

2010 Academic Plan Themes: A Draft

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Theme 1: **Strongest possible academic experiences**

- A rigorous and stimulating academic experience is the heart of UNC's mission. We seek to attract the best undergraduate and post-graduate students to learn from and work with the most talented and accomplished faculty. Carolina's traditional commitment to an outstanding liberal arts education for undergraduates remains the best way to prepare our students for the challenges and opportunities they will face beyond graduation. Success for students opting for professional undergraduate or post-graduate studies depends on integrated coursework, practica and research opportunities. At all levels of their education, our students must have the benefit of small-group interaction with our faculty. Carolina's intellectual environment must welcome new fields of inquiry, either in core disciplines or via interdisciplinary innovation. Dedicated to solving the world's most pressing problems, we aim to identify and foster excellence across our entire community and among all whom we teach and serve.

Theme 2:

Faculty prominence, recruitment, development and scholarship

- To further enhance Carolina's strengths, we must continue to recruit, retain, and support our faculty in ways that emphasize the University's commitment to excellence in teaching, scholarship, and public service. A world-class university must have a world-class faculty. Through their teaching and scholarship, such faculty exemplify Carolina's ideal of intellectual leadership that inspires students in the classroom or lab, advances the faculty member's discipline, and benefits an increasingly knowledge-based society. Intellectual leaders of this caliber will consider Carolina a career destination because of a vibrant intellectual climate and a robust mutuality of commitment between the faculty and the University. Only through a sustained commitment to competitive compensation, benefits, support for research and creative activity, opportunity for leave, and professional reputation of UNC, will UNC remain competitive with what the best institutions offer their faculty. Carolina will recruit and retain our faculty most successfully by ensuring that all faculty may pursue new ideas in teaching and research in an open, stimulating, collaborative, and intellectually rewarding atmosphere.

Theme 3: **Interdisciplinarity in teaching, research, and public engagement**

- One of Carolina's intellectual signatures is the imaginative collaboration across disciplinary boundaries in research, teaching, and engagement with our constituencies. We have led the way in contributing to scholarship that is nimble and path-breaking, and that redefines perspectives on long-standing academic pursuits. In order to continue and enhance interdisciplinarity across the campus, we must foster and support innovative efforts among the faculty. The efforts will include developing additional school, departmental, and University incentives and administrative infrastructure that reward and contribute to exploratory, inventive scholarship and teaching. Some possible areas of exploration include:
 - The roles of centers and institutes in fostering interdisciplinary research;
 - Support of innovative interdisciplinary research that may be too advanced for traditional external support;
 - Relief from administrative impediments to interdisciplinary teaching.

Theme 4:

Further campus inclusivity and diversity

- Carolina aspires to be an increasingly inclusive educational institution that attracts and values talented people from all backgrounds, preparing them to contribute as leaders, scholars and educated citizens. UNC will dedicate itself to further our capacity to draw upon the abilities, experiences, and perspectives of all students, faculty and staff. A campus community rich in differences in race, ethnicity, economic background, disability, gender, or sexual orientation, is essential to a vibrant education and to cutting-edge research, service and teaching.

Theme 5:

Engagement with the profound challenges of state, national, and global communities

- As a public institution in the broadest sense, Carolina engages with local and global communities to work on problems of disease, poverty, environmental degradation, injustice and inequality. Academic engagement mobilizes faculty and student professional expertise and resources to address significant challenges and concerns as expressed by communities and societies. Engaged scholarship promotes the public good through balanced, respectful and mutually beneficial collaborations. Carolina will broaden and deepen its engagement by using our teaching and research resources to:
 - explore enhanced collaboration with the policy formation and implementation process;
 - enhance the mutuality of educational growth and social betterment through student learning experiences and scholarly partnerships;
 - utilize our centers and institutes to enable Carolina's partnerships with communities, the state and nations to reach scholarly, artistic, scientific and practical goals leading to the solutions of significant societal dilemmas;
 - cultivate our innovative and entrepreneurial capacities for the improvement of the human condition and the environment;
 - seek ways to disseminate information and discoveries to the public and to university partners;
 - investigate innovative ways to address our local and global citizenship responsibilities.

Theme 6: Extend Carolina's global presence in research and teaching

- Carolina should embrace opportunities to extend its traditional state, regional, and national service to include peoples and cultures beyond our borders. To this end Carolina will extend its global presence through strategically chosen educational, research, and service activities that place UNC faculty and students in creative partnerships with institutions and governments worldwide that share our academic values and goals. As opportunities for international engagement increase, curricula in foreign languages and cultures, along with immersion and study abroad programs, will prepare our students to become knowledgeable and adept in globally competitive environments. Regular faculty and student exchanges with our global counterparts will enrich UNC's intellectual vitality and diversity. Respecting and preserving its distinctive national and regional identities, Carolina's collaborative links around the world will exemplify UNC's interdisciplinary and entrepreneurial character and raise its profile as a hub of international research and learning.