

## **NORTH CAROLINA HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES TIMELINE**

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Prior to the Civil War ending in 1865, there were only a handful of higher education institutions exclusively for African Americans. These institutions and the ones established after the Civil War ended are referred to as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

It would be difficult to understand the creation of historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) without understanding the social climate that led to its establishment. Prior to the Civil War ending in 1865, the majority of African Americans in the United States were slaves in the southern states. Education for African Americans was sparse, especially in the South due to laws like the one in North Carolina that prohibited teaching slaves to read and write. It should be no surprise, then, that by the time the southern states seceded from the Union, it was a rare occurrence for an African American to be literate.

While there were a few HBCUs in the North prior to the Civil War, the first college available to African Americans in the South was Shaw University, which opened its doors in 1895. Although the passing of the 13th Amendment gave slaves their freedom, it did not guarantee African Americans would receive fair treatment. In the South, there were “Black Codes” instituted where Southerners attempted to keep African Americans from enjoying the rights that they should have gained under the Constitution. It wasn’t until after the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s that real progress was made towards ensuring equal access to education for all people. While federal laws exist today that prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age, some African American students still prefer the environment of a historically black campus. Because HBCUs primarily serve African Americans, students who choose to attend an HBCU may do so because they prefer students and instructors with similar backgrounds and who have had similar cultural experiences.

### **References:**

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## North Carolina's Historically Black Colleges and Universities – By Date

1865 Shaw University	1867 Fayetteville State University	1867 Johnson C. Smith University	1867 Barber-Scotia College
1867 Saint Augustine's University	1873 Bennett College	1879 Livingstone College	1886-1975 Kittrell College
1891 North Carolina A&T State University	1891 Elizabeth City State University	1892 Winston-Salem State University	1910 North Carolina Central University

## North Carolina's Historically Black Colleges and Universities – Alphabetically

### Barber-Scotia College (1867)

Barber-Scotia College was commissioned by the Presbyterian Church (USA) and founded as Scotia Seminary in January 1867. The institution's purpose was to prepare freedwomen to become teachers and social workers. Its original classes were classified as normal, academic, and homemaking. In 1916, the school became Scotia Women's College. In 1930 the college merged with Barber Memorial College of Alabama, and their collective name was adopted as Barber-Scotia College. Barber-Scotia became a four-year college in 1942 and was granted a four-year rating by the North Carolina Board of Education in 1946. In 1954 the charter was amended to admit students without regard to race or sex, thereby allowing men to enroll. Barber-Scotia lost its accreditation in 2004. Due to a lack of funds, classes for the spring 2016 semester were suspended with the intention of reopening in the fall.

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### Bennett College (1873)

Bennett College was founded in 1873 as a normal school to educate freed slaves. It met in the unplastered basement of the Warnersville Methodist Episcopal Church (now known as St. Matthew's Methodist Church). The Freedmen's Aid and Southern Education Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church took over support of the school in 1874. By 1878, a group of emancipated slaves purchased the present site for the campus. A donation of \$10,000 from Lyman Bennett provided further assistance. The school's name was changed to Bennett Seminary in his honor. In 1878, college-level courses were offered, and Bennett College was chartered as a four-year college in 1889. In 1926, under the direction of the Women's Home Missionary Society and the Board of Education, Bennett College, formerly a coeducational institution, became a women's college.

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### Elizabeth City State University (1891)

Elizabeth City State University was founded on March 3, 1891, by the North Carolina General Assembly with the passage of House Bill 383 establishing a normal school to educate and train black teachers for the public schools of North Carolina and began operating January 4, 1892. The school was elevated from a two-year normal school to a four-year teachers college in 1937. On March 30, 1939 the institution's name was officially changed to Elizabeth City State Teachers College. In 1963, the college's name was changed to Elizabeth City State College by the General Assembly of North Carolina, and on July 1, 1969, the college became Elizabeth City State University. In 1972, the university joined the University of North Carolina System.

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### Fayetteville State University (1867)

Fayetteville State University was founded in 1867 as Howard School in honor of General Oliver Otis Howard, the first commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau. In 1877, the North Carolina General Assembly chose Howard School as a teacher training institute for African Americans, and its name changed to State Colored Normal School. Other landmarks include becoming a four-year college in 1939 and receiving both state and regional accreditation in 1947. The name of the school was changed to Fayetteville State College in 1963, and in 1969, the institution acquired its present name. The university was made part of the University of North Carolina System in 1972.

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### Johnson C. Smith University (1867)

Johnson C. Smith University was chartered as The Freedmen's College of North Carolina in April 1867. Later in 1867, the school's name became Biddle Memorial Institute in honor of the late husband of Mary D. Biddle, a generous initial donor. In 1879 the school became Biddle University. In 1923, in recognition of a major donation from Jane Berry Smith, the institution's name became Johnson C. Smith University. The university was recognized as a four-year college in 1924. In 1938, the university became an independent college, affiliated with the Presbyterian Church. Women were admitted to the freshman class of 1941.

