ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE COLLEGE EDUCATION

SECTION 11.4.(a) Guarantee of No In-State Tuition Increase for Standard College Term. – Article 14 of Chapter 116 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 116-143.9. Fixed tuition payment.

(a) There is established the fixed tuition payment program. The rate of tuition of any freshman or transfer undergraduate student who is admitted to any constituent institution of The University of North Carolina and deemed to be a North Carolina resident for purposes of tuition shall be guaranteed as provided by this section. The program shall have the following components:

(1) A guarantee that the rate of tuition approved by either the Board of Governors or the Board of Trustees of the constituent institution will remain constant or decrease during the tuition period.

(2) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, the tuition period shall be:

(i) eight consecutive academic semesters for a student seeking a baccalaureate degree in a four-year program or 10 consecutive academic semesters for a student seeking a baccalaureate degree in a program officially designated by the Board of Governors as a five-year program, not including any summer sessions,

(ii) the appropriate balance of a designated program length after making the proper adjustments for a student who transfers to the constituent institution,

(3) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, the student must remain enrolled continuously at the constituent institution during the entire tuition period.

(4) At the end of the tuition period, the cost of tuition for any additional academic semesters reverts to the amount of the current tuition for that constituent institution and a tuition surcharge imposed under G.S. 116-143.7, if applicable.

(b) The tuition period may be tolled if the student is able to demonstrate a substantial disruption or interruption in the student's pursuit of a degree as provided in G.S. 116-143.7(c).

(c) The Board of Governors shall adopt the policies needed to implement this section and shall also determine what the fixed tuition rates and the tuition periods shall be for undergraduate transfer students who are North Carolina residents for purposes of tuition."

SECTION 11.4.(a1) Subsection (a) of this section is effective when it becomes law and beginning with the 2016 fall academic semester, applies to the rate of tuition for freshmen and transfer students who enroll at a constituent institution and to the rate of tuition for freshmen and transfer students who enroll at a constituent institution in subsequent academic semesters.
SECTION 11.4.(b) Cap on Student Fees. - Article 14 of Chapter 116 of the General
Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:
"§ 116-143.10. Cap on student fees.
Notwithstanding G.S. 116-143 and G.S. 116-11(7), the Board of Governors of The University
of North Carolina and the Board of Trustees at each constituent institution may increase the
cumulative total of all undergraduate student fees approved by either the Board of Governors or
the Board of Trustees by no more than three percent (3%) per academic year."
SECTION 11.4.(b1) Subsection (b) of this section is effective when it becomes law
and applies beginning with the 2017-2018 academic year. The student fees charged for the
2016-2017 academic year shall be the baseline used to determine the amount of the three percent
(3%) increase in student fees that is permissible for the 2017-2018 academic year.
SECTION 11.4.(c) NC Promise Tuition Plan and "Buy Down." - Article 14 of
Chapter 116 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:
"§ 116-143.11. NC Promise Tuition Plan; State "buy down" of certain financial obligations.
(a) The NC Promise Tuition Plan shall be established and implemented as provided by this
section. Notwithstanding G.S. 116-143 and G.S. 116-11(7), the Board of Governors of The
University of North Carolina shall set the rate of undergraduate tuition for Elizabeth City State
University, the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, and Western Carolina University as
follows: Beginning with the 2018 fall academic semester, the rate of tuition for students deemed to
be North Carolina residents for purposes of tuition shall be five hundred dollars ($500.00) per
academic semester and the rate of tuition for nonresident students shall be two thousand five
hundred dollars ($2,500) per academic semester.
(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the State shall "buy down" the amount of
any financial obligation resulting from the established tuition rate that may be incurred by
Elizabeth City State University, the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, and Western
Carolina University as provided by this subsection. Beginning with the 2018-2019 fiscal year, the
Director of the Budget shall determine each fiscal year, based on information provided by the
Board of Governors and the Chancellor of each constituent institution, the amount required to
offset the forgone tuition receipts at each of the three institutions as a result of the tuition rate
established by this section. The Director of the Budget shall authorize an increase in the base
budget of The University of North Carolina of up to forty million dollars ($40,000,000) each fiscal
year to cover the cost of the "buy down" that fiscal year and shall allocate the appropriate sum to
each constituent institution. Any increase in the base budget authorized pursuant to this subsection
shall not be included in the calculation of projected enrollment growth under G.S. 116-30.7.
(c) When implementing the provisions of this section, the Board of Governors shall give
due consideration to maintaining the unique historical character of each institution, including
service to students who are first generation, college-going, economically disadvantaged, or
minority."
SECTION 11.4.(c1) By January 16, 2017, the Board of Governors shall develop and
implement a marketing strategy utilizing advertising means with historically successful results that
is designed to increase enrollment at Elizabeth City State University and to effectively market the
NC Promise Tuition Plan at that campus. Of the funds appropriated by this act to the Board of
Governors of The University of North Carolina for the 2016-2017 fiscal year, the Board of
Governors may use a sum of up to two hundred fifty thousand dollars ($250,000) to accomplish
the purpose provided in this subsection.
SECTION 11.4.(c2) G.S. 116-144 reads as rewritten:
"§ 116-144. Higher tuition to be charged nonresidents.
The Board of Governors shall fix the tuition and required fees charged nonresidents of North Carolina who attend the institutions enumerated in G.S. 116-4 at rates higher than the rates charged residents of North Carolina and comparable to the rates charged nonresident students by comparable public institutions nationwide, except that a
person who serves as a graduate teaching assistant or graduate research assistant or in a similar
instructional or research assignment and is at the same time enrolled as a graduate student in the
same institution may, in the discretion of the Board of Governors, be charged a lower rate fixed by
the Board, provided the rate is not lower than the North Carolina resident rate.

