



THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

NORTH CAROLINA TEACHING FELLOWS PROGRAM: ANNUAL REPORT

January 1, 2022

University of North Carolina System
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

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Background

The North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program was reestablished by the North Carolina General Assembly in the 2017 State Budget (S.L 2017-57) with the purpose to “recruit, prepare, and support students residing in or attending institutions of higher education located in North Carolina for preparation as highly effective STEM or special education teachers in the State’s public schools.”

The legislation also established the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Commission (Commission), a 14-member body tasked with providing program oversight. In accordance with the parameters set by the General Assembly, the Commission was tasked with the responsibility of selecting five educator preparation programs to partner with the program.

Per G.S. 116-209.62(f), the Commission was directed to evaluate educator preparation programs and use the designated legislative criteria to create an application process to select five educator preparation programs as partners for the program. After careful evaluation, the following institutions were selected: Elon University, Meredith College, NC State University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

During the 2020 Legislative Session, HB 1096 (Session Law 2020-56) was adopted, which authorized the expansion of the program to three additional EPP partner institutions and in doing so, directed the NC Teaching Fellows Commission to make a “diverse selection.” In responding to that directive, the Teaching Fellows Commission modified the rubric used to evaluate applications from prospective EPP partners to include the following qualitative metrics (in addition to other assessment measures):

- Diversity of EPP Program Admissions
- Diversity of EPP Program Completers
- Geographic Diversity
- HBCU/MCI Institution Status

The Commission received a total of 15 applications from the following EPPs: Appalachian State University, Campbell University, Chowan University, East Carolina University, Elizabeth City State University, Fayetteville State University, Lenoir-Rhyne University, North Carolina A&T State University, North Carolina Central University, North Carolina Wesleyan, the University of North Carolina at Asheville, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, and Western Carolina University.

After careful evaluation and independent scoring, the three institutions with the highest scores were Fayetteville State University, North Carolina A&T State University, and the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. On Wednesday, June 9, the Teaching Fellows Commission met to take formal action to accept these three institutions as new program partners. Each of these new institutions will welcome their first Teaching Fellows for the 2022-2023 academic year.

Program Overview

For 2017-2018, the first year of the program’s reauthorization, the Teaching Fellows application opened on December 4, 2017, with an application deadline of January 15, 2018. For the 2017-2018 cycle, a total of 232 applications were received. After an initial review, applicants progressed to finalist interviews, which were held in six locations around the state over two weeks (virtual interviews were also

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provided). On April 1, 2018, the NC Teaching Fellows Commission offered awards to 110 applicants. In total, 74 students joined Teaching Fellows as part of the initial 2017-2018 cohort.

For the 2018-2019 application cycle, a total of 220 applications were submitted. After initial review, finalist interviews were again held across the state. After a comprehensive evaluation of finalists' applications and interview scores, the Teaching Fellows Commission decided to offer 133 awards. In total, 107 students joined Teaching Fellows as part the 2018-2019 cohort.

For the 2019-2020 application cycle, a total of 189 applications were submitted. After initial review, finalist interviews were again held across the state. After a comprehensive evaluation of finalists' applications and interview scores, the Teaching Fellows Commission chose to offer 114 awards. In total, 92 students joined Teaching Fellows as part of the 2019-2020 cohort.

For the 2020-2021 application cycle, a total of 156 applications were submitted. After initial review, finalist interviews were held virtually, due to COVID-19 concerns. After comprehensive evaluation, the Teaching Fellows Commission chose to offer 118 awards. In total, 90 students joined Teaching Fellows as part of the 2020-2021 cohort.

Program Enrichment

A key element of the Teaching Fellows program is providing meaningful enrichment opportunities to all program participants. The enrichment model for Teaching Fellows is two-fold – under the direction of a campus director, each of the five partner institutions have designed an enrichment framework, which is designed to build community in a smaller setting among a Fellow's peers who attend the same institution. The campus-level enrichment opportunities are intentionally designed to be unique, allowing each institution to align to their respective program's particular areas of focus and to build organic partnerships within their own respective communities.

