

Dear Editor,

Regarding the recent proposed program cuts at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, I am writing to highlight the significant contributions made by our graduate teaching associates and faculty members in fostering excellence in undergraduate education within the Mathematics and Statistics Department. This collaborative effort has been pivotal in enhancing the quality of instruction and ensuring student success in our various mathematics courses.

From the onset of our journey, we graduate teaching associates are immersed in a rigorous and supportive environment. In their first year, we participate in courses focused on teaching methodologies and shadow faculty members to gain practical insights. This foundation is crucial in preparing us to take on teaching responsibilities. The faculty members work closely with us, offering guidance and support akin to a hand-in-glove relationship. This collaboration allows for an open channel of communication, where graduate teaching associates can seek advice and assistance at any time.

Those faculty members serving as course coordinators have been instrumental in enhancing the teaching process by sharing an extensive collection of learning materials, built up over years, so we don't have to start teaching from scratch. This support is invaluable in providing organized and systematic guidance. Particularly for the Calculus course I'm currently teaching, faculty members collaborate closely with us, teaching together as a team. This teamwork is crucial in creating a seamless and effective learning experience for our students, ensuring a streamlined and impactful educational environment.

Moreover, different faculty members diligently visit our classes at least twice each semester, bringing with them a wealth of diverse perspectives. These visits go beyond mere formalities; they are integral to our teaching process, offering constructive feedback and alternative viewpoints that are essential for teaching improvement. This proactive approach to mentorship not only demonstrates our unwavering commitment to teaching excellence but also significantly contributes to the professional development of our graduate teaching associates.

The impact of this collaborative model extends beyond individual classrooms. With the involvement of graduate teaching associates, we are able to offer more course sections with smaller class sizes. This approach has been recognized as a key factor in educational quality and plays a significant role in university rankings, such as those by US News & World Report. Smaller class sizes foster a more intimate learning environment, allowing for personalized attention, increased student engagement, and a deeper understanding of the material.

These benefits are not only limited to the undergraduate students but also enrich the graduate teaching experience, creating a symbiotic relationship between our graduate and undergraduate programs. The presence of a robust graduate teaching program directly contributes to the quality of undergraduate education, enhancing student learning outcomes, boosting enrollment, and elevating UNCG's academic reputation.

Given these considerations, it is imperative to recognize the value of our graduate programs, particularly the PhD in Computational Mathematics. These programs are not ancillary to our mission but are integral to our success. Therefore, rather than contemplating cuts, it is essential that the university continue to invest and allocate more funding to these programs. Such investment will undoubtedly yield dividends in terms of enhanced undergraduate enrollment, teaching quality, and the overall reputation of UNCG.

In conclusion, the role of graduate teaching associates and the support provided by our faculty are indispensable to the academic excellence of our university. As we move forward, let us continue to nurture and strengthen these programs, ensuring that UNCG remains a beacon of outstanding education in mathematics.

Sincerely,  
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