

### THE UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA

# GREENSBORO

# Civic Action Plan









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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

UNC Greensboro Chancellor Franklin Gilliam signed the Campus Compact 30th Anniversary Action Statement in early 2016. In conjunction with leaders of more than 400 other postsecondary institutions, Chancellor Gilliam committed to the integration of civic action ideals into the fabric of UNC Greensboro, through this Civic Action Plan, and through incorporation into the University's new strategic plan. The Anniversary Action Statement included a pledge to, "move forward with a renewed sense of urgency, along with the impacts we expect to achieve." This plan demonstrates what UNC Greensboro expects to achieve with our commitment to prepare students for citizenship, to build partnerships for change, and to focus our institution on the public good which is inherent in higher education.



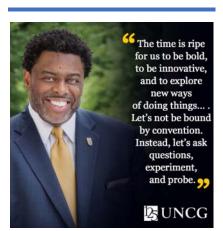
This plan is founded on the principles outlined in the Campus Compact 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Action Statement, which include:

- We empower our students, faculty, staff, and community partners to co-create mutually respectful partnerships in pursuit of a just, equitable, and sustainable future for communities beyond the campus nearby and around the world.
- We **prepare our students for lives of engaged citizenship**, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good.
- We embrace our responsibilities as place based institutions, contributing to the health and strength of our communities—economically, socially, environmentally, educationally, and politically.
- We harness the capacity of our institutions—through research, teaching, partnerships, and institutional practice—to challenge the prevailing social and economic inequalities that threaten our democratic future.
- We foster an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement.

UNC Greensboro is an institution firmly committed to a community-engaged approach. We are focused on, and guided by, reciprocal, cross-sector, and interdisciplinary partnerships for mutual benefit. Our commitment to mutual benefit is at the heart of any institutional strategy that pursues academic excellence in the forms of student transformation, knowledge transformation, and regional transformation. Amidst growing social, economic, and health inequalities; increased global connections; and rapid change, engagement becomes a strategic and synergistic way to



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UNCG Chancellor Frank Gilliam

address complex and often "wicked problems" that defy simple solutions.

#### UNC GREENSBORO: INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

The University motto since 1893, "Service" continues to be a guiding principle put into practice through all aspects of university life. Our commitment to service is a key reason why UNCG proposes to "redefine the public research university for the 21st century as an inclusive, collaborative, and responsive institution making a difference in the lives of students and the communities it serves" (Vision Statement, 2009, italics added). The strategic plan and stated goals align the University's motto of service with a commitment to "develop a capacity for active citizenship, ethics, social responsibility, personal growth and skills for lifelong learning in a global society" (UNC Greensboro General Education Council, 2015).

In 2002, UNCG created the Office of Leadership and Service-Learning (OLSL). Uniquely crossing multiple divisions, OLSL's three programmatic areas provide opportunities for increasingly complex and differentiated co-curricular and curricular engagement, while developing leadership through community action. OLSL maintains an extensive community partner database accessible to the UNCG community with links to volunteer opportunities, engaged faculty research, service-learning partners, student leaders and bus routes.

In 2006, an official service-learning designation was incorporated into course registration, which identifies courses that meet UNCG standards for academic service-learning. The Office of Leadership and Service-Learning (OLSL), a key catalyst for positive social change through civically engaged learning in and out of the classroom, supports curriculum and partnership development for student learning. In 2011 - 2012, nearly 900 students were enrolled in 51 courses, and faculty took students to nine countries to experience service-learning internationally.

In 2008, UNCG was recognized by the Carnegie Foundation as an Engaged Campus in Curricular Engagement and Outreach and Partnerships. In 2009, UNCG was the first UNC system institution to approve new tenure and promotion policies to reflect recognition and rewards for engaged scholarship that integrates teaching, research, and public service.



In the years 2008 – 2012 UNCG launched multiple iterations of a Community Engagement Institute to support excellence in community engagement. In 2012, the Institute for Community and Economic Engagement re-launched as both a virtual and physical presence and advocate of community engagement to provide a highly visible point of contact for the external community for campus activities related to community and economic development. UNCG continues to build an infrastructure to support engagement initiatives identified in the new strategic plan. Several undergraduate and graduate programs (including Peace and Conflict Studies, Educational Leadership and Cultural Foundations, Interior Architecture, Communication Studies) now engage students in service-learning as part of the degree requirement. Annually, Undergraduate Research, The Graduate School, OLSL and ICEE earmark significant funding awards for faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, and community partner teams to engage in community based research. UNCG's most recent Capital Campaign listed more than \$10 million targeted to support community engagement efforts including \$2M for the Center for Youth, Family and Community Partnerships and \$.25M to the Center for New North Carolinians immigrant and refugee services (Greensboro is a Federal refugee resettlement site).

