

Dear Chancellor Gilliam,

My name is Ricky E. Farr, PhD, and I proudly graduated from the UNC Greensboro PhD program in Computational Mathematics. I currently serve as a dedicated faculty member at Spartanburg Methodist College.

Recently, I came across Provost Storrs' recommendation to discontinue the program, and I must express my deep concern. I understand that difficult decisions arise due to budget constraints, and I empathize with the challenges this presents. I am writing this letter to passionately implore you to reconsider and retain the UNC Greensboro PhD program. The impact of this program extends far beyond its academic significance, contributing to the growth and reputation of our institution.

The Ph.D. program in Computational Mathematics plays a vital role in fortifying undergraduate mathematics and statistics instruction at UNCG. A significant number of program students receive support through graduate teaching assistantships, actively contributing to undergraduate education. These individuals enhance the learning experience by participating in mathematics and statistics tutoring labs, leading sections of introductory courses, and collaborating with full-time faculty to provide valuable feedback and assessment of student progress.

This support is instrumental in ensuring the success of undergraduate students in foundational mathematics courses. Data underscores the pivotal role of early mathematics success in improving graduation rates, reducing time to completion, and fostering overall student success – all key metrics essential to the new funding model.

While these graduate teaching assistants receive financial support, it's important to note that the cost of equivalent services would significantly rise if the University were compelled to pay market wages for tutors and instructors with advanced degrees. This scenario could potentially force the University into a dilemma: either scaling back student support services in early mathematics and statistics courses (adversely impacting crucial metrics and likely leading to reduced overall funding) or absorbing a substantial increase in costs to maintain equivalent services. The implications are far-reaching, emphasizing the indispensable nature of the Ph.D. program in Computational Mathematics to the University's educational ecosystem and financial sustainability.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ricky E. Farr, PhD '17

Faculty Member Spartanburg Methodist College