SECTION 11.4.(d) Evaluation of Admission Cap on Nonresident Students Entering
the Freshman Class of a Constituent Institution. – The Board of Governors shall consider what
effect, if any, the elimination of or an increase in the current cap of eighteen percent (18%) on the
enrollment of nonresident students entering the freshman class at the constituent institutions listed
in subsection (d1) of this section may have regarding the student applications to those institutions.
If the Board of Governors determines that eliminating or increasing such cap may increase the
number, academic strength, and diversity of student applications at those institutions, then the
Board of Governors may, in its discretion, adopt a policy that eliminates or establishes a different
cap and the period of time for which the modification of the cap shall be implemented at those
institutions.

SECTION 11.4(d1) Subsection (d) of this section applies only to Elizabeth City State
University, the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, and Western Carolina University.

SECTION 11.4(e) Establish Merit Scholarships at North Carolina Agricultural and
Technical State University and North Carolina Central University. – Chapter 116 of the General
Statutes is amended by adding a new Article to read:

"Article 35

"Cheatham-White Scholarships.

§ 116-290. Cheatham-White Scholarships; establishment and purpose; benefits.
(a) Scholarships Established. Purpose. – The Cheatham-White Scholarships are
established as a merit scholarship program at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State
University and at North Carolina Central University. The purpose of the scholarships is to provide
an outstanding educational experience for students who are exceptional scholars, versatile and
well-rounded individuals with a broad range of interests, and who are accomplished and proficient
in areas of both the arts and the sciences. They must also demonstrate leadership potential and a
strong commitment to service.
(b) Scholarship Benefits. – Each scholarship is a fully funded four-year scholarship that
covers the cost of all of the following: full tuition, student fees, housing, meals, textbooks, a
laptop, supplies, travel, and personal expenses. Each scholarship also provides four summers of
fully funded enrichment and networking opportunities that may include international travel and
study.
(c) Number of Scholarships Awarded. – Up to 30 scholarships, 40 for resident students
and 10 for nonresident students, may be awarded each academic year to students admitted to North
Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. Up to 50 scholarships, 40 for resident
students and 10 for nonresident students, may be awarded each academic year to students admitted
to North Carolina Central University.