Additionally, UNCG has created opportunities for graduate and undergraduate education within several community-serving research centers. One example is the Center for New North Carolinians (CNNC), which serves to build bridges between academic and immigrant communities. The CNNC facilitates service-learning experiences for over 300 undergraduate and graduate students each year, as well as provides a research fellows program for 33 professionals and academics, immigrant and refugee leadership development, and information services and technical support for the greater community. An exemplar of true community-university partnership, CNNC has the unique distinction of being the only organization on campus that receives United Way recognition while housed within university.

In the past two years, two new community engaged centers have opened connected to UNCG. The Center for Housing and Community Studies (CHCS) is a university-based research, evaluation, and technical assistance center. The CHCS provides technical assistance to governmental and nonprofit agencies as well as the preparation of working papers, research notes, and scholarly publications. Faculty and student engagement and scholarship have focused on a diversity of themes, including fair and affordable housing, linkages between housing and health, connections among





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housing and food insecurity as well as vacancy and asset mapping for housing in Greensboro neighborhoods.

The recently opened Center for Community-Engaged Design serves as an interdisciplinary research center that fosters community/university partnerships for meaningful research and design of the built and natural environments. Housed in the Department of Interior Architecture, CC-ED collaborates with community partners, non-profit organizations, and municipal departments to address design-related projects in underserved areas and for underrepresented populations in the Piedmont-Triad area. Through community-engaged processes of research, service, visioning, teaching, and learning, CC-ED brings innovative design thinking and methodologies to bear in areas where resources are most limited. One specific project of the CC-ED is the North Carolina Mainstreet Program. North Carolina Main Street Program has partnered with UNCG's Interior Architecture Department and its Center for Community-Engaged Design to provide design assistance to the 94 Main Street communities across the State. So far, thirteen undergraduate and four graduate Main Street Fellows working with faculty have completed designs for over 70 facade rehabs and 7 upper story apartment conversions in 32 NC towns.

UNC Greensboro's commitment to the collective good is directly reflected in the University's 2017 Strategic Plan, *Taking Giant Steps*. Foundational introduction for the plan states

Higher education conveys the promise of transformative experience, enhancing the quality of life for the individual student and enriching society through the contributions gained from an educated populace. The pathways that higher education institutions have traditionally taken to provide these transformational experiences, though, should no longer be taken for granted. With this new strategic plan, we stand poised to embrace the challenges and opportunities of a new era; we stand ready to develop and adopt best practices; and we stand ready to become an exemplar of the 21st century research university. We stand ready to take Giant Steps.

The plan to take Giant Steps is anchored by **Transformation**.

**Student Transformation**: Student transformation occurs when students acquire knowledge and develop skills and habits of mind necessary to be life-long learners, informed and engaged members of society, and successful in life and work. This is accomplished through a variety of learning



experiences, both inside and outside the classroom. Experiential learning, study abroad, service-learning, student leadership opportunities, and extracurricular activities all contributetostudenttransformation. Consistent with our history of, and commitment to, providing opportunity for all, all UNCG students, regardless ofbackground, should have equitable access to a high-quality, transformative educational experience as members of the Spartancommunity.

**Knowledge Transformation**: Knowledge transformation occurs when understanding is enhanced through research, creative activity, critical analysis, and translation of research to practice. UNCG faculty build upon the existing knowledge base, grow and refine the disciplines, reach across disciplinary boundaries to address complex problems, and critically examine pressing social issues through multiple lenses. Their active roles in knowledge transformation transfer to the classroom, allowing faculty to bring cutting edge perspectives to their students. Opportunities for undergraduate students to actively engage in research provide unique insights into analysis and knowledge generation, while opportunities for graduate students to engage in research are well-established as essential to their professionalization in their given field. Consistent with our university values, research and creative activity related to access, equity, and disparities are consistent strengths.

Regional Transformation: Regional transformation occurs when local economies are strong and well-aligned with current and future needs, and when equitable access is provided to a reasonable standard of living and quality of life for all. UNCG contributes to regional transformation by collaborating with community partners to move forward common goals; serving as a partner to enhance and sustain a healthy and prosperous environment; providing education, research, and creative capacity to the region; and serving as a partner in the economic development of our region.

