

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO
STATE OF THE CAMPUS 2010
Chancellor Linda P. Brady
August 18, 2010**

Welcome to the 119th opening convocation of The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. It is a pleasure to be here with you, as we come together to embark on a new academic year and celebrate the accomplishments of this great university.

Someone once said, "The beginning is only the start of a journey to another beginning." I cannot help but feel this way as we commence the 2010-11 academic year. As we work together to redefine the 21st century university, we are constantly engaging in new beginnings and journeys together. Thank you for your dedication and efforts to make UNCG a dynamic place to work, learn, create and inspire.

I recognize that we have come through a difficult year. Budget challenges and the welfare of students, faculty and staff have been on our minds – and, indeed have kept me and many of you up at night. But despite the challenges we have faced together, or possibly because of the challenges we've faced together as a university, I truly believe we are a stronger community better prepared to tackle the challenges we will confront in the future.

If it is any comfort, we are not alone. Colleges and universities across this country are examining their missions and reinventing themselves to position their institutions for the future. There has been much talk of how we will "get through" the current economic crisis, as if when the crisis ends we will return to a previous, normal state of affairs. I am convinced we must prepare for a "new normal," a future that will demand we recommit this university to academic quality and student success. And our people represent the foundation on which we will build.

Introducing new university leaders

Our people make UNCG thrive. I am pleased to announce that there have been several additions to the university's leadership team or changes in titles and roles since we gathered in this place last year. When I call your name, please stand, and after I have read all of the names, we will welcome you with our applause.

Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development
Interim Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
Dean, Lloyd International Honors College
Dean of Students
Interim Director of Housing and Residence Life
University Counsel
Director of Athletics
Chief of Staff
Special Assistant for Government Relations

Dr. Terri Shelton
Dr. Cherry Callahan
Dr. Jerry Pubantz
Dr. Brett Carter
Mr. Curt Erwin
Mr. Steve Serck
Ms. Kim Record
Ms. Bonita Brown
Mr. Mike Tarrant

ACE Fellow

Dr. Clarenda Phillips

We are delighted to welcome all of you to your new roles at UNCG. I also want to express my personal thanks to members of my Executive Staff. These individuals work tirelessly on behalf of this great university.

Welcoming new faculty and staff

I want to recognize the many new faculty and staff members joining UNCG this year. A number of new faculty members have joined the UNCG community. There are approximately 33 new tenure track and 40 non-tenure track faculty members. Would you please stand to be recognized? And if you are a new staff member, please stand to be recognized. Thanks to all of you for choosing UNCG.

I am pleased to also welcome members of UNCG's Board of Trustees. Led by Chair Randall Kaplan, this Board works hard in service of this university and guides us as we move to new levels of achievement. Board members Kate Barrett and Skip Moore are with us today. I am thankful for your service.

Remembering a year of remarkable accomplishments

While this has been a challenging year, it also was a year marked by remarkable accomplishments. This morning I want to highlight some of these accomplishments, before turning my attention to the budget and priorities for the year ahead.

At this time last year, we launched implementation of UNCG's Strategic Plan 2009-14, by activating a number of goals and establishing university-wide teams to pursue efforts in each of these areas. The implementation teams submitted reports to the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor that were reviewed by the Deans' Council and Executive Staff during the summer. Let me ask Dr. Rebecca Adams, Associate Provost for Planning and Assessment, and other faculty and staff who served as members of the implementation teams who may be with us today to stand, so we can thank you for your dedication to this process.

Much progress has been made in each area. Provost Perrin will provide a comprehensive report on those efforts during the Faculty Convocation on September 8. Twenty-five percent of the revenue generated by the Campus Initiated Tuition Increase for 2010-11 will be invested in Student Success. The Deans' Council will determine shortly how these funds will be allocated in support of student success-related goals in the Strategic Plan.

Based on recommendations from the implementation teams and the Deans' Council, we will activate nine additional goals in 2010-11.

