160,964	\$9,718,825	\$14,846,385	\$15,406,587
Discounted Revenue	\$43,572,673	\$44,713,338	\$47,155,231	\$53,310,343
Discount Percent	14.1%	17.9%	24.0%	22.4%

Table 5

Undergraduate Tuition Discounting			
	Undergraduate Tuition*	Institutional Scholarships	Discounted Revenue
FY08 Actual	\$43,750,738	\$6,027,954	\$37,722,784
FY09 Actual	\$46,500,947	\$8,153,005	\$38,347,942
FY10 Actual	\$51,697,248	\$12,525,218	\$39,172,030
FY11 Budget	\$56,680,782	\$12,452,811	\$44,227,971
FY12 Projections	\$66,177,000	\$14,784,000	\$51,393,000
FY13 Projections	\$75,991,000	\$17,238,000	\$58,753,000
FY14 Projections	\$85,553,000	\$19,629,000	\$65,924,000
FY15 Projections	\$94,213,000	\$21,794,000	\$72,419,000
FY16 Projections	\$103,762,000	\$24,181,000	\$79,581,000

* excludes COF stipend; i.e. student share of tuition only

SECTION III: PROTECTION OF LOW AND MIDDLE INCOME STUDENTS

Describe the projected financial aid available (federal, state, institutional & private moneys) to students to mitigate the impact of any increase in tuition and fees. Describe how any additional institutional monies from increased tuition will be allocated to financial aid and how it will be awarded. Specifically address strategies as they relate to providing assistance to low and middle income students.

On the included Excel spreadsheet (“Institutional Data for FAP 2010”), we have included a distribution of Pell recipients for Colorado resident, undergraduate students at Colorado institutions (see tab labeled “PelleligFTE.” Please verify if correct and, if needed, provide updated figures.

While UNC is committed to making a university education as affordable as possible, we also believe that protecting low- and middle-income students means giving them access to a university experience where they can be successful. We believe that focusing solely on financial aid packaging does not protect low- and middle-income students. We must also be attentive to the quality of academic programs and student support services, particularly for low- and middle-income students who come from families without a history of college attendance.

As UNC enrolls increasing numbers of students from high-need populations, we do these students a profound disservice if we focus exclusively on ameliorating rises in our price point. It is well established in national research that students with high need-based financial aid awards tend to persist at lower rates than the general population¹. UNC is increasing its support services geared to low-income, first-generation, and under-represented minority students. Access, to be meaningful, must be access to academic success. The support needed to foster such success has a cost, even when delivered efficiently. We intend to direct revenues derived from tuition increases, not just to discounting, but also toward enhancing the capacity of our existing support services in advising, tutoring, and mentoring. Some of these programs are discussed in Section V.

According to a March 2010 article from *Inside Higher Education*², tuition discounting reached an all-time high at private colleges and universities in 2008. The article goes on to discuss the complexity, risks, and rewards of discounting, or use of financial aid. Data from a number of sources, including the College Board and NACUBO, confirm the upward trends in discounting. It is also clear that public higher education is using discounting to a greater extent. UNC is no exception as shown in Table 4 of the previous section.

Effectively using institutional dollars to attract and retain both low- and middle-income students is more than just a simple net price calculation. Intuitively, both sticker price and net price, after discounting, matter to the student. The sticker price influences whether students will apply, while the net price influences whether they will enroll and complete their education. These decisions vary by student demographics (e.g., race, gender, marital status, family income, parents’ educational attainment, occupational status, academic ability) and institutional characteristics (tuition sticker price, discounting, location, reputation, selectivity, special programs, and curriculum³).

¹ Citation information link: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2008174>

² “Slashing Prices” *Inside Higher Education*. March 31, 2010

³ DesJardins, Ahlburg & McCall. “An Integrated Model of Application, Admission, Enrollment, and Financial Aid”. *The Journal of Higher Education* May/June 2006.

