March 20, 2013

Statement from UNC President Tom Ross about Governor Pat McCrory’s proposed 2013-14 state budget:

The University appreciates the many fiscal challenges facing the state, including a stubbornly high unemployment rate. While parts of our economy appear to be rebounding, these are still difficult times for many North Carolinians, especially its families and students. And yet, the importance of education to our future remains clear and ever present.

I am very concerned by the magnitude of the new cuts proposed for our campuses, particularly in light of the more than $400 million in permanent budget reductions we absorbed two years ago. I worry about the impact additional reductions will have on our ability to provide high-quality educational opportunities to our residents and to assist in North Carolina’s economic recovery.

The University of North Carolina remains committed to operating more efficiently, while continuing to do our part to ensure North Carolina’s economic competitiveness and high quality of life. We recognize that we must do more with less and remain accountable to the taxpayers and state policymakers.

Just last month, the UNC Board of Governors adopted a new strategic plan that will help guide further investment in our public University, and we are pleased that many elements of that plan are found in the Governor’s budget proposal. The University’s strategic plan calls for:

- Making North Carolina more competitive by enlarging the state’s talent pool for the jobs of today and tomorrow;
- Making targeted new research investments in fields of strategic economic importance to North Carolina; and
- Better serving state needs through expanded online learning opportunities, improved educational access for military-affiliated students, and focused investment on improving health outcomes.

We look forward to the next steps in the budget process and will work in partnership with the legislative leadership to identify targeted investments in the University that enlarge and strengthen North Carolina’s talent pool and improve the state’s competitive position.