



THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

MEMORANDUM

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

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From: UNC System Office

Date: December 13, 2023

Subject: Interim Report: Board of Governors Accreditation Commission Update

This memorandum encloses an interim report to the Chairs of the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee required to be submitted by January 1, 2024 by Section 3.3 of [S.L. 2023-132](#). The report summarizes the UNC System Office's efforts in recruiting stakeholders to join a Commission studying alternatives to the current process by which institutions of higher education are accredited.



INTERIM REPORT: Board of Governors Accreditation Commission Update

December 13, 2023

University of North Carolina System
Raleigh, North Carolina

[Session Law 2023-132](#) directed the University of North Carolina Board of Governors to “establish a Commission to study alternatives to the current process by which institutions of higher education are accredited and shall invite stakeholders, including stakeholders from other states, to participate.” The legislation also required the Commission to provide an update on its recruitment efforts by January 1, 2024.

At the direction of President Peter Hans, this report is being submitted on behalf of the Board of Governors by the Division of Governmental Affairs in consultation with the Division of Strategy and Policy and the Division of Legal Affairs.

To date, the following actions have taken place:

1. System Office staff have engaged with research organizations interested in reforming the higher education accreditation process to develop and co-host a convening of higher education officials from states and state systems to discuss state-driven alternatives to regional accreditation. The discussions have been productive, and we anticipate that this external organization will sponsor and host this convening which will serve as a kick-off event for the Commission. In addition, the research organization will collaborate with the UNC System Office in drafting a report on the Commission’s findings and recommendations. Partnering with a research organization ensures that the resulting policy analysis and recommendations on higher education accreditation reform will be disseminated beyond North Carolina and other participating states, including to federal policymakers.
2. System Office staff have begun recruiting individuals from the following states to participate in the above-mentioned convening:
 - a. Tennessee
 - b. Florida
 - c. Georgia
 - d. Texas

Separately from the Commission’s recruitment efforts, Dr. David English, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Chief Academic Officer, has been in regular communication with UNC constituent institutions’ Chief Academic Officers regarding this process. Additionally, System Office staff and Community Colleges System Office staff have drafted a Request for Information to send to regional accrediting agencies to determine whether they are interested in accrediting North Carolina’s higher education institutions. We anticipate responses to the Request for Information by February 29, 2024.

Also, we have requested a meeting with the U.S. Department of Education to discuss the changes made in [Session Law 2023-132](#) and how our agencies can cooperate to make accreditation transitions as seamless as possible.

The Commission will issue its final report and recommendations to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by September 1, 2024.

Questions regarding this effort should be directed to Eric Naisbitt at ewnaisbitt@northcarolina.edu.