

Beyond Academics

<http://beyondacademics.uncg.edu/>

About

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The University of North Carolina at Greensboro supports students with [intellectual and developmental disabilities](#) enrolled in *Integrative Community Studies*, a four-year certificate course of study that emphasizes higher education, self-determination, community inclusion, career development and independent living. Students completing requirements for graduation receive a certificate awarded by The Office of Undergraduate Studies at UNCG. Beyond Academics is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit partner of the university that provides support and services for enrolled students.

History

A community-wide planning initiative sponsored by CenterPoint Human Services, Center for Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services in Forsyth, Stokes, Davie and Rockingham counties, was undertaken to assess the unmet needs of citizens with intellectual disabilities in 2004. A significant gap discovered was the lack of available post-secondary education and support options for young adults with [intellectual disabilities](#) who had concluded their secondary education career. A community coalition committed its time to the discovery of promising practices in post-secondary education for young adults with [intellectual disabilities](#) and other developmental disabilities. The coalition found a limited number of existing programs across the nation in development and providing college experiences to these young adults. The committee sought the technical assistance of such programs and initiated a framework for a post-secondary education course of study.

In 2006, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro partnered with this pilot project in moving it forward as an Academic program offered by the university today. The charter students were identified and the exciting work of conceptualizing, implementing and evaluating a course of study and system for supporting student life began in 2007. A private, not-for-profit agency, Beyond Academics was established in 2009 to collaborate with the university to provide academic and therapeutic supports that assist the students to fully benefit from this highly inclusive educational experience.