Recognizing the complexity and individualized nature of both sticker price and discounting, UNC has been aggressively pursuing financial aid strategies that are most effective for our particular students, given UNC’s unique characteristics. This involves a combination of researching available literature, developing statistical models to analyze UNC data, and using straightforward empirical evidence – whether students are meeting their educational goals and how they report that financial factors are affecting their success. For example, we interview students who withdraw to better understand attrition and modify our student support services and financial aid policies accordingly.

Appendix III is a series of charts showing the enrollment and yield rates of UNC students cross-tabulated by need and academic ability. This is an example of the kind of analysis we are doing to better understand how we can effectively use financial aid. We are pleased to report that our research-informed approach is resulting in empirical success.

For four years (FY06-FY09) UNC had been experiencing a decrease in low- and middle-income students as measured by being “Pell eligible”. (In general, UNC defines low-income students as Pell-eligible and middle-income students with the CCHE Level 1 definition, up to 150% of Pell eligibility.) Beginning in 2009, UNC implemented new financial aid strategies for needy students while simultaneously increasing institutional discounting. These results are paying off in terms of our Pell eligible students (Table 6).

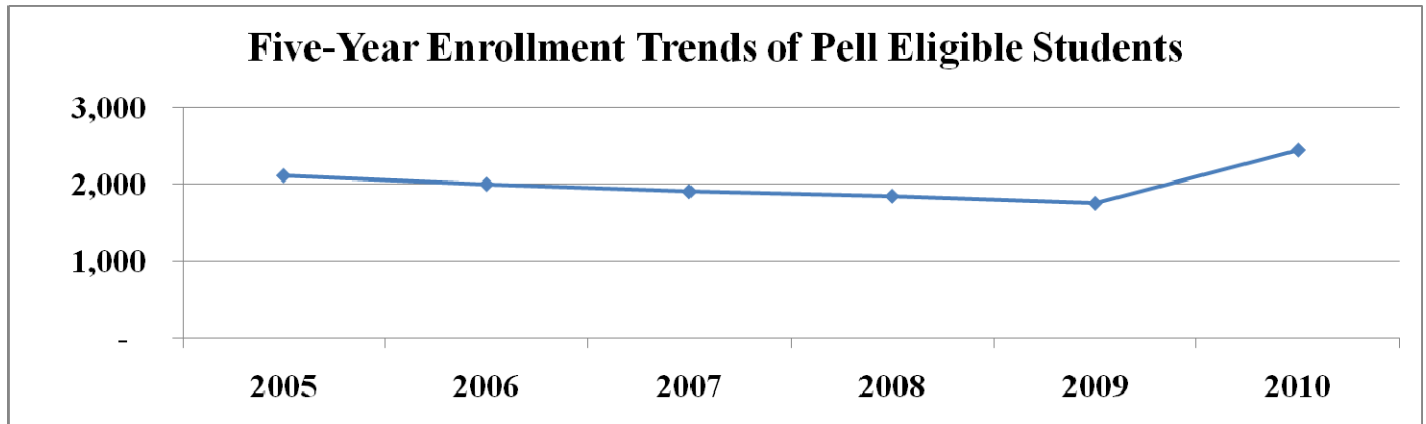
As shown in Appendix III yield rates are generally highest for UNC’s neediest students (i.e., EFC between \$0 and \$6,926) with CCHE Index scores between 94 and 111. UNC has lower yield rates for less financially needy and better prepared students. From our declined admissions studies we know that these students tend to choose out-of-state and private four-year institutions. The number of new first-time freshmen resident admits in the highest need category (\$0 EFC) has increased from 197 in Fall 2008 to 519 in Fall 2010.

UNC is continuing to gather and analyze data to better understand how this ultimately impacts student success, including graduation rates.

Table 6

Pell Eligible Students FY05-FY10			
Year	Pell Eligible	Total	Pell Eligible
2005	2,111	8,875	23.79%
2006	1,998	8,922	22.40%
2007	1,903	8,831	21.55%
2008	1,843	8,629	21.36%
2009	1,750	7,937	22.05%
2010	2,446	8,188	29.87%

Chart 1



As state support for both financial aid and the College Opportunity Fund declines, the challenge to protect low- and middle-income students will become greater. Increases in federal grants, primarily Pell, have been helpful. For example, we took advantage of the changes in Pell rules for summer by expanding course offerings for students, giving them the opportunity to use summer Pell grants and to graduate more quickly.