The three areas of transformation further focus on areas of historical and emerging strength. The focus areas are crosscutting and cross-disciplinary.

#### **Focus Areas:**

Health and Wellness: Health and Wellness is broadly defined to encompass the many dimensions necessary for individuals to cope, adapt, grow, and develop. This theme encompasses predictors and indicators of the state of the human condition, and scientific advances related to Health and Wellness.

### Plan Goals

We empower our students, faculty, staff, and community partners to co-create mutually respectful partnerships in pursuit of a just, equitable, and sustainable future for communities beyond the campus—nearby and around the world.

We prepare our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good.

We embrace our responsibilities as place-based institutions, contributing to the health and strength of our communities—economically, socially, environmentally, educationally, and politically.

We harness the capacity of our institutions—through research, teaching, partnerships, and institutional practice—to challenge the prevailing social and economic inequalities that threaten our democratic future.

We foster an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement.



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<u>Vibrant Communities</u>: Vibrant Communities are those with a high quality of life for all members, characterized by opportunities for cultural enrichment, equitable access to high quality education and social support services, a just standard of living, and a flourishing economy.

Global Connections: Individuals, organizations, and geographic and civic entities from around the world connect with each other in many ways, influenced by the history, language, tradition, religion, creative expression, economics, ethics, and political mores found in globally diverse cultures.

#### Working with Communities

Community engagement is process- and relationship-oriented. "Nothing about us is for us without us" is a way of framing why community engagement matters and how it informs practices. Were those who are expected to benefit from the engagement included in designing, implementing, sharing, and reviewing the work? Did partners' actions demonstrate a learning stance — a commitment to listening equitably to the wisdom of academic and non-academic partners for their shared growth, or did they enact a fixing stance — an assertion that professional expertise is sufficient to solve issues for or on behalf of community members?

In the context of higher education, community engagement is a strategy that extends beyond individual public service activities or service-learning courses. Rather it is an institutional approach to collaboration that calls for the scholarly and practical engagement of diverse disciplines, sectors, and partners. What might be accomplished if we worked collectively and with common aims and shared strategies, rather than individually and coincidentally?

Already, many UNCG members are powerful thought and action partners with colleagues within and beyond academic disciplinary communities as they merge scholarly, professional, and lived knowledge. Community engagement is not an end, but a means towards creating reciprocal partnerships that achieve the priorities and goals of both the community and the university.

#### PLANNING TEAM AND PROCESS

The Civic Action Plan process was managed by a steering committee which included individuals representing nearly every component of UNC Greensboro, including Student Affairs, Community and Economic Engagement, Office of the Chancellor, External Affairs, Office of the Provost, and various academic areas. Members of the steering committee





met with offices and departments, student organizations, community organizations, and other involved stakeholders to review the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary document and the commitments and to discuss the items which evolved into this plan. During the time of the meetings, the University engaged a new strategic plan, which necessitated a review of the draft Civic Action Plan and reformatting to focus the new plan in the context of the institutional strategic plan.

#### CIVIC ACTION PLAN

To fully integrate the Civic Action Plan with the UNC Greensboro Strategic Plan "Giant Steps", we used the transformative components of the strategic plan as the framework for the actions and outcomes in this plan. The three transformation areas: Student Transformation, Knowledge Transformation, and Regional Transformation contain the elements of UNC Greensboro's Civic Action Plan, and our methodologies for meeting the five goals stated in the Campus Compact document. The UNC Greensboro Plan will provide three to five action items for each of the three transformative areas of the "Giant Steps" plan.

#### Student Transformation

UNC Greensboro Leadership Challenge Program.

Leadership Challenge is a world-class leadership

program focused on three transformative category.

program, focused on three transformative categories: self, others, and future. The existing program will be improved through integration with *Giant Steps* through inclusion in the Civic Action Plan, expansion of the program, and incorporation of additional methodologies to prepare student citizens and to foster future engaged citizens.

#### Co-Curricular Transcript

The Co-Curricular Transcript is as an official university document where all students can memorialize and showcase knowledge and experiences gained outside the classroom which support development of essential skills important to future careers and graduate or professional schools. The Transcript demonstrates learning outcomes and knowledge attainment in areas of value to employers and graduate school, and to meet the needs for "hands on" learning to lawmakers and others.