§ 116-291. Cheatham-White Scholarships; fund established; administration of fund.
(a) Fund Established. – There is established the Cheatham-White Scholarships Fund to be
used to fund scholarships awarded pursuant to this Article. Both private and public funds may be
solicited in the creation of the fund.
(b) Matching Funds. – The funds appropriated each fiscal year to the Cheatham-White
Scholarships Fund shall be matched by non-State funds and disbursed pursuant to G.S. 143C-4.5.
(c) Administration of Fund. – The University of North Carolina General Administration
shall administer the Cheatham-White Scholarships Fund and the Cheatham-White Scholarships
program.

§ 116-292. Cheatham-White Scholarships; eligibility and selection criteria.
(a) Eligibility. – To be eligible to be nominated as a potential candidate for a
Cheatham-White Scholarship, a person must satisfy all of the following criteria:
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(1) Be a competitive applicant for admission as a freshman in the fall semester into a baccalaureate program at either North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University or North Carolina Central University.

(2) Be a United States citizen or permanent resident.

(3) Be on course to graduate from high school in the spring semester prior to college admission.

(b) Selection Criteria—Candidates for Cheatham-White Scholarships shall be selected on the basis of academic merit, honorable character, outstanding leadership potential, and a demonstrable commitment to service. Financial need shall not be a consideration.

§ 116-293.  Cheatham-White Scholarships; school nomination of candidates.

All North Carolina high schools are eligible to nominate a student to be considered as a candidate for a Cheatham-White Scholarship. For purposes of this section, a high school includes a public school under the direction of a local board of education, a charter school, a regional school, a high school operated as part of The University of North Carolina, a school operated by the Department of Health and Human Services, a school operated by the State Board of Education, or a nonpublic school regulated under Article 39 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes.

The number of nominees from each school is determined by the size of the senior class as follows:

19. (1) Up to 199 seniors .................................................... 2 nominees.

20. (2) 200-399 seniors ...................................................... 3 nominees.

21. (3) 400-499 seniors ...................................................... 4 nominees.

22. (4) 500 or more seniors ................................................ 5 nominees.

§ 116-294.  Cheatham-White Scholarships; administration of scholarships.

The University of North Carolina General Administration shall administer the Cheatham-White Scholarships, in consultation and collaboration with North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University and North Carolina Central University, pursuant to policies adopted by the Board of Trustees of both constituent institutions. As part of its administrative responsibilities, The University of North Carolina General Administration, in consultation and collaboration with North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University and North Carolina Central University, shall do all of the following:

1. Design and implement an application and school nomination process to be used to identify potential scholarship candidates and a process for awarding the scholarships.

2. Develop a direct nomination process, in addition to the school nomination process, that allows a student to nominate himself or herself to be considered as a candidate for the scholarship in certain circumstances.

3. Define and describe more fully the selection criteria to be considered when choosing a scholarship candidate and recipient.

4. Identify the parties that will (i) evaluate scholarship applications and nominations and (ii) determine which candidates shall be awarded scholarships.

5. Design the framework and add the necessary substantive detail for the scholarship program, including courses of study that will be available, summer enrichment programs, and other extraordinary educational opportunities, and oversee its implementation.

6. Establish a mentoring and networking system for scholarship recipients.

7. Administer the Cheatham-White Scholarships Fund.

8. Establish a Cheatham-White Scholarships alumni association and network.

9. Any other function necessary for the successful implementation of the Cheatham-White Scholarships program and administration of the Cheatham-White Scholarships Fund.”
SECTION 11.4(e) G.S. 116-291, as enacted by subsection (e) of this section, becomes effective July 1, 2016. The remainder of subsection (e) of this section becomes effective beginning with the 2017 fall academic semester so that students may be nominated for the scholarship during the 2017-2018 academic year, and recipients of the scholarship may enroll to begin a course of study at the constituent institution beginning with the 2018 fall academic semester.

SECTION 11.4(f) Scope. — Subsections (a) through (d) of this section do not apply to high schools governed by the University of North Carolina General Administration.

SECTION 11.4(g) Effective Date. — Except as provided otherwise, this section is effective when it becomes law and applies to the 2016 fall academic semester and each subsequent academic semester.