



**Board of Trustees Retreat
Students of the Future:
A Glimpse of the Next Generation of UNCG Students
November 10, 2014**

Executive Summary

“What is college” and “why should I go” are questions the new generation of Plurals will be asking. Their answers to these questions are important to explore as we begin our strategic planning for the next decade. UNCG will need to be responsive to the way Plurals view higher education: how they want to go about getting it, and to their demographic characteristics.

According to the Chronicle of Research Services, the traditional model of college is changing, as demonstrated by the proliferation of for-profit institutions, hybrid class schedules with night and weekend meetings, and, most significantly, online learning. The idyll of four years away from home spent living and learning and growing into adulthood will continue to wane. While the “traditional student model” will continue to exist, it will be a smaller segment of the prospective student pool. Students of the future will emphasize convenience. Research in the article *The College of 2020*, shows that more students will attend classes online, study part time, take courses from multiple universities, and jump in and out of colleges. Students will demand more options for taking courses to make it easier for them to do what they want, when they want to do it. They will make those demands for economic reasons, too.

Martin Van Der Werf, author of *The College of 2020*, notes that the full-time residential model of higher education is becoming too expensive for a larger share of the American population. More and more students are looking for lower-cost alternatives to attending college. Three-year degree programs, which UNCG already has and some colleges are now launching, will proliferate. The trend toward low-cost options will also result in more online programs. These changes, and the pressure they will put on colleges to adapt, are coming at a particularly acute time. While many jobs still do not require a college degree, nor will they in the future, most of the higher-paying, career-oriented jobs increasingly require a college degree as a means of entry or advancement. In other words, the product colleges are offering will be in greater demand than ever. But impatience over how slowly colleges are changing is perhaps higher than ever, too.

Works Cited

Van Der Werf, Martin. "The College of 2020: Students." *Chronicle Research Services* (2009). Print.

Dana Dunn
Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor