

Section 1: PURPOSE

“At pivotal points in our history this University has provided the toolkit with which the people of North Carolina built themselves out of poverty and mediocrity. By offering the raw material of innovation and the glue of common purpose, the University has shown how our aspirations can take concrete form.”

*--UNC President Erskine Bowles
Inaugural Address, April 12, 2006*

Section 1. What was the purpose of this study?

The purpose of the University of North Carolina Tomorrow Initiative was to determine how the University of North Carolina can respond more directly and proactively to the 21st century challenges facing North Carolina both now and in the future through the efficient and effective fulfillment of its three-pronged mission of teaching, research and scholarship, and public service. The outcomes of this Initiative will guide and shape current and future priorities, resource allocations, existing and future programs, strategic plans, and missions of the University of North Carolina, its 17 constituent institutions and its affiliated entities to ensure that UNC not only becomes more proactive and responsive to the needs of our state, but remains so in the years to come as the people of North Carolina continue to confront the myriad challenges of the rapidly changing, knowledge-based global economy and environment of the 21st century.

To become more responsive to the needs and challenges of our state, UNC first had to identify those needs and challenges. This was accomplished under the leadership of UNC Board of Governors Chairman Jim Phillips, UNC President Erskine Bowles, and the UNC Tomorrow Commission, a 28-member blue-ribbon group including business, education, government, and nonprofit leaders from across the state. They were charged with the responsibility of learning what the people of North Carolina need from their University and making relevant recommendations to the UNC Board of Governors. The Commission's work was guided by the expert research, analysis, and advice of the UNC Tomorrow Scholars Council, a diverse 14-member panel of faculty from across the UNC system engaged to serve as advisors to Chairman Phillips, President Bowles, and the Commission.

The UNC Tomorrow Commission and Scholars Council recommend to the UNC Board of Governors that UNC respond to the needs and challenges facing North Carolina as identified in this report.

² “UNC,” as used in this summary, refers to the University of North Carolina, its 17 constituent institutions, and its affiliated entities established under Chapter 116 of the North Carolina General Statutes.