Addressing the rising cost of higher education

UNCG has launched two new programs designed to address the rising cost of higher education and improve our retention and graduation rates. The first program is the UNCG Guarantee, a need-based financial aid and student success program that allows

qualified students to complete their education with little or no debt. This program promises to expand access for low-income students. Thirty-four UNCG Guarantee students have been admitted in the first class this fall. Ten of these students will also be enrolled in the Lloyd International Honors College. These students have earned an average high school GPA of 3.87, report an average total SAT score above the average for the entering freshman class as a whole, and more than 50 percent are ethnic minority students. I look forward to welcoming these students and their families during an orientation event later today.

This fall also marks the inauguration of UNCG in 3, an accelerated degree program that allows well-prepared undergraduates to complete their studies in three years. Students enrolled in this program are entering UNCG with a minimum of 12 college-level credits (some through enrollment in UNCG's iSchool) and will attend winter and/or summer sessions to complete their degrees. Last spring, UNCG signed an articulation agreement with the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics designed to attract some of these outstanding high school students to UNCG in 3 through options in Biology, Chemistry, Math, Physics, and Computer Science, available only for these extremely well-prepared students.

Reinforcing our commitment to student success

This university's commitment to student success has been reinforced through the integration of the academic affairs and student affairs functions under the leadership of Provost David Perrin, who now carries the title of Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor. In December, Provost Perrin appointed a Student Affairs/Academic Affairs Restructuring Committee to consider and advise him regarding the vertical and horizontal integration of the two divisions.

The committee's work was informed by the UNCG Strategic Plan, particularly its emphasis on access and student success. The new administrative structure, which consolidates responsibility for UNCG's academic programs, research activities, and student affairs under the leadership of the Provost, was undertaken to foster collaboration between faculty and staff and across academic and student affairs in order to enhance the recruitment, retention and success of students.

The realignment also supports UNCG's goal of enhancing the residential character of the university and has contributed to the expansion of living and learning communities – outcomes that require close coordination between academic and student affairs units.

During the past year UNCG's faculty has made significant progress in improving and ensuring intentionality and coherence in our General Education curriculum. It is imperative that we set high standards for student learning and build a culture of evidence for the ongoing improvement of teaching and student learning.

This year we will host on-campus General Education workshops for academic leadership, dedicate a travel development fund to support attendance by General Education leaders to relevant conferences, and encourage the General Education Council to work closely with

the academic deans and departments to ensure objectives related to recertification and assessment are included in unit plans. I want to express my personal appreciation to Professor Lisa Tolbert, outgoing chair of the Gen Ed Council, and all the members of the Council, for your dedicated service and commitment to Gen Ed reform at UNCG.

Launching new academic programs

Our faculty continues to develop innovative and high-quality academic programs. During the past year, UNCG has received approval for or launched a number of new programs, including the B.S. in Entrepreneurship, the M.S. and Ph.D. in Nanoscience, and the Ph.D. in Environmental Health Science. Last Friday the UNC Board of Governors approved our request to plan a joint doctoral program in Social Work with North Carolina A+T State University – building on an already successful partnership.

Another significant accomplishment relates to the research, scholarship, and creative activity of our faculty. During 2009-10, approximately \$48 million in total funds were awarded, an increase of 34 percent over 2008-09. Total funds requested in grant submissions during this period reflect a 50 percent increase and set a new record for the university of close to \$200 million. Congratulations to our faculty, staff, graduate students and post-docs who support these efforts.

July 1, 2010 marked the launch of UNCG's new School of Music, Theatre and Dance. The realignment of the performing arts was the outcome of a year-long process in which faculty, staff, and administrators considered areas of common interest and opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration. The newly defined school includes nearly 1,200 majors and more than 100 faculty and staff. The school builds on the strengths of the constituent units and will enhance the visibility of the performing arts at UNCG. I want to thank all of the faculty and staff who engaged in the creative process that led to this outcome.

Expanding equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives

The Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion issued a report in April that offers recommendations for initiatives to be pursued in 2010-11. These initiatives include: expansion of university support services to address the needs of students, faculty and staff around a variety of differences; expansion of retention and recognition efforts regarding students, faculty, and staff, with a special focus on UNCG staff; and the review of hiring policies and practices to ensure greater diversity in administrative positions on this campus.

