



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

OFFICE OF UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS

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Mr. Robert Grimes
Principal, E A Laney School
2700 North College Road
Wilmington, NC 28405

Dear Mr. Grimes:

Greetings from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I write today, on the threshold of another admissions season, to reiterate our commitment to your students, and especially to your seniors. If we may help them in any way as they plan for life after high school, or if we may be of any service to their counselors or their teachers, we hope that you will not hesitate to let us know.

I write today also to encourage your seniors to continue challenging themselves at a time when they might be tempted to let their efforts flag. Each year we see strong students who have chosen senior schedules that are significantly less rigorous than the schedules they pursued in grades nine through eleven. Some of these top seniors have chosen to take fewer than five core academic subjects— the minimum we recommend to prospective students who are considering Chapel Hill. Others have elected to take only one or two Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or honors courses when many more are available to them. Still others have chosen to leave school early each day or to graduate from high school at the end of their first semester.

In almost every instance, decisions such as these will significantly weaken a student's chances of being admitted to Carolina or to any other selective school. Because our enrolled students normally take five rigorous courses per semester, we evaluate our candidates at least partly on their demonstrated ability to handle a full and challenging schedule. When applicants who are otherwise strong choose to take weak schedules, they damage their chances of earning admission. When students who have already been admitted choose to drop their most difficult courses at midyear, they risk having their admission revoked.

We realize that each student's circumstances are different and strive to take those circumstances into account. We know, for example, that some students must work to support their families and have little choice but to leave school early. Others have truly exhausted the curricula of their high schools.

In general, however, we expect to see our candidates challenging themselves until the very end of their high-school careers. By doing so, they make the best use of their intellectual gifts and talents. They also prepare themselves to thrive once admitted— and that is our hope for every student who joins us.

In traveling the state this fall, I have met many counselors and parents who have expressed similar concerns and similar hopes. If this letter would help any of your students recommit themselves to the cause of their own education, I hope you will feel free to share a copy with them.

Sincerely,

Stephen Farmer
Assistant Provost and Director of Undergraduate Admissions

cc: Directors of Guidance