An additional layer of support is provided by state-level enrichment opportunities, which bring together the collective group of Fellows from all five partner institutions. These events are designed to build a strong sense of community among all Fellows and to highlight particular topics to ensure a strong and cohesive vision for the broader mission and purpose for the Teaching Fellows program. The first enrichment event was held for the 2017-2018 class of Teaching Fellows on April 5-6, 2019 at the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching in Cullowhee, North Carolina. Fellows gathered for a two-day seminar that focused on teacher leadership, professionalism, and building strong classroom culture.

The second enrichment event, which included the 2017-2018 and the 2018-2019 class of Fellows, was held on September 14-15, 2019 at the Rizzo Conference Center in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The event agenda provided opportunities for teambuilding activities, a Q&A panel with beginning teachers and their mentors from the New Teacher Support Program, an in-depth workshop on cultural bias and social emotional learning, and a session that featured the 2018 and 2019 North Carolina Teachers of the Year.

Due to COVID-19, it was not possible to host an in-person enrichment event for fall 2020. Out of an abundance of caution, an enrichment event, formatted as a "mini-seminar," was held virtually on November 8, 2021. The event featured Dr. Rick Hess, who serves as Senior Fellow and Director of Education Policy Studies at the American Enterprise Institute, and was facilitated by Dr. Andrew Kelly,

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Senior Vice President for Strategy and Policy at the UNC System Office. Another virtual “mini-seminar” is being planned for February 2022, with the goal of resuming an in-person format in fall 2022.

Reporting Requirements

This report has been prepared in accordance with the reporting criteria specified by G.S. 116-209.62(j). However, due to COVID’s impact on testing, observations, and data reporting for 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years, program graduates do not yet have sufficient data to be evaluated as prescribed in 116-209.62(j)(2)(d) and (e), and 116-209.62(j)(3); these metrics are thus excluded from this report.

- 1) Forgivable Loans awarded from the Trust Fund, including the following:
 - a. Demographic information regarding recipients.
 - b. Number of recipients by institution of higher education and program.
 - c. Information on number of recipients by anticipated STEM and special education licensure area.
- 2) Placement and repayment rates, including the following:
 - a. Number of graduates who have been employed in a STEM or special education licensure area within two years of program completion.
 - b. Number of graduates who accepted employment at a low-performing school identified under G.S. 115C-105.37 as part of their years of service.
 - c. Number of graduates who have elected to do loan repayment and their years of service, if any, prior to beginning loan repayment.
 - d. Number of graduates employed in a STEM or special education licensure area who have received an overall rating of at least accomplished and have met expected growth on applicable standards of the teacher evaluation instrument.
 - e. Aggregate information on student growth and proficiency in courses taught by graduates who have fulfilled service requirements through employment in a STEM or special education licensure area.
- 2a) Mentoring and coaching support through the North Carolina New Teacher Support Program, including the following:
 - a. Number of forgivable recipients who received mentoring and coaching support when employed at a low-performing school identified under G.S. 115C-105.37.
 - b. Number of forgivable loans recipients who received mentoring and coaching support when employed at a school not identified as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.37.
- 3) Selected school outcomes by program, including the following:
 - a. Turnover rate for forgivable loan graduates, including the turnover rate for graduates who also received mentoring and coaching support through the North Carolina New Teacher Support Program.
 - b. Aggregate information on student growth and proficiency as provided annually by the State Board of Education to the Commission in courses taught by forgivable loan graduates.
 - c. Fulfillment rate of forgivable loan graduates.

Data Reporting

The data below reflects the cumulative totals of the 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021 classes of North Carolina Teaching Fellows (excluding program graduates and withdrawn students).

Please note that percentages have been rounded.

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A. Demographic Information

The Teaching Fellows' demographic data largely mirrors the metrics of the existing teacher workforce in North Carolina, particularly in terms of race and gender. Numerous studies have established a clear correlation between a diverse teacher workforce and positive outcomes for student achievement – a finding that underscores both the importance and the urgency of increasing the diversity of the teacher pipeline in North Carolina.¹ At current capacity, the Teaching Fellows program makes up a fraction of the larger teacher pipeline, but even so, remains committed to the larger statewide efforts to substantively increase teacher diversity.

Table I: Teaching Fellows by Gender

	2017-2018 Cohort 1	2018-2019 Cohort 2	2019-2020 Cohort 3	2020-2021 Cohort 4	TOTAL
Male	13	13	18	17	61
Female	61	94	74	72	302
TOTAL	74	107	92	90	363

Table II: Teaching Fellows by Race

	2017-2018 Cohort 1	2018-2019 Cohort 2	2019-2020 Cohort 3	2020-2021 Cohort 4	TOTAL
Black/African American	4	6	11	12	33
American Indian/Alaska Native	1	1	1	1	4
Asian/Pacific Islander	4	2	0	2	8
Hispanic/Latino	4	5	5	7	21
Multiracial/Other	0	3	4	1	8
White/Caucasian	61	90	71	67	289
TOTAL	74	107	92	90	363

B. Program & Licensure Area

Table III: Teaching Fellows by Institution

	2017-2018 Cohort 1	2018-2019 Cohort 2	2019-2020 Cohort 3	2020-2021 Cohort 4	TOTAL
Elon University	8	7	2	7	24
Meredith College	7	7	0	7	21
North Carolina State University	25	52	51	48	176
UNC-Chapel Hill	15	13	16	12	56
UNC Charlotte	19	28	25	16	88
TOTAL	74	107	92	90	363

¹ 1 Redding, C. (2019). A Teacher Like Me: A Review of the Effect of Student–Teacher Racial/Ethnic Matching on Teacher Perceptions of Students and Student Academic and Behavioral Outcomes. *Review of Educational Research*, 89 (4), 499–535. See also Egalite, A. J., Kisida, B., & Winters, M. A. (2015). Representation in the classroom: The effect of own-race teachers on student achievement. *Economics of Education Review*, 45, 44-52.; Dee, T. S. (2005). A teacher like me: Does race, ethnicity, or gender matter? *The American Economic Review*, 95(2), 158-165.

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Table IV: Teaching Fellows by Intended Licensure Area

	2017-2018 Cohort 1	2018-2019 Cohort 2	2019-2020 Cohort 3	2020-2021 Cohort 4	TOTAL
STEM	53	74	58	57	242
Special Education	21	33	34	33	121
TOTAL	74	107	92	90	363

C. Program Graduates

Table V: Summary of Program Graduates

	Number
Total Number of Program Graduates	65
Number of Graduates Employed in STEM/SPED Licensure Area	41
Number of Graduates Employed in Low-Performing School	2
Number of Graduates Who Have Elected for Cash Repayment	24

Table VI: Partnership with New Teacher Support Program

As of the date of this report's submission (January 1, 2022), NTSP continues to support program graduates, as outlined below. The updated data for the current 2021-2022 school year will be available later this year.

	Number
Number of Graduates Receiving Mentoring and Coaching Support from the New Teacher Support Program	28

Next Steps

The program recently initiated its fifth application cycle, which opened on November 1, 2021. The application deadline is midnight on Monday, January 10, 2022. After that time, all submitted applications will undergo an initial review, followed by another round of finalist interviews.

Per statute, the Teaching Fellows Commission will meet and make final decisions on the number of awards to be offered by April 1, 2022. Finalists who are selected and offered an award will have until May 1, 2022 to sign the promissory note to formally accept the terms of the forgivable loan.

The next annual report from the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program must be submitted by January 1, 2023.