We are also committed to maximizing private sources of funding. During the past year we have worked extensively with our foundation to refocus its activities and more closely integrate fund-raising with university priorities. As part of that restructuring, a new Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations joined UNC in October. She has extensive development experience in both public and private higher education, and we believe she will be a catalyst for a more robust level of private scholarships. In FY07 private financial aid was \$6.7 million and increased to \$7.7 million by FY10. Private scholarships tend not to be strictly need-based grants. They generally include criteria such as membership affiliation with an organization, demographic-based eligibility, and/or merit-based requirements. However, there is no question that these kinds of scholarships often benefit low- and middle-income students.

Table 7 reflects historical and projected federal, state, and institutional grants that are strictly need-based, including work-study grant aid. As state grants have declined in real dollars and purchasing power, UNC has more than doubled institutional grants for students.

Table 7

Historical and Projected Grant Aid by Source for Undergraduates					
Source	FY07 Actual	FY08 Actual	FY09 Actual	FY10 Actual	FY11 Projected
Federal	\$5.6	\$5.8	\$6.2	\$10.5	\$12.3
State	\$3.3	\$4.3	\$4.6	\$4.2	\$3.5
Institutional	\$1.4	\$1.7	\$2.1	\$5.0	\$3.7
Other Aid	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Total Grant Aid	\$10.3	\$11.8	\$12.9	\$19.7	\$19.5

(in millions)

Given the reality of the decline in state funding, we will need to rely on institutional funds (other students' tuition) to provide a full array of financial aid to all students, including low- and middle-income students. Tables 4 and 5 in the previous section show our overall projections. Specifically focusing on resident undergraduate need-based grants, we intend to increase the institutional commitment by 17% in FY12 and

at least 15% per year in FY13 through FY16 (Table 8). This is equal to or greater than our tuition rate increase percentages.

Institutional grants for residents increased by a dramatic 145% in FY10. As part of our research-based approach to financial aid, we developed statistical award models based on historical data and then were aggressive in our offers. We had far more students accept offers than historical data predicted; we suspect that is due to changes in the overall economic environment. As a result, we overspent our budget by \$2.4 million for a total of \$4.9 million. We covered this by applying one-time funding to the over-expenditure. Accordingly, we have adjusted our financial aid strategies to keep the institutional need-based grants at the \$3.5 million level for FY11 (a \$1.0 million increase from the prior year's budget), with the intention of growing to at least \$7.0 million by FY16. During the five-year planning horizon we are projecting that 25% of new undergraduate revenue will be used for institutional aid. As we continue to gather data and test it against our models, both the total amount of institutional financial aid and the mix of need-based, merit, and other awards will continue to change. Nonetheless, with the tuition increases described in Section I, we are committed, at a minimum, to the need-based amounts reflected in Table 8.

Table 8

Institutional Grants: Resident Undergraduate Need-based Aid Historical Trend and Projections				
	Amount	Annual Increase	Percent Change	Res UG Tuition Increase
FY07	\$1.4			
FY08	\$1.7	\$0.30	21%	9%
FY09	\$2.0	\$0.30	18%	9%
FY10	\$4.9	\$2.90	145%	9%
FY11 (Note 1)	\$3.5	-\$1.40	-29%	9%
FY12	\$4.1	\$0.60	17%	15%
FY13	\$4.7	\$0.60	15%	15%
FY14	\$5.4	\$0.70	15%	12%
FY15	\$6.2	\$0.80	15%	9%
FY16	\$7.1	\$0.90	15%	9%

(in millions)

Note 1: In FY10 we overspent our institutional discount budget by almost \$3.0 million. We covered this by applying one-time funding to the over-expenditure. The actual institutional discounting for FY10 reflects an artificially high base against which to compare FY11. We are using 25% of increased revenue for institutional discounting.

This need-based aid will be directed first to Level 1 students using our evolving models. Based on current data and assuming constant federal and state funding, need-based aid packages would be approximately:

- \$0 EFC students: \$5,550 Pell, \$900 State need-based grant, \$300 Institutional need-based aid;
- EFC up to \$5,273: \$1,176-\$5,500 Pell, \$900 State need-based grant, \$2,000 Institutional need-based grant; and
- EFC up to \$7,910: \$900 State need-based grant, \$1,500 Institutional need-based grant.

Other scholarships from both private donors and institutional funds will supplement this need-based aid for many low- and middle-income students. Our total annual growth in institutional scholarships would average \$2.4 million over the five-year FAP period.

SECTION IV: STUDENT DEBT LOAD

Describe the measures the governing board shall implement to help reduce student debt load as a result of tuition/fee increases.

On the included Excel spreadsheet (“Institutional Data for FAP 2010”), we have included a distribution of loan data for Colorado resident, undergraduate students at Colorado institutions (see tabs labeled “averageFedloans” and “#studentswFedloans.” Please verify if correct and, if needed, provide updated figures.

As discussed in Section III, UNC is committed both to providing discounts for those students who most need it and to cost-effectively providing students access to quality academic programs and complementary support services that allow the students to meet their educational goals. This is our commitment to “student success.” In support of this commitment, UNC is using a research-based approach to develop comprehensive financial aid strategies segmented by student population. Appendix V is another example of our internal analyses which show that:

- Between FY07 and FY10, the percentage of full-time resident undergraduate students receiving some form of financial aid increased from 70% to 80%.
- At the same time **the portion of their financial aid package that was loans declined from 89% to 80%.**
- In part, this is due to the increased investment in institutional aid in terms of absolute dollars and more widespread awards; in FY10 42% of resident undergraduates received institutional aid as compared to 20% in FY07.

In 2009, baccalaureate graduates at UNC completed their degrees with the third-lowest average student debt load in Colorado (Table 9).

Table 9

Adams State College	\$20,013
Colorado School of Mines	\$21,503
Colorado State University	\$19,854
Colorado State University Pueblo	\$22,393
Fort Lewis College	\$18,039
Mesa State College	\$20,672
Metropolitan State College of Denver	\$22,650
University of Colorado- Boulder	\$19,961
University of Colorado-Colorado Springs	\$19,487
University of Colorado at Denver	\$24,224
University of Northern Colorado	\$18,539
Western State College	\$18,229

Source: JBC Staff Briefing 02/23/10

UNC will continue to use all sources of financial aid grants to mitigate student debt load while offering loans at the levels established by the federal government. In particular, whereas traditional support has been concentrated on entering freshman students, UNC is intentionally addressing aid over the full four years of a student’s enrollment. We are analyzing enrollment and retention data cross-tabulated by EFC and student level (first-time freshman, continuing freshman, etc.) and will use the results to incrementally apply more

institutional financial aid towards sophomores, juniors, and seniors, reducing their reliance on loans. In addition, UNC staff is expanding the information provided to students about the long-term impacts of borrowing, balanced with information about the value of an investment in their education.

SECTION V: ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF UNDERSERVED & UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS

Describe how your institution will continue to address the needs of underserved and underrepresented students to maintain access, provide appropriate outreach, and ensure success. Specifically address the following populations:

1. *First generation students*
2. *Minority students*
3. *Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds*

UNC's student population includes a significant number of first-generation students (37% of 2009 freshman class), self-identified ethnic minorities (25% of 2009 freshman class), and students who meet federal low income levels (19% of 2008-09 undergraduates). National research and our experience at UNC suggest that the most effective way to meet the needs of underserved and underrepresented students is through a broad array of targeted services.

