January 31, 2022

Dear Search Committee for the Dean of UCF's College of Community Innovation and Education:

I am honored to be nominated for the position of Dean of the College of Community Innovation and Education (CCIE) at the University of Central Florida (UCF). Please find attached a copy of my *curriculum vitae*. My record of significant administrative experience over many years and my commitment to interdisciplinary collaborations, diversity and inclusion, discovery and innovation are very well suited for the role and are consistent with UCF's mission.

Currently, I serve as the Interim Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at East Carolina University (ECU) and have been in the role for over two years. ECU, a constituent institution of the University of North Carolina (UNC) is a public research institution with an enrollment of nearly 29,000 students and more than 5,000 faculty and staff. The institution, comprised of 12 colleges, has a wide range of academic programs located on three campuses – the East Campus, the Health Sciences Campus, and the Outer Banks Campus.

As the second ranking officer at ECU, I represent the Chancellor during absences. I am primarily responsible for administering academic and administrative policies/operations and for leading and ensuring academic quality. In addition, I recommend resource allocations and ensure that the institution is mission-driven and responsive to the UNC System, monitoring fiscal conditions and changes in state higher education policy.

Prior to this appointment, I served as dean of ECU's College of Education for four years and before that, served in the College of Education and Human Performance at the University of Central Florida as Interim Dean, Executive Associate Dean, Assistant Dean, Department Chair, and Professor for 17 years. Serving in these leadership roles has provided me valuable experience into the operation, management, and leadership of large, complex, academic units.

Even with my extensive leadership experience, leading in a pandemic has been challenging. In higher education many institutions have been forced to reevaluate fundamental aspects of their operations with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic being profound and far reaching. ECU has been no exception and has faced unparalleled challenges accompanied by an ongoing sense of uncertainty. But I have appreciated the challenge of leading during such an historic time in higher education and I have tried to bring calmness, compassion, resolve, and a listening ear to my approach to leadership during the pandemic. Further, I believe that during times of uncertainty it is crucial for leaders to be transparent and to leverage the assets of the institution.

Even without a pandemic, the enterprise of higher education is ever-evolving, requiring leaders to be reflective and growth-oriented. During trying times like those we've faced over the last two years accentuates the need for reflection and a growth mindset. I strongly believe that for institutions to strive in a post-pandemic era, it is crucial that we acknowledge the lessons learned in the last two years. What have been affirmed during this time - lessons that over the last two years have reinforced core beliefs of mine - are the importance of shared governance and the critical need for leaders to communicate with transparency and clarity. I have the experience, ability, and passion to assist in leading UCF's CCIE toward fulfilling its mission and I pledge to do so by engaging the incredible assets on the campuses in a transparent and collaborative way.

I am pursuing this role as dean because I feel the core mission of the college mirrors core values I hold as a leader in higher education. Student success and faculty/staff success appear to be at the very heart of CCIE's mission and as a faculty member, former dean and now provost, the success of students, faculty and staff ignite my passion to serve as an academic leader. I have often said that leadership is about people and it is only by knowing, advocating for, and supporting the people of the organization and the place that one can truly leverage all of the assets of that organization or place. That is why I so ardently support the Office of Faculty Excellence in its quest to facilitate logistics for professional development opportunities and for providing a hub for idea-sharing and collaboration. That is why I have prioritized student success by creating the role of Chief Student Success Officer within the organizational structure of the Office of the Provost to focus on and coordinate student success initiatives. That is why I work to unite partners across campus to create a truly dynamic learning ecosystem for online learners to ensure that they have access to the same quality learning experience as students on campus.