<u>Intergroup Dialogue Series / Spartans-In-Dialogue</u>

Spartans-In-Dialogue is a 5-week interactive dialogue experience designed to build relationships across difference. Participants of different identities (i.e. race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, faith, socioeconomic status, etc.) will engage in ongoing,

## Student Transformation

Student transformation occurs when students acquire knowledge and develop skills and habits of mind necessary to be life-long learners, informed and engaged members of society, and successful in life and work.



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intergroup communication about topics related to racial identity, race relations, and intersections with other identities. Students who participate will build relationships and effectively communicate across difference; increase awareness and understanding of personal and other perspectives and experiences, as well as understand challenges related to national and global issues; and practice dialogue skills to engage in meaningful conversations about difficult topics.

#### Civic Engagement Institute and Speaker Series.

Each year, the Office of Leadership and Service-Learning and the Institute for Community and Economic Engagement partner with other campus offices, regional schools, and area agencies to bring internationally renowned community engagement scholar-practitioners to campus to engage with faculty, staff, students, and community colleagues. Speakers facilitate discussions on key aspects of engagement, including capacity development for engaged teaching, learning, research, and creative activity; expansion of policies, structures, and paradigms to support engagement; and alignment of institutional and community priorities through engagement.

#### **Build a Spartan Initiative**

The Build a Spartan initiative transforms student development programs and services to create and sustain opportunities for students to engage in a vibrant community. University-wide programmatic areas will be integrated with civic engagement and experiential learning areas to create a cohesive experience designed to imbibe cultural norms, civic and democratic engagement, and community.

#### Host Coalition for Diverse Language Communities

The Coalition for Diverse Language Communities (CDLC) is a catalyst for innovative, relevant, collaborative, and policy-related research that is responsive to identified diverse language communities. Members of the CDLC are listening to lived experiences and ensuring that the next generation of teachers are competent and confident in engaging with diverse language learners, families, and communities. Among CDLC's many fellows, Dr. Ye He (Teacher Education and Higher Education) brings public school teachers to classrooms in China to bridge cultures and exchange ideas, while Drs. Melody Zoch and Amy Vetter (Teacher Education and Higher Education) offer professional development writing workshops to local school districts.



#### Knowledge Transformation

#### **General Education Program Transformation**

Faculty Senate, with the assistance of subcommittees and work groups, is re-imagining and transforming the General Education Program. The current General Education Program (GEP) aligns specific markers for a variety of courses and course sections. Tentative work on the new GEP will include a focus on global, cocurricular, and experiential learning to support classroom teaching. Civic engagement is under consideration as a GEP requirement.

#### Health and Human Sciences National Study

The School of Health and Human Sciences (HHS) recently concluded its involvement as one of four institutions nation-wide in a study that piloted an institutionalization rubric for community engaged scholarship within Schools and Colleges (unit-level). The study was a collaboration between researchers at the University of Massachusetts Boston (New England Resource Center for Higher Education) and Hunter College, and funded by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. An appointed HHS working committee completed an extensive organizational assessment rubric, which involved conversations and focus groups with department chairs and faculty members across HHS. The rubric facilitates the examination of structures, policies, and practices with the goal of advancing community engagement within the unit for the purposes of selfassessment and strategic planning. The process served the unit in taking a strategic review of the activities and structures connected to supporting community engagement within the School. Recommendations for future steps within HHS were presented to the Dean.

#### Interdisciplinary Research Activity Transformation

Enhance UNCG's capacity to engage in interdisciplinary research, scholarship and creative activity that advances student outcomes; enhances the vibrancy of the Triad, state, and nation; that increases external funding; and that leads to new discoveries and knowledge, with specific focus on the humanities, training and technical assistance, and early childhood.

#### Integration of Academic Courses With Community Outreach

UNC Greensboro has had more than 7,300 students enrolled in service-learning courses; academic class sections where a community service or outreach component is part of the formal curriculum. Efforts to expand the number of students involved in communityengaged academic pursuits will continue, accompanied

### Knowledge **Transformation**

Knowledge transformation occurs when understanding is enhanced through research, creative activity, critical analysis, and translation of research to practice.





by an expansion of faculty support for integration of community-based or community-engaged courses.

#### Exploration of Mental Health Care in The Triad

The latest collaboration between Dr. Bob Wineburg (Social Work) and Rev. Odell Cleveland, the Behavioral Health Faith Summit will give the community insights into the challenges facing people with mental illnesses. The work is dedicated to fusing the energy of health professionals and the faith community. Collaborators will host a one-day summit, which will count as certification training for healthcare professionals, including sessions focused on the enduring stigma of mental illness and how to help people feel more comfortable seeking care.

#### Regional Transformation

#### Preservation of Regional History

The Public History initiative, "Unearthing History, Building Community" (UHBC), is a five-year collaboration between faculty, students, residents, and designated museums to uncover, document, and share the stories of Triad-area neighborhoods and communities that are in danger of becoming "lost" to history in order to enhance community vitality by creating a usable past that roots people in place and connects them.

#### A Shared Art And Project Space

A new art space — which will be named the Greensboro Project Space — will transform the student experience and re-shape downtown. UNCG's Art department will launch the 3,200-square foot space in the heart of Greensboro's historic south end, designed to serve as a "locus of interaction" between the university and the city. The multifunctional space — which will share a building with The Forge, the city's makerspace — may be used as a classroom for UNCG students, an art gallery for regional and national artists, and an event space to host public programming.

#### <u>Transdisciplinary Programs for Workforce Development</u>

The transdisciplinary workforce development program focuses on faculty and researchers working collaboratively to incubate and administer transdisciplinary online programs that focus on indemand workforce success skills through innovative course design and active learning. These programs are coordinated to provide a single "point of service" for workforce skill development, where faculty teaching, skill instruction, and active learning are combined into a

## Regional Transformation

Regional transformation occurs when local economies are strong and well-aligned with current and future needs, and when equitable access is provided to a reasonable standard of living and quality of life for all.



single package to improve the quality and success of the regional workforce.

#### **Engage Latino Immigrant Parents In Education**

Dr. Laura Gonzalez (Teacher Education and Higher Education) learned by observation the challenges Latina/o immigrants face and maneuver. She sees that parents want their children to succeed academically here in the United States, but the parents often face cultural barriers in doing so. She is working with Spanish-speaking parents to support the development of cultural skills to help them guide their children to succeed in school. In Forsyth County, she has created 8-week group sessions to help Latina/o parents guide their children toward their educational futures.

#### Lifetime Eating and Physical Activity Practices (LEAP)

LEAP focuses on identifying common goals and common measures for healthy eating and physical activity in Guilford County. A targeted and coordinated effort that works in synergy with existing efforts, LEAP aims to identify common goals that existing program providers and residents can use to inform their own efforts at wellness, as well as essential data needed to understand whether goals have been met. This is one of three strategic seed grants for community engagement funded by the Provost's Office. Taking an interdisciplinary, crosssector and community-engaged approach, the research team includes faculty and researches from UNC Greensboro, health practitioners from the largest regional healthcare provider, and the county health department. The diverse team will engage a broad array of students, service providers, advocacy groups, and neighbors.





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#### INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND PLANNING

As part of the outcomes for the Strategic Plan and Civic Action Plan, UNC Greensboro will implement the following institutional measures for support and planning of the Civic Action Plan:

#### **Tracking and Measurement**

Tracking and measuring community engagement and public service activities to provide critical information for a variety of honors, recognitions, and accreditations as well as for fundraising and strategic planning. Tracking of outcomes of both the strategic plan and civic engagement programs are integrated into the University-wide Institutional Effectiveness processes. UNC Greensboro will collect data in a variety of qualitative and quantitative ways, in several different offices and departments. Collection of data and metrics will be coordinated primarily through the Office of the Chancellor, with support from Institutional Assessment and Accreditation and dozens of UNC Greensboro departments and offices.

Data collection should never be an end unto itself; it is a tool for continuous improvement and striving toward excellence. A comprehensive portrait of UNCG's civic action and involvement supports:

Understanding of purposes, activities, and constituents
Use of civic action as a teaching pedagogy
Use of civic action as an approach to research
Use of civic action in creative activities
Use of civic action in co-curricular activities
Outcome assessment of civic action on community and
university priorities to guide future strategic
direction and efforts

#### Reporting

UNC Greensboro will periodically report on progress toward "Giant Steps" and the Civic Action Plan through updated web pages, written reports, and presentations.

#### THANKS AND REFERENCES

**Civic Action Planning Team Members** 

A note about references: as an action plan, and not a scholarly work, this document contains ideas, knowledge, proposals, thoughts, and work products from dozens of sources, individuals, and experts. Citation of each source would lead to an unmanageable (and unintelligible) document. This action plan, without any individual authorship, is produced as a collaborative effort of many,



with the intellectual resources and expertise from the following references:

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