September 16, 2009

President Erskine Bowles
The University of North Carolina
UNC Office of the President
PO Box 2688
Chapel Hill, NC 27515-2688

Dear President Bowles:

Recent reports have suggested that UNCG employs a larger number of senior and middle managers than do other UNC campuses and our national peers. In particular, concerns have been raised about the growth in those administrators in which “Chancellor” or “Provost” appears in the title of the position. Between 2005 and 2008, the number of managers with these titles increased from 33 to 51; 1 of these positions was a net new hire and the remainder represent renaming of existing positions/employees, consistent with the practices of our peers. During this same period UNCG’s undergraduate enrollment increased 11.3% and total enrollment increased 8.4%.

We support efforts to enhance administrative efficiencies, especially in these difficult economic times. Our recently approved targeted cuts, management flexibility cuts, and reductions in centers & institutes ($6.9 million) eliminate 65 positions. All of these positions are administrative and 43% are middle management (including assistant and associate vice chancellors and provosts, directors, and other middle managers). Nine positions with “Chancellor” or “Provost” in the title have been eliminated and the associated duties have been reassigned. We have also redefined the positions of 17 additional employees whose titles contained the words “Chancellor” or “Provost.” These actions result in 25 chancellor- or provost-titled positions, in comparison to the 33 that existed in 2005 and the 51 that existed in 2008.

We are reviewing the Bain & Company Final Report prepared for UNC-Chapel Hill to identify options applicable to our continued efforts to reduce administrative expenses and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our organization. Other steps include a review of existing Centers & Institutes, to identify opportunities to consolidate support and further enhance external/non-state support for research and programming. I expect to receive and act on these recommendations by January 1, 2010.
We expect additional administrative efficiencies during this fiscal year and next as a result of a review of our personnel and business practices and administrative restructuring. We plan a divisional administrative restructuring designed to eliminate duplicative programming in academic and student affairs and enhance efficiencies. This restructuring and efforts to enhance the efficiency of our operations in other areas will result in the elimination of at least two additional positions at the assistant/associate provost/chancellor or equivalent level in 2010-11.

Between 2005 and 2008 the number of UNCG employees with “Director” in their title increased by 55. I believe these numbers drive, in large part, the apparent increase in the number of administrators at UNCG between 2005 and 2008. Based on preliminary review of these positions, which cut across all divisions of the university, we believe many of the titles do not reflect accurately the scope of responsibility of the position. For example, advancement (development) officers assigned to schools and colleges in support of fund-raising carry the title “Director of Development,” although they have no managerial or supervisory responsibilities. Similarly, admissions officers carry the title “Assistant Director,” although they do not supervise other employees. The same pertains for financial aid officers. We are engaged in a systematic review of these positions, and anticipate a major reduction in the number of positions characterized as “administration” between now and December 1, 2009. The result will lower the number of “Administrators” at UNCG from 297 to a figure below the 208 average of our national peers.

UNCG examined the data provided by UNC General Administration in an e-mail to the Chancellors dated August 27, 2009 to help understand the relative staffing levels at UNCG in comparison to other UNC Campuses and to UNCG’s National Peers. Based on our analysis of total staff rather than a subset of positions, UNCG serves more students per staff member than the majority of her sister campuses and significantly more than her national peers (see attached chart). This was the case in 2005 and remains in 2008. From 2005 to 2008, UNCG actually increased the ratio of students served per staff, while most UNC campuses and UNCG’s National Peers experienced a decrease in students served per staff. Thus, we believe UNCG is efficiently serving a growing student population.

Our goal continues to be an administrative structure that supports academic quality and responsive service to students, in line with generally accepted national standards. It is critical that EPA status be retained for positions of responsibility, regardless of title, to ensure accountability and management flexibility. UNCG’s focus remains on providing quality teaching, research, and service to address the needs of the Triad and the State of North Carolina.

Sincerely,

Linda P. Brady
Chancellor