

# UNC Wilmington

## All Funds Budget Narrative



Through the FY24 All Funds Budgeting process, the University of North Carolina Wilmington developed a budget which will help support system-wide strategic goals as well as strategic priorities identified by the university. In addition, the budget further reflects an institutional commitment to efficient operations and financial plans which are responsive to enterprise risks. Examples of how UNCW's budget supports each of the aforementioned efforts is provided below.

### **UNC System Strategic Goals**

UNCW continues to make student access and success a priority. This is reflected in UNCW's strong performance across various UNC System priority metrics – particularly: (1) Undergraduate Degree Efficiency (UGDE), (2) First Time Student Debt at Graduation, (3) Transfer Student Debt at Graduation, and (4) Education and Related Expenses per Degree. To build upon existing efforts at UNCW to enhance student access and success, the FY24 budget provides additional investments across a number of areas – including, but not limited to:

- *Student Aid:* Additional investments will be used to appropriately scale the campus's need-based aid budget to its growing student body and to enable UNCW to remain accessible and affordable to students with demonstrated need. As a result, these investments should inversely impact the amount of debt that resident students need to incur to attend UNCW.
- *Student Employee Wage Adjustments:* Additional funding is budgeted to increase wages for students working in the Student Union. On-campus employment not only reduces the need for students to borrow, it is a high-impact practice that aids in student retention, persistence, and graduation. In addition, the applicable positions within the Student Union are intended to complement the student's academic and career goals.
- *Physical and Mental Health Services:* Additional funding will enable the Student Health Center to cover the costs associated with mandatory and discretionary salary adjustments for clinical care professionals (which are necessary to attract/retain the high quality staff which provide important medical services to students). Further, increased funding will also support the hiring of an additional psychologist at the counseling center to better meet growing student demand for mental health services and enable the university to offer enhanced after hours support for students in need.

### **UNCW Strategic Priorities**

The FY24 budget continues to make important investments which directly align with the university's existing strategic plan goals, while holding some funding in reserve to provide immediate support for new strategic priorities identified in the updated strategic plan (anticipated to be completed in the summer of 2023). Existing strategic plan priorities supported by the FY24 budget include, but are not limited to:

- *Attracting/Retaining Students:* Supported by maintaining recent investments in the Student Learning Center (to ensure convenient access to tutoring services), along with investments at the Disability Resources Center (to ensure convenient access to assistive technologies and associated services for eligible students). This priority is also supported

through enhanced investments in institutional based financial aid and student support services (as referenced in the preceding section).

- *Attracting/Retaining Faculty and Staff:* Supported through the strategic deployment of the Labor Market Adjustment Reserve (originally provided to UNCW in FY23), which enabled campus to address considerable salary issues in more than 400 positions across campus. Additional investments being made in FY24 to support this priority include (1) Faculty Promotion & Tenure Adjustments and (2) increases to the UNCW faculty and staff recruitment and retention fund.
- *Fundraising and Aligning Donor Support with Strategic Priorities:* Supported through the hiring of an additional Major Gifts Officer which is necessary as the university stands up two new academic colleges.<sup>1</sup>

### **Improved Efficiency**

UNCW seeks to provide students with a high-quality education in a manner which is efficient and provides excellent value to taxpayers. That commitment is reflected in UNCW's performance pursuant to the UGDE metric and Education and Related Expenses per Degree metric. Specifically, UNCW's UGDE score of 28 (using FY21 data) is among the highest and/or best in the system, while its education and related expenses per degree of \$42,310 (using FY21 data), is among the lowest and/or best in the system.

While UNCW has arguably been one of the most efficient campuses in the UNC System in recent years, we continue to evaluate opportunities to improve operations/operate more efficiently, while maintaining the quality experience that students expect and deserve. This commitment to improvement is apparent in UNCW's approach to the development of the All-Funds-Budget for FY24. Specifically, UNCW's divisions were tasked with identifying savings opportunities in units where efficiency opportunities existed and where we expect variable expenses will naturally decline as student demand changes and enrollment attrits in applicable disciplines. This process resulted in budget savings across UNCW of more than \$2 million<sup>2</sup> (which will be used offset the FY24 appropriations reduction related to SCH change), and therefore fully preserves the \$2.3 million appropriations increase for campus (related to performance) so that the performance funding can be deployed in a manner which supports UNCW's new strategic plan.

### **Enterprise Risks**

Enterprise Risk Management and Internal Audit collaborate each year to identify the top enterprise risks across the university. These risks and corresponding mitigation strategies are taken into account as a component of the annual budgeting process. For example, Human Capital (recruiting/retaining) was identified as a prevailing risk in FY22 and FY23. Accordingly, and consistent with UNCW's strategic plan goals, the university has established a recruitment/retention fund (as referenced above) and used University Risk Management and Insurance Association risk classifications to help prioritize allocations from the Labor Market Adjustment Reserve (in an effort to help minimize employee turnover in positions which are essential for managing key risk functions).

---

<sup>1</sup> *Necessitated by the dissolution of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the creation of two new colleges – specifically: (1) College of Science and Engineering, and (2) College of Humanities, Social Sciences, and the Arts.*

<sup>2</sup> *The source of savings/budget reductions (by division) is as follows: Academic Affairs at \$1.563 million, Business Affairs at \$296k, Central Administration at \$81k, and Student Affairs at \$58k.*