In September 2017, Chancellor Everts solidified Appalachian’s commitments to the goals set out in the University of North Carolina System’s strategic plan by publicly signing an agreement with UNC President Margaret Spellings. View Appalachian’s goals and performance updates below.

### Prioritize

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Baseline Fall 2016</th>
<th>Year 1 Fall 2018</th>
<th>Year 2 Fall 2019</th>
<th>Year 3 Fall 2020</th>
<th>Year 4 Fall 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural Enrollments</td>
<td>5,328</td>
<td>5,405</td>
<td>5,502</td>
<td>5,607</td>
<td>5,715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase enrollment of rural students by 7.3% from baseline year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As of Fall 2017 (Year 0)</td>
<td>5,648</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-income Completions</td>
<td>1,288</td>
<td>1,335</td>
<td>1,397</td>
<td>1,460</td>
<td>1,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase number of low-income graduates by 24.2% from baseline year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As of Fall 2017 (Year 0)</td>
<td>1,347</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Completions</td>
<td>1,371</td>
<td>1,404</td>
<td>1,449</td>
<td>1,493</td>
<td>1,543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase number of graduates from rural areas by 16.2% from baseline year</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>As of Fall 2017 (Year 0)</td>
<td>1,432</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Low-income Achievement Gaps in Undergraduate Degree Efficiency</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the disparity in academic performance between low-income and the overall population by 5% from baseline year</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>As of Fall 2017 (Year 0)</td>
<td>17.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Workforces</td>
<td>1,741</td>
<td>1,818</td>
<td>1,922</td>
<td>2,025</td>
<td>2,141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase number of critical workforce credentials (in fields of science, technology, engineering &amp; math) by 29.8% from baseline year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As of Fall 2017 (Year 0)</td>
<td>1,948</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Improve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Baseline Fall 2015</th>
<th>Year 1 Fall 2017</th>
<th>Year 2 Fall 2018</th>
<th>Year 3 Fall 2019</th>
<th>Year 4 Fall 2020</th>
<th>Year 5 Fall 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low-income Enrollments</td>
<td>4,492</td>
<td>4,555</td>
<td>4,639</td>
<td>4,722</td>
<td>4,817</td>
<td>4,911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase enrollment of low-income students by 3.3% from baseline year</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>As of Fall 2017 (Year 1 Preliminary)</td>
<td>4,847</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Undergraduate Degree Efficiency</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve efficiency of degree completion for the overall undergraduate population by 3.86% from baseline year</td>
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<tr>
<td>As of Fall 2017 (Year 0)</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Productivity</td>
<td>$15,779,664</td>
<td>$16,154,664</td>
<td>$16,654,664</td>
<td>$17,154,664</td>
<td>$17,717,164</td>
<td>$18,279,664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase research &amp; development-sponsored program awards and licensing income by 15.8% from baseline year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As of Fall 2017 (Year 0)</td>
<td>$13,223,315</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sustain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Baseline Fall 2010-15</th>
<th>Year 1 Fall 2011-16</th>
<th>Year 2 Fall 2012-17</th>
<th>Year 3 Fall 2013-18</th>
<th>Year 4 Fall 2014-19</th>
<th>Year 5 Fall 2015-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-year Graduation Rates</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
North Carolina Department of Commerce
Tier Designations*

To encourage economic activity in the less prosperous areas of the state, the North Carolina Department of Commerce annually ranks the state’s 100 counties based on economic well-being and assigns each a tier designation. County tiers are calculated using four factors: average unemployment rate, median household income, population growth and per capita property tax base. Additional automatic qualifying criteria include population and poverty rate. Counties with fewer than 12,000 people, or fewer than 50,000 and a poverty rate equal to OR greater than 19%, qualify for Tier One status. Any county with a population under 50,000 qualifies for Tier Two status.

**TIER 1:** (40 most distressed counties)
- Alleghany
- Anson
- Ashe
- Beaufort
- Bertie
- Bladen
- Caldwell
- Camden
- Caswell
- Chowan
- Clay
- Columbus
- Edgecombe
- Gates
- Graham
- Greene
- Halifax
- Hertford
- Hyde
- Jackson
- Jones
- Lenoir
- Macon
- Martin
- McDowell
- Montgomery
- Nash
- Northampton
- Pasquotank
- Perquimans
- Richmond
- Robeson
- Rutherford
- Scotland
- Swain
- Tyrrell
- Vance
- Warren
- Washington
- Yancey

**TIER 2:**
- Alamance
- Alexander
- Avery
- Burke
- Catawba
- Cherokee
- Cleveland
- Craven
- Cumberland
- Currituck
- Dare
- Davidson
- Davie
- Duplin
- Franklin
- Gaston
- Granville
- Harnett
- Haywood
- Hoke
- Lee
- Madison
- Mitchell
- Onslow
- Pamlico
- Person
- Pitt
- Polk
- Randolph
- Rockingham
- Rowan
- Sampson
- Stanly
- Stokes
- Surry
- Transylvania
- Wayne
- Wilkes
- Wilson
- Yadkin

**TIER 3:** (20 least distressed counties)
- Brunswick
- Buncombe
- Cabarrus
- Carteret
- Chatham
- Durham
- Forsyth
- Guilford
- Henderson
- Iredell
- Johnston
- Lincoln
- Mecklenburg
- Moore
- New Hanover
- Orange
- Pender
- Union
- Wake
- Watauga

*Listings reflect 2016 designations. For more about designations, rural and low-income determination criteria, visit: https://www.commercenc.gov/research-publications/incentive-reports/county-tier-designations