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### Kittrell College (1886-1975)

The historically black Kittrell College was founded in 1886 by the North Carolina Conference of African Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1885, the North Carolina Conference passed resolutions authorizing the establishment of a normal and industrial school. Kittrell was chosen as its location. The school opened in 1886 as Kittrell Normal and Industrial School. Benjamin N. Duke donated a library that had been dismantled and shipped from Durham. The school was incorporated by the Legislature of North Carolina on March 7, 1887. The school closed its doors in 1934 after financial problems, but after a reorganization, it reopened three years later as Kittrell College. The school shut down again in 1948. In 1953 it began operating as a high school and junior college. The last high school class to graduate was in 1965 and the last junior college class in 1975, at which time the institution closed.

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### Livingstone College (1879)

Livingstone College began in 1879 as an educational institution for clergy in the African Methodist Church (A.M.E.) and was called Zion Wesley Institute. Its first location in Concord closed its doors in 1881 but reopened in Salisbury in October 1882. The institute was re-chartered as Zion Wesley College in 1885. In 1887, an act of the North Carolina state legislature changed the name to Livingstone College in honor of David Livingstone, a British Christian missionary, philanthropist, and explorer in Africa. The college consists of two schools: an undergraduate College of Arts and Sciences and a graduate school of theology named Hood Theological Seminary.

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### North Carolina A & T State University (1891)

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical (A&T) State University was established as Agricultural and Mechanical College for the Colored Race on March 9, 1891 as part of the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890. These acts worked together in requiring states that received college land-grant monies from the federal government to show that race was not an admission criterion or else designate a separate land-grant institution for persons of color. As North Carolina did not allow the admission of blacks to the existing North Carolina Agricultural and Mechanical College (now called North Carolina State University), North Carolina was mandated to create a separate school for African Americans. The college operated in Raleigh as an annex to Shaw University until such time as its permanent site in Greensboro was operational in 1893. In 1915, the state legislature changed the college's name to the Agricultural and Technical College of North Carolina. In 1957, its name was changed again to the North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College, and in 1967 the college became a university. In 1972, North Carolina A&T State University became a constituent university of the University of North Carolina system.

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### North Carolina Central University (1910)

North Carolina Central University is the nation's first state-supported liberal arts institution for African Americans. NCCU was chartered in 1909 as a private institution, and opened on July 5, 1910. The school was originally called the National Religious Training School and Chautauqua for the Colored Race. The school was sold and reorganized in 1915 and became the National Training School. In 1923, the school was purchased by the General Assembly of North Carolina, at which time the private school was turned into a public institution and renamed Durham State Normal School. It became a four-year college in 1925 and was renamed North Carolina College for Negroes. In 1947, the legislature changed the name to North Carolina College at Durham. The college became North Carolina Central University in 1969 and in 1972 became a part of the University of North Carolina system.

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### Saint Augustine's University (1867)

Saint Augustine's, closely associated with the Episcopal Church, was founded in 1867 as the St. Augustine Normal School and Collegiate Institute. The new school opened its doors for instruction on January 13, 1868. The name of the school was changed to St. Augustine's School in 1893 and then to St. Augustine Junior College in 1919. The school's status was upgraded to a four-year institute in 1927, and in 1928, its name was changed to St. Augustine's College. St. Agnes Hospital and Training School for

Nurses was established on the campus of St. Augustine's (circa 1896) to provide medical care for and by African Americans. St. Augustine's College was the nation's first HBCU to own an on-campus commercial radio station and television station. St. Augustine's College became St. Augustine's University on August 1, 2012.

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#### Shaw University (1865)

Shaw University was founded by Dr. Henry Martin Tupper as Raleigh Institute on December 1, 1865. Theology classes, which were originally taught in a one-room basement in the Old Guion Hotel, were taught in its two-story structure at Blount and Cabarrus streets. In 1870, the school moved to a new site, and in 1872 its name was changed to Shaw Collegiate Institute in honor of Elijah Shaw, who provided the largest financial donation towards completion of the institution's new building. In 1875, the school was chartered and incorporated by the state of North Carolina and its name was changed to Shaw University. Shaw was the first college in the nation to offer a four-year medical program, the first HBCU in the nation to open its doors to women, and the first HBCU in North Carolina to be granted an "A" rating by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

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#### Winston-Salem University (1892)

Winston-Salem State University was established as the Slater Industrial Academy on September 28, 1892. The school began as a one-room structure with one teacher and 25 students. In 1895, the General Assembly of North Carolina recognized the school and by 1899 took over its support, renaming the institution Slater Industrial and State Normal School. In 1925, the school's name was changed to the Winston-Salem Teachers College after being issued a charter by the state of North Carolina to become the first African American institution in the country to grant elementary teacher education degrees. In 1953, the School of Nursing was added. In 1963, the North Carolina General Assembly renamed the institution Winston-Salem State College. The name of the college was changed to Winston-Salem State University in 1969, and it merged into the University of North Carolina System in 1972.

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#### Conclusion

In 2016, North Carolina A & T State University and North Carolina Central University rank among the top HBCUs in America. Nevertheless, overall enrollment at HBCUs has declined. The future of HBCUs may depend on making sweeping changes such as consolidating with other HBCUs, increasing admission standards and financial accountability, and focusing on providing real work and research opportunities while students are in school. Some suggest that the answer lies in increasing enrollment diversity of Latino, American Indian, Asian, white, and international students. However, part of the appeal of an HBCU is being surrounded by professional people of color and students who view each other as individuals and not as members of a particular peer group or ethnicity. Certainly, changes in diversity would affect the existing culture and climate that make an HBCU unique.