- UNC is home to three TRiO programs which help students from first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented families successfully enter higher education and graduate. TRiO participants benefit from services including career exploration, academic and personal counseling, college and financial aid information, college and graduate school admissions preparation, summer academic and enrichment programs, and workshops for students and parents on topics including study skills, time management, and college survival skills.
 - **UNC McNair Scholars Program** serves 30 UNC juniors and seniors annually.
 - Faculty mentors are a critical component of the McNair Scholars Program. Over 100 dedicated UNC faculty members have served as mentors to McNair Scholars since the program's inception in 1995, and many of those have served multiple times.
 - Since the year 2000, 76% of graduating UNC McNair Scholars have been accepted to or have completed a graduate degree. Our McNair Scholars have presented their research internationally and attend graduate school programs across the country.
 - Among our UNC McNair alumni are four PhDs, three lawyers and two medical doctors.
 - **UNC Student Support Services Program/Center for Human Enrichment** serves 200 UNC students annually.
 - Students in the UNC CHE program persist at 86%. In 2008-2009, 88% of students were in good academic standing, and CHE maintains a 60% graduation rate. Each of these statistics is significantly above the rates reported for UNC at large. In addition, during the past academic year, over 40% of CHE students maintained a GPA of over 3.0 with 11 CHE participants achieving a *cumulative* GPA of 4.0.
 - UNC's CHE program was recently noted as being in the top 1% of programs in the country.
 - **Northern Colorado Upward Bound** program serves 50 students annually from Greeley Central High School, an important outreach activity consistent with the statewide higher education strategic planning pipeline goal.
- Over the past two years, UNC has invested over half a million dollars in the First Generation Program which has attracted 150 students who are the first in their family to attend college. This \$4,000 per year scholarship supports these students in reaching their educational goals.

- UNC is home to four cultural centers (Marcus Garvey, Cesar Chavez, Asian Pacific American Student Services, and Native American Student Services), International Student Services, Disability Support Services, and an office for Veterans.
- UNC is expanding off-campus and online offerings and strengthening community college partnerships to provide non-traditional students with additional opportunity to enter higher education. The UNC Fast Track Program is a transfer scholarship opportunity for students attending Aims Community College and who are planning to transfer to UNC. The Fast Track option permits a student to apply to a community college while simultaneously creating a connection or “nexus” with UNC. Students who participate in the Fast Track program become eligible for either the Greeley Guarantee Transfer Scholarship and/or The Aims Guarantee Scholarship.
- We also adopt some of the practices developed to serve underrepresented populations for use with the entire student population. For example, in fall 2009, UNC launched its University College, an academic home for “exploring” students (i.e., those who have not declared an academic major), students on academic probation, interdisciplinary majors, and highly motivated students in programs to challenge them in the areas of original research and civic leadership. The University College, which is unique among public higher education institutions in Colorado, now serves almost 3,000 students.

UNC will invest approximately 25% of its new tuition revenue in continuing to build services that support student success, as previously described in the explanation of UNC’s approach to the FAP. Specific initiatives include:

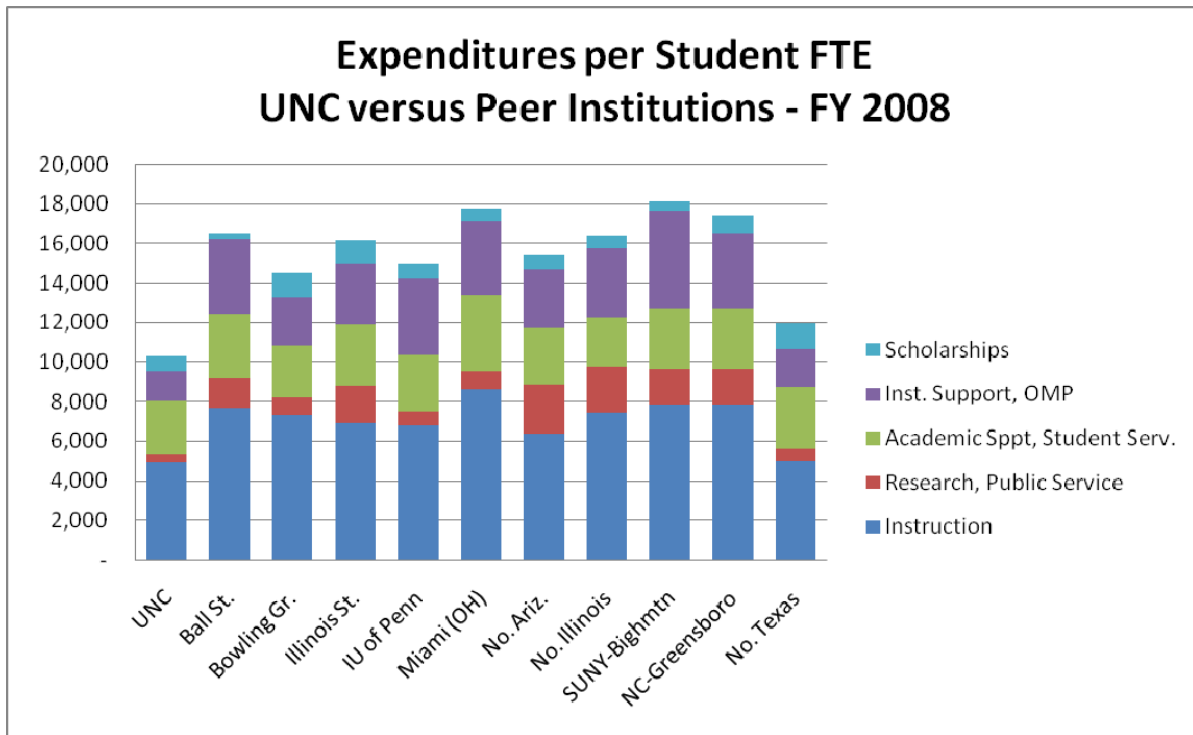
- Further development of data about what is essential to help students reach their education goals
- Implementation of a customer relations management system to individualize communication to students from the recruitment period throughout their academic career, allowing us to address unique needs of underserved and underrepresented student populations;
- Use of “academic coach” positions to support low-income, first-generation, underrepresented populations who come to UNC through the Denver Scholarship Foundation and Daniels Fund;
- The fall 2011 launch of a new “UNIV 101” course tailored to the needs of the “fledgling learner” making the transition to university-level instruction, which will be of particular importance to first-generation students, who often lack a frame of reference for coping with the college experience;
- Continued development of the Office of Veteran Services UNC created in 2010 to facilitate the entry or re-entry of military veterans into higher education, providing support throughout the continuum of a veteran’s student experience; and
- Continued development of the Stryker Institute for Leadership Development, launched in 2001 to advance the leadership development of talented women students from underrepresented minority groups, especially women of non-traditional age, and high financial need.

SECTION VI: OPERATIONAL FLEXIBILITY

Describe how the institution/governing board will utilize institutional flexibility to maximize operations, maintain quality, increase efficiencies and create cost savings.

In spite of recent tuition increases at UNC, we have the next-to-lowest tuition rate among our NCHEMS peers, and UNC’s expenditure per student is now the lowest in our peer group (Chart 2). There is no question that UNC and Colorado’s other public universities are underfunded in relation to their national peers. However, in our financial planning work, we have not used the average expenditures and revenues of our peers as targets. Rather, our planning is based on factors that include UNC’s obligation as a public institution to serve the state’s changing population, costs associated with enrollment growth and quality, the fact that many of our students come from low- and middle-income families, our historical mission as an education thought leader, and a continuing emphasis on efficiency. We have also launched a campus-wide initiative to identify additional cost saving measures at UNC in the coming year.

Chart 2



Source: IPEDS (FY08 is most recent data available)

Specifically regarding the flexibility offered by statute, UNC has already opted out of both State Purchasing and State Collections. Our external collection agents have been more effective in collecting past-due accounts than previous efforts, which moderates the need to raise tuition. Opting out of state purchasing has given us flexibility to avoid some cost increases that would have been funded by tuition. We are investigating efficiencies and cost savings that might result from opting out of State Fiscal Rules and/or Centralized Contract Management. We estimate savings of about \$25,000 in personnel time from opting out of centralized contract management, which will be redirected to assist university personnel in more effectively negotiating and managing vendor contracts.