CCIE is uniquely positioned as a college to offer a high-quality education to a diverse range of students. As a leader, it is incumbent upon me to work across the college and university to promote diversity, support equitable practices, and activate an inclusive campus environment. But if universities are to have a diverse student body, they will be wise to ensure they have a diverse faculty. To those ends, I have worked (as both a dean and as provost) closely with the Office for Equity and Diversity on initiatives across campus to assist academic and administrative leaders with recruiting historically underrepresented faculty and staff. I have been an ongoing advocate and champion for ECU's excellent Emerging Scholars Symposium. I have supported faculty in making successful transitions in their careers by sponsoring their participation with the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity. In addition, I created a position in the last two years, housed in the Office of Faculty Excellence, to organize and lead professional development opportunities that focuses mentoring and racial equity.

Through continuing to build a diverse, inclusive, and equity-minded faculty, universities can provide an educational environment that will maximize their efforts to provide opportunity and indeed success to all students. While serving as the Dean of the ECU College of Education, with an enrollment of approximately 3500 students, employing about 150 full-time faculty members, the College raised over $15 million in philanthropic support in 4 years as part of a university-wide comprehensive campaign. Over the same time span, the College significantly increased its number of under-represented faculty in tenure-track positions. As of Fall 2019, 23.5% (21/89) of tenure/tenure-track faculty within the College of Education were from historically under-represented populations. This signifies 48.7% growth from Fall 2015, when 15.8% (12/76) of tenure/tenure-track faculty were from historically under-represented populations.

But if universities are to continue to build a diverse, inclusive, and equity-minded faculty, they must have students to teach. It is widely understood that universities will face enrollment challenges due to the looming population data trends in the coming few years with projections of drastically fewer incoming first-year students. This "enrollment cliff" is a considerable threat to many institutions which is why, over the last two years, I have prioritized and worked jointly on a university-wide initiative that fosters collaboration across our campuses - *Strategic Enrollment Planning* (SEP). SEP is multidimensional in that it creates a centralized and coordinated effort cutting across areas like academic planning, online education, marketing and recruitment, and expanding options for military students to take strategic steps to reach, not only new students, but also new *types* of students. The work centered on enrollment and effective recruitment strategies that I have been engaged in over the last couple of years will position the university to better manage these enrollment challenges over the next few years and to provide access to a wide range of students.

UCF plays a significant role in state economic development. Through the strategic enhancement of research and instructional activities, research universities like UCF, with strong educational and research programs in areas of importance to the state and city assume a leadership role in economic development. As an academic leader, I have served at both a *very high research* university and a *high research* university and I am strongly committed to research. Over the past decade, the research enterprise at ECU has grown substantially. During my time as dean, the ECU College of Education secured $22.7 million in grant funding in 2019, up from $7 million in 2015 when I first arrived at the university. Growing research activities that uplift and support the community is a priority, and I am highly committed to fostering interdisciplinary research collaboration. Throughout my career, I have built collaborative bridges between universities and their surrounding communities, including fostering university/industry partnerships and partnerships between educational institutions differentially positioned along the instructional pipeline.

If presented with the opportunity to serve in the role of Dean of the College of Community Innovation and Education at UCF, I will work closely with students, faculty, staff, and administrators to address the college's priorities needed to elevate the college's prominence; thereby enhancing CCIE's visibility and reputation. As universities continue to navigate these unprecedented times, I believe we must remain committed to the academic mission and research enterprise. A vision of leadership, with a commitment to shared governance, that is dynamic, participatory, transparent, and evolving, must involve all stakeholders. Benchmarking the college's structure, programs, research efforts, and faculty achievements is key. The actions the college takes now will shape the institution for many years to come.

My professional experiences provide a good match with the qualifications sought in the Dean of the College of Community Innovation and Education at UCF. By serving in various progressive administrative roles at public research institutions, as well as being a faculty member in the academy for over 25 years, I have the requisite skills and abilities to lead CCIE's accomplished and committed faculty and staff in the pursuit of excellence. My professional accomplishments and broad institutional view regarding important issues facing higher education provide a solid basis from which to begin a term as Dean of the College of Community Innovation and Education.

I look forward to conversing with you in more detail about the position. Thank you for the opportunity to be considered.

Sincerely,

B. Grant Hayes, Ph.D., Distinguished Professor
Interim Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs