

Chancellor Gilliam,

I am Nalin Fonseka, an alumnus of UNCG. The intention of this letter is to express my fullest support for the Ph.D. and M.A. Programs in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at UNCG. I wish to share my experience as an alumnus of UNCG and tell you about the impact that the Ph.D. program in Computational Mathematics at UNCG has had on my life and career. I was a graduate student in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at UNCG from August 2015 to August 2020.

I first heard about the Ph.D. program in Computational Mathematics at UNCG from Professor Ratnasingham Shivaji at the JMM graduate recruitment table in January 2015. At the JMM, Professor Shivaji made a huge impression on the Ph.D. program at UNCG. I immediately went through the department website, and I was very excited to see the curriculum that the department offers for Ph.D. students. I was very impressed by the achievements of the faculty and their track record. At that point, I was convinced that UNCG would be an ideal place for me to start my graduate studies.

I joined UNCG as a graduate assistant in August 2015. During the first semester itself, I was inspired by the dedication of my professors, including my advisor, Professor Shivaji. I was always fascinated by the passion my professors showed as teachers, the quality of instructions, and the mathematical and professional skills that the students acquired. In the span of my five years at UNCG, I experienced how the graduate program in Computational Mathematics developed my research, teaching, and professional skills. The graduate education I received from UNCG is immeasurable. To this end, I want to stress that UNCG is one of the single most positive influences in my life.

In the fall of 2020, I began my first appointment as a tenure-track assistant professor in mathematics at Carolina University in Winston-Salem in August 2020. In 2021, I was also selected as a Mathematical Association of America Project NExT Fellow. Project NExT (New Experiences in Teaching) is a professional development program for new or recent PhDs in the mathematical sciences. I was also the winner of a teaching excellence award at Carolina University in April 2023. I currently serve as a tenure-track assistant professor of mathematics at the University of Central Missouri. I honestly think this exceptional beginning to my mathematical career is due to the outstanding graduate education I received from UNCG. It is clear to me that one of the main steering forces behind my success is the quality graduate education I received from UNCG. I always feel so grateful for the opportunity that the Computational Mathematics graduate program at UNCG gave me.

I was shocked to hear that the university is seeking to eliminate the Ph.D. and M.A. programs in Computational Mathematics. At the time this sad news was coming out, my advisor (Professor Shivaji) was on a recruitment trip to Sri Lanka to recruit Ph.D. students to the Ph.D. program in Computational Mathematics at UNCG. Amidst such great efforts by the excellent faculty at the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, it is disheartening to see that the university is going to eliminate the Ph.D. program in computational mathematics. I sincerely hope that the administration will reverse the decision to eliminate the Ph.D. program in Computational Mathematics.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics to keep its excellent Ph.D. and M.A. programs alive. The graduate programs in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics have produced many scholars, bright citizens, and brilliant mathematicians and it has demonstrated high-quality graduate education. The positive impact it has had on graduate education by attracting accomplished, research-active faculty is too great. The Computational Mathematics Ph.D. program's high reputation makes it a precious asset to UNCG. It is truly a wonderful experience and an honor for me to be one of the graduate students in the excellent Ph.D. program in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at UNCG. I strongly believe that the Computational Mathematics Ph.D. program will continue to excel as one of the best graduate programs in mathematics in the region and will bring a lot of recognition to UNCG through its immense contribution to academia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Nalin Fonseka', written on a white background.

Nalin Fonseka

<https://sites.google.com/view/fonsekan/home>