SECTION VII: ALIGNMENT WITH STATEWIDE STRATEGIC PLANNING

Describe how the implementation of the elements of this FAP provides either opportunities for or barriers to alignment with the ongoing statewide strategic planning process.

In the cover letter to the draft plan from the Higher Education Strategic Planning (HESP) committee, the co-chairs note: "...we believe Colorado's quality of life and prosperity – for us and for those who follow us – will depend on the choices we make about education. In particular, we believe our decisions on higher education – how we fund it and what we demand of it – will be key to our future, now more than ever." UNC concurs wholeheartedly with this statement. While the HESP is not yet final, it seems clear that Colorado's public investment in higher education is going to be directed to the support of undergraduate credit hours, at least for the period of time addressed by Senate Bill 3. This being the case, the approach outlined in UNC's plan is entirely consistent and aligned with both the intent of Senate Bill 3 and that of the HESP.

The increased investment recommended in the HESP draft is essential. As the data in the report show, public funding for Colorado students who are pursuing higher education is at the bottom nationally. UNC supports a two-pronged approach to funding: 1) directly to students and 2) in support of state and national priorities. This is also consistent with the intent—although not with the implementation—of the College Opportunity Fund legislation.

However, given the severe constraints of state funding, achieving recommendations 2 and 3 in the HESP draft is dependent upon the innovation, flexibility, and creativity inherent in a market-based approach to higher education. UNC's internal financial planning and projections assume such an approach. The market for Colorado's public colleges and universities is not a closed system limited to other Colorado public institutions. Colorado residents have access to literally thousands of private educational opportunities, including many for-profit ventures. Any attempt to regulate competition among public institutions without considering the other entities that are competing for the same students will significantly harm our ability to compete in this market. In order to respond to changes in the higher education market and to the specific needs of our students, we must have the flexibility to adjust our mix of programs and services as well as change our pricing and discounting.

The University of Northern Colorado is a mission-driven organization. We give students access to the transformative power of education, which is particularly significant for the students we serve whose options historically have been limited by socio-economic status and demographics such as ethnicity.

We believe that the most significant advances in efficiency and effectiveness in the quality of life and prosperity of people—a positive sum outcome—have occurred when the passion, thoughtfulness and expertise of individuals are allowed to flourish. Benjamin Franklin's creation of public lending libraries is one such example. Worlds of knowledge have been opened for countless people through this vision for public libraries, which were established not by governmental or regulatory mandate but by passionate individuals working together. The way to achieve the goals of the HESP is not more control and more regulation, which would require more administrative overhead, a negative-sum outcome. Nor is it simply shifting the cost of higher education from state funding to student tuition, a zero-sum outcome. Rather, the answer lies in the ability of each college or university to act with enlightened self-interest, which can be achieved only when the passionate and creative people at each institution are empowered to make the decisions requiring experience and expertise unique to that institution.

We care about our students and therefore are committed to a positive sum approach to addressing both our state's need for educated citizens and the realities of funding constraints. A 15% tuition increase next year means a \$700 annual sticker price increase for resident undergraduate students, which will keep our tuition less than that at our peer institutions (Appendix IV). We will continue to invest in institutional discounting, so this increase won't completely offset losses in state funding; however, we understand that our fiscal sustainability depends upon both setting the right tuition price and providing the right amount and type of financial aid.

The elements of UNC's FAP – tuition, discounting, protection of low- and middle-income students, minimizing student debt load, addressing the needs of underserved and underrepresented populations – are dependent upon retaining maximum flexibility to achieve fiscal sustainability and fulfill our mission. With this flexibility, we remain committed to doing our part to help Colorado achieve a “degree dividend” by continuing to make tuition and discounting decisions based upon research into all of the factors necessary for a UNC student to be successful.