I want to express my thanks to Professor C.P. Gause and Professor Sue Dennison, co-chairs of the committee in 2009-10, for their outstanding leadership, and to members of the committee for their sustained commitment to building an inclusive community. May I ask all of you to please stand?

We have launched a national search for the position of Chief Diversity Officer and Associate Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. We look forward to welcoming a new visionary leader who will build on the historic efforts that have

characterized this campus over the years. I am grateful to Professor Gwen O'Neal, chair of the search, and other members of the committee, for the critically important work they will do this year.

UNCG continues to make significant progress in enhancing the diversity of the campus, and focusing on success. I am especially proud of the hard work of faculty search and promotion and tenure committees, reflected in the growing number of women faculty and ethnic minority faculty in the junior ranks, as well as the significant increases in the number of tenured associate and full professors.

A recent report by *The Education Trust* explored six-year graduation rates for different groups of students across the country. Their report found that nationally 60 percent of whites but only 40 percent of African Americans who start college hold bachelor's degrees six years later. *The Education Trust* praises UNCG for our success in graduating African American students at a comparable rate to white students. On average, 56 percent of African American students at UNCG graduate in six years, compared with 51 percent of white students. To quote from the report, "Clearly, when colleges focus on student success, all students benefit greatly – particularly students of color."

Making great strides in athletics

Spartan Athletics has made great strides this year, under the leadership of our new Director of Athletics, Kim Record. Kim hired a number of new coaches and senior athletics department staff, oversaw a space assessment that identifies immediate and long-term needs for athletics (including opportunities for collaboration with the School of Health and Human Performance and Campus Recreation), and presided over UNCG's inaugural season in the Greensboro Coliseum for men's basketball. Spartan teams won three Southern Conference championships, including two "first ever" championships in wrestling and men's tennis.

On the academic front, all Spartan teams met or exceeded their Academic Progress Rate (APR) goals, and women's golfer Sofia Aidemark was UNCG's third student-athlete in the Division I era to be elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

Implementing new and continued sustainability measures

Sustainability remains a core value at UNCG. In 2009-10 UNCG appointed a full-time sustainability coordinator in facilities operations, initiated planning for implementation of a behavior-based energy conservation program, implemented Green Cleaning under the leadership of our housekeeping staff, and acquired "Tree Campus USA" designation by the Arbor Day Foundation – the first state university in North Carolina to achieve this designation.

Beginning this fall, UNCG is introducing a campus garden to support our core value of sustainability. A university committee co-chaired by Professor Susan Andreatta, Department of Anthropology, and Guy Sanders from Housing and Residence Life is working with faculty, staff, and students to prepare a campus lot located at 123 McIver Street for future vegetable growing. Plans and guidelines are being developed to enable

faculty to incorporate use of the campus garden into their courses on a semester by semester basis.

Building on our outstanding campus

We continue to make great strides in the construction and renovation of facilities. 2009-10 marked the successful completion of all projects associated with the 2000 Higher Education Bond Program. Construction of the new School of Education building on Spring Garden Street is proceeding on schedule with an anticipated completion date in Spring 2011. This will be our first LEED-certified building on the campus. The Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering building is rising from the ground on the south campus of Gateway University Research Park, with an anticipated occupation date in Spring 2012.

Funding for a \$1.8 million renovation of Curry Building has been identified and planning will begin immediately, with construction targeted to begin in summer 2011. A \$1.3 million renovation of Jackson Library begins this fall. Completion of the baseball practice facility is expected this fall and renovation of the locker room in the HHP building is expected to be completed in Spring 2011.

Exceeding fundraising goals in a challenging economic environment

UNCG just concluded a very successful fundraising year. We exceeded our goal of \$12 million, raising a total of \$12.5 million in an extremely challenging economic environment. UNCG was the only UNC-system institution to reach its fundraising goal for the year. That says a great deal about the efforts of the staff, faculty, and administrators engaged in friend raising and fund raising: those in University Advancement, our College of Arts & Sciences, and our schools as well as many others on the campus.

Five new professorships were established in the areas of economics, music, theatre and dance, chemistry and biochemistry, and nutrition, supporting the work of faculty in those areas. Funds for an additional nine professorships were raised, bringing the total number of professorships for 2009-10 to 14. I would like to ask our new holders of named professorships to please and be recognized. They are:

Dr. Kevin B. Lowe, Burlington Industries Excellence Professor;

Dr. Mary Ellis Gibson, Elizabeth Rosenthal Excellence Professor;

Dr. Derek Krueger, Joe Rosenthal Excellence Professor;

Dr. Susan D. Calkins, Bank of America Excellence Professor;

Dr. Terri L. Shelton, Carol Jenkins Mattocks Distinguished Professor;

Dr. Nancy Miller, Burlington Industries Professor; and

Dr. Diane L. Gill, Linda Arnold Carlisle Distinguished Excellence Professor for Women's and Gender Studies.

Last year we launched a task force on Integrated Marketing and Strategic Communications, co-chaired by Associate Vice Chancellor for University Relations Helen Hebert and Professor Joy Bhadury of the Bryan School of Business and

Economics. This group has focused on how to enhance the image of UNCG in print materials, billboards, brochures, the website, social media and other modes of communication. The task force has identified 14 key drivers that will serve to create unique positioning and messages for UNCG. The culmination of their efforts this year will assist in the planning process for UNCG's next capital campaign. Please stand if you have been involved in the work of the Task Force.

Taking a look at budget funding and cuts

Let me turn to the subject of the budget and provide some highlights of the recently concluded legislative session. As I have said on numerous occasions, the people of North Carolina have supported their university at levels that are unprecedented across the nation. Indeed, colleagues in other states tell us how fortunate we are to live and work in a state whose citizens and legislators understand the critical importance of education for the future of our economy and the health and welfare of our people.

In 2009-10, UNCG experienced a permanent \$6.9 million cut, which primarily impacted administrative, non-classroom functions. For 2010-11, the General Assembly was successful in limiting additional cuts for the UNC system to \$70 million. UNCG's share of that cut is \$6.4 million.

The UNC system received full funding for enrollment growth and need-based financial aid, funding for the operation of new buildings, and funds for repair and renovation of some existing buildings.

The General Assembly also approved the UNC Board of Governors Alternative Tuition Plan, which included a \$168 Campus-Initiated Tuition Increase for UNCG resident undergraduates, with 50 percent of the revenue invested in need-based financial aid, 25 percent in student success programming, and 25 percent in faculty recruitment and retention.

In addition, UNCG and North Carolina A+T State University received \$1 million in recurring funds for the Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering to hire additional faculty and staff. JSNN welcomes the first class of 17 master's and doctoral students in nanoscience this fall.

The General Assembly also approved a Special Provision permitting UNCG to use \$8.5 million in COPS funding to acquire property, develop, and construct a pedestrian underpass connecting main campus with Lee Street. This project is essential to the development of UNCG's "New Neighborhood."

The General Assembly also authorized financing for \$85,700,000 in key non-appropriated capital projects at UNCG, including the renovation and expansion of the Quad Residence Halls and a renovation of the Dining Hall.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all who responded to our call to action in the spring, including members of the Board of Trustees, the Board of Visitors, the Parents'

Council, alumni, faculty and staff, students, and community boards and foundations, including the Greensboro Partnership. Thanks especially to members of the Guilford Legislative Delegation who ensured the voices of our Greensboro universities were heard throughout the process.

Protecting the quality of a UNCG education

As you know, the General Assembly authorized the campuses to raise tuition up to \$750 to offset the management flexibility cut. UNCG proposed, and President Bowles approved, an increase of \$485, over and above the CITI, to offset the \$6.4 million permanent cut. Twenty percent of the revenue generated as a result of this increase will be invested in need-based financial aid.

While we are sensitive to the additional burden this tuition increase imposes on students and their families, we must protect the quality of a UNCG education, and our ability to provide students with the classes and support they need to keep on track. To take one example, some of these funds have enabled us to add nearly 1,000 seats in high demand General Education classes for fall semester. We would not have been able to meet these needs, and others related to classroom instruction and student support, in the absence of the additional revenue.

And despite this increase, UNCG's tuition and fees remain well below our national peers. Only one of our 17 peer institutions has lower resident undergraduate tuition and fees.

You also know that the UNC System has been authorized to implement furloughs as needed for the 2010-11 fiscal year. This authority was granted to President Bowles in an effort to provide the system with options as it seeks to balance the budget. President Bowles has delegated authority to implement furloughs to the Chancellor of each campus. At this point UNCG has no plans to implement a furlough during the current fiscal year. We will continue to monitor the situation and keep you informed throughout the fiscal year.

Planning for a troubling 2011-13 budget scenario

Let me say a few words about prospects for 2011-13. The State of North Carolina is anticipating a deficit which could exceed \$3 billion dollars for the first year of the next biennial budget that begins in July 2011. The loss of Federal Stimulus dollars accounts for about half of the deficit, and the expiration of temporary tax increases accounts for another significant portion.

The anticipated deficit would represent a budget shortfall of approximately 16 percent. If UNCG's budgeted state appropriations were reduced in proportion to the state shortfall, we would suffer a budget cut in the magnitude of \$25 million dollars that could translate into the loss of more than 250 positions on this campus.

We need to begin planning now for an extremely difficult couple of years. But as we plan for how to deal with an even tougher situation in 2011-13 than we have faced in 2009-11, we must consider how to position UNCG for the "new normal" that will emerge

in 2012, 2013 and beyond. We must take steps now to ensure we remain a strong, vibrant university. Academic quality and student success are, and will remain, the keys to positioning UNCG for this future.

Celebrating academic quality and student success

We are at a critical moment in UNCG's history. The efforts we engage in the coming year will establish a framework for success in the future. The University of North Carolina at Greensboro is, and has been, an institution committed to excellence and student success. This is reflected in the fact that 45 new members were inducted into the Epsilon chapter of Phi Beta Kappa on April 20, 2010. UNCG remains one of only seven institutions in North Carolina to host a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.

This past spring, two doctoral students, Bethany Blair from the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, and Mili Fernandez from the School of Music, Theatre and Dance, won Fulbright scholarships to spend a year studying abroad in Finland and Spain, respectively. During the past 12 years, 14 UNCG students have received Fulbrights.

The Lloyd International Honors College begins the year with a very large and talented new class of first-year students. The incoming class of more than 200 students boast exemplary academic credentials, including SAT scores more than 200 points above the UNCG average. The class of 2014 joins an additional 800 students who are pursuing Honors through the College. And this week a renovated North Spencer Residence Hall has reopened as a space for students from the Honors College that includes a new classroom for use as a global teleconferencing center.

Setting priorities for facing the "new normal"

There are obviously many more examples of UNCG's commitment to academic quality and student success. But if we are to sustain and enhance the reputation of this university in the "new normal," we must embark upon a course that will position us for an even more competitive future. This will require efforts in three areas:

- First, UNCG will take steps to enhance our undergraduate student profile;
- Second, UNCG will implement an ambitious program of learning communities in conjunction with the development of a new neighborhood and renovation of existing residence halls;
- Third, UNCG will embark on a conversation regarding an academic realignment that will build on our historic strengths in areas related to health and human development and that will position our academic programs and the Graduate School for greater visibility, enhanced fund-raising opportunities, and future success.

Each of these initiatives is critical to positioning UNCG for the future. Let me say a few words about them.

Enhancing the undergraduate student profile

UNCG has long been known for educating bright and talented individuals whose personal and professional accomplishments as students and as graduates make us all very proud. At the same time, during the past decade the quality of entering undergraduate classes at UNCG has declined vis a vis our sister institutions within the UNC system. Nine UNC campuses had higher SAT scores in fall 2009; UNCG was one of seven campuses with lower scores. Looking over a longer term, from 1986 to 2009, other UNC campuses (especially Appalachian State, UNC Wilmington, and Western Carolina University), have made significant commitments to enhancing their undergraduate student profiles.

This trend is troubling and we must take steps now to reverse it. The UNC Board of Governors has set ambitious targets for each of the constituent universities that require us to improve our retention and graduation rates over the next five years. Improvement in these rates is a primary goal of UNCG's Strategic Plan 2009-14, which commits us to becoming a university of first-choice for increasing numbers of high-achieving students.

We know there is a relationship between the academic readiness of students and our efforts to retain and graduate them. UNCG's dramatic enrollment growth has come at a cost in terms of the academic profile of UNCG's undergraduate student body. We must move now, in anticipation of a change in the funding model which will link incremental funding to achieving retention and graduation rate targets.

This summer the Deans' Council considered the impact of several proposals to raise the minimum SATs required for admission to UNCG in fall 2011. Following extensive review of the impact of a change on our student profile, the decision was made to raise significantly the minimum SATs required for admission to UNCG. This effort will strengthen UNCG in important ways, but it may also present some costs in the short-term in the form of a smaller freshman class in 2011 and a reduced enrollment-change budget. To counter the loss in first-time freshmen, UNCG will accelerate efforts to grow distance and graduate enrollment.

It is also possible that we will see some shifts in student demographics, but we are developing plans for moderating the impact of this initiative on access and the diversity of our student body, including a significant investment in the recruitment of outstanding low-income and ethnic minority students. UNCG is now, and expects to remain, the most diverse university in the UNC system.

Creating learning communities and a new neighborhood

Admitting a strong freshman class is a necessary but not sufficient condition for student success. National research demonstrates that students who live on campus are more likely to return and graduate at higher rates than students who reside off campus. Last year, we offered a strategic direction for housing at UNCG that is designed to nearly double the number of UNCG students living in university-managed housing over the next decade.

In May we broke ground on a new LEED-certified 400-bed suite-style residence hall on Spring Garden Street that will be ready for students in fall 2011. Planning and design is

also well under way for the renovation and expansion of the seven historic Quad residence halls. Students will vacate the Quad in May 2011 when renovation work begins in order to be ready to house 600 students in a renovated Quad in fall 2012.

We have made great strides in the planning and development of an expanded campus to include apartment-style student housing, a new indoor recreation center, and a central campus police station along the Lee Street Corridor, immediately south of the existing campus.

For the past two years, UNCG has been in discussion with representatives of the Glenwood neighborhood and the City of Greensboro on a master plan for this "new neighborhood." Property acquisition has begun, and we hope to begin design of the first phase of development later this year. The neighborhood voted overwhelmingly at its meeting on July 2 to work with UNCG to modify their neighborhood plan to allow for a University mixed-use neighborhood along the northern edge of Glenwood. I want to express my appreciation to Mike Byers, Associate Vice Chancellor for Campus Enterprises, for leading this effort.

The quality of the residence hall environment is an increasingly important factor in decision-making by prospective students and their parents. Enhancing the recruitment of outstanding students demands a major investment in the development of apartment-style units and recreation facilities.

But residence halls offer more than simply a place for students to sleep. One of the primary goals of UNCG's Strategic Plan was is our commitment to implement learning communities for all first-time UNCG undergraduates to encourage integration of learning across courses. Ultimately we aim to offer a learning community experience to all UNCG undergraduates. We know that participation in a learning community is directly related to student success.

This year the 3.3 Implementation Team, co-chaired by Dean of Undergraduate Studies Steve Roberson and Dean of Libraries Rosann Bazirjian, has worked to develop models of learning communities, initiated an RFP for faculty proposals, and participated with representatives from Student Affairs, Housing and Residence Life, and Facilities in the design of learning community spaces for the new residence hall on Spring Garden Street and a renovated and expanded Quad. We are convinced this will contribute to our efforts to recruit, retain and graduate successful undergraduates.

Realigning academic programs to meet future needs

A third critical area of work involves opening a conversation regarding academic realignment based on our historic strengths in programs related to health and human development, and on the anticipated demand for graduates in these fields in coming years. This is also the right time to assess the positioning of the Graduate School, the academic programs located there, and support for our efforts to grow graduate enrollment.

There are a number of reasons why this makes sense. First, UNCG's Strategic Plan 2009-14 provides an opportunity to explore health and human development, broadly defined, as a major area of focus. This plan resulted from a year-long planning process that engaged the entire campus. Our efforts will build on UNCG's historic strengths and high demand in areas related to health and human development. It also leverages the work of UNCG centers and institutes engaged in research and community engagement.

With respect to the Graduate School, UNCG's Strategic Plan 2009-14 also commits us to grow graduate enrollment significantly during the next several years. Exploring the role and mission of the graduate school and its relationship to research and economic development, including how to better support graduate students and post-docs, is timely and will help us achieve this ambitious goal. In addition, it is time to address the appropriate academic homes for the three graduate programs located in the Graduate School – this location made sense when they were being developed initially, but they now deserve to be located with other academic programs and faculty colleagues.

We have opportunities to leverage our resources to expand sponsored research and other sources of funding, and to reinforce our commitment to serve the needs of this community, the state, and the nation. New disciplines and interdisciplinary fields of study are emerging in allied health, human development, and social welfare, including fields like genetic counseling. Considering how best to structure our human, financial, and capital resources to take advantage of these opportunities for growth and enhance our visibility locally and nationally makes sense. This will impact UNCG's ability to recruit the next generation of outstanding faculty and students.

Moreover, this period of fiscal challenge compels us to make difficult choices about how to sustain excellence in the years ahead. During the past two years we have executed budget cuts while endeavoring to protect the academic core. As I noted earlier, 2011-13 will be even more difficult – and there can be no expectation that we will return to the status quo ante.

Academic programs drive the university's budget. In the face of continued major cuts in the future, I am deeply concerned about the disconnect between our academic programs and structures and the resources needed to maintain quality. We recognize that across the board cuts lead to mediocrity for all programs – an outcome none of us would support.

Colleges and universities across this state and around the country face similar challenges. Many are using this time to reassess their strengths, project future needs, and position themselves for success. Several of our sister institutions in North Carolina already have opened conversations about, or begun the process of, academic restructuring. For example, Appalachian State University announced the creation of a new College of Health Sciences on July 1. And our colleagues at Purdue University have announced the creation of a College of Health and Human Sciences.

At UNCG, while faculty, staff and students in the Schools of Human Environmental Sciences and Health and Human Performance have a special interest in this discussion, so

do faculty, staff and students in Nursing and other disciplines and programs. These conversations must, and will, engage any and all groups on the campus who want to contribute to building a more visible and successful academic unit focused on health and human development. We should focus on imagining the possibilities first.

Provost Perrin met this morning with a subcommittee of the Deans' Council, including faculty representatives from HES and HHP, to discuss their recommendations for a process and timeline for engaging the faculty. He and I will meet this afternoon with faculty of HES and HHP to solicit their feedback on the process and address concerns. Our focus in the days ahead will be on consultations to determine the process by which an expanded conversation will occur.

The goal is to engage the process in the fall and act on recommendations by this time next year. The outcome should result in one fewer major academic division, producing significant financial savings and efficiencies over time. I commit to you that this process will occur in the context of the values of collaboration, transparency, inclusiveness and shared governance for which our campus is known.

Assessing how to invest in the future

In order to protect quality in the years ahead we must make difficult choices now about where and how to invest in the future. We cannot do everything and be excellent in all that we do. We cannot sustain an organizational structure that was developed in a different era to meet different needs. Indeed, UNCG has made significant changes throughout its 119-year history in response to challenges and opportunities in our environment.

Our goal must be to ensure UNCG emerges from this period of economic and social transition an academically stronger, more selective, and more focused institution. Academic restructuring is an essential element of our plan to sustain academic quality, in conjunction with efforts to enhance the undergraduate student profile and build learning communities. We need your help and best thinking. Provost Perrin and I look forward to visiting each academic division for further discussions throughout the year.

As we begin this new academic year, we do so understanding the importance of positioning this university now for the future. In her commencement address in May, author Margaret Maron quoted from Robert Frost's classic poem: "Two roads diverged in a wood and I, I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference."

I thank you for all that you do and for allowing me to walk with you along the road less traveled. We will reach our destination together.

Thank you.