

Meeting Minutes, Faculty Senate, full meeting, February 25, 2025

In attendance:

Phoebe Ajibade (A), Shyam Aravamudhan (A), Ayanna Armstrong (S), Jennifer Beasley (S), Stephen Bollinger (S), Dewayne Randolph Brown (S), Chantel Simpson Carroll (S), Roymieco Carter (A), Subrata Chakrabarty (A), Arvind Chandrasekaran (S), Eunho Cho (S), Daphne Cooper, Mike Cundall (S), Yvonne R. Ford (S), Tiffany Fuller (S), Etta Gravely (A), Scott H. Harrison (S), AKM Kamrul Islam (A), Floyd James, Yuhan Jiang (S), Stephanie Kelly (S), Joy Kennedy (S), Roland Leak (S), Blessing Masasi (A), Adam McClain (S), Nicole McCoy, Ademe Mekonnen (S), Hyosoo Moon (A), Cephas Naanwaab (A), Letycia Nunez-Argote (S), Xiuli Qu (A), Bill Randle (S), Zaira Estrada Reyes (S), George S Robinson Jr., Mashooq Salehin (S), David Schall (S), Nichole Smith, Natasha Spellman (A), Ecaterina Stepaniuc (S), Christina Tupper (S), Pauline Ada Uwakweh (S), Rajah Varatharajah (A), John Paul Ward (S), Jeff Wolfgang (S)

(S): Senator

(A): Alternate

Call to order was done by Dr. Scott Harrison at 3:00 pm. Roll call was led by Dr. Fuller. There was a link to attendance sent out and a QR Code. The agenda was presented. A motion was made by Dr. McCoy and seconded by Dr. Marshall for the agenda to be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

Parking was discussed with parking office leadership. Further consideration of faculty reserved parking, including after 5 pm, appears likely. An increase in faculty and staff parking capacity is also generally being planned for. The need for faculty to be able to transit to main campus during the day was discussed. Some faculty are at work-related locations off main campus (e.g., the Farm, Revolution Mills, and clinical experiences for students), but need to move to and from main campus for their regular duties and involvements. As may address this, a general objective of the parking office is to have parking levels on campus reach 85% capacity full as opposed to the 99% capacity full sometimes occurring across campus. Measures regarding parking for off-campus students and a student residence hall parking deck are a likely part of bringing about this intended strategy. Other substantial dynamics with student parking include driving between residence halls and classroom buildings. There was in addition discussion about needing to further interconnect the campus bus system with the city train system.

A provisional uniform tool for teaching effectiveness was then discussed with Dr. Audrey Dentith from the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE). Dr. Harrison thanked Dr. Dentith and the CTE, along with the many members of the education policy committee and executive committee for their work on the provisional uniform tool. Dr. Dentith offered her thanks as well to all who had been involved. Dr. Harrison referenced the UNC System policy indicating that teaching effectiveness approaches are to be developed by both the faculty senate and provost's office, and discussed the timeline. Dr. Dentith then described the three parts to the teaching

effectiveness policy by the UNC system: peer assessment, self-assessment and student feedback. The uniform tool is mainly intended for peer assessment. A goal for mentorship to be happening with peer assessment was mentioned – in general for the uniform tool to promote growth as an outcome from how faculty evaluate and support others to become more effective faculty teachers. Benchmarks for the peer evaluation were to address course goals and contents, student engagement and classroom climate instructional practices, assessment and feedback, and reflection and improvement. The uniform tool that has been developed is an instrument that has been created that would address this and would be used by everyone across campus. The instrument has been designed to work with in-person and online courses. There is language in the document for the instrument about how to use this instrument and the two forms that it provides (form A and form B). There is form A, which is a rubric that could be used where two to three areas are identified for a targeted assessment based on the benchmarks. The second option, form B, is something where the instructor wants to focus on learning and wants to look at one or two particular things that happen in their classroom that they are seeking feedback on. Examples could be evaluating the quality questions posed by the instructor during discussion, student engagement or student participation in activities, or functionality of learning groups in the classroom. A goal for the peer evaluations is to go beyond summary opinions and to rather ensure collection of real data. Additional discussion ensued with comments from Dr. Stepaniuc, Dr. Randle and others. Some appreciative remarks were made of the proposed uniform tool. It may however have some impact on general workload that could be of some concern. Yet, a net benefit is that it allows for essential feedback to be received on a regular basis. There was some discussion about how faculty would pair up for the peer evaluation process and whether the disposition of the process would be thoughtful with respect to power structures within a given academic department. It was proposed that, as one possible approach, there could be a cadre of expert teachers who could be provided by the Center for Teaching Excellence to provide for peer evaluations in any such instances of concern. The discussion concluded with comments about the tool being provisional (i.e., to be developed further after its initial launch, goals for soliciting feedback from faculty during the initial period of usage for the tool, and that the uniform tool was soon being presented to department chairs.

The recently enacted academic program review (APR) policy was then mentioned. It had been recently enacted by the university in response to a mandate from the UNC System. Dr. Harrison indicated that it had been requested that the APR policy indicate involvement of the faculty senate. Such involvement typically occurs at top tier universities. Dr. Harrison mentioned that several communications had taken place with administration including a special session that all faculty were invited to, a committee meeting with an administrator, and a subsequent discussion with the provost. Some very basic language had been suggested for the policy to indicate that the faculty senate could be notified about academic program review recommendations as they were put forward. This feedback was not incorporated into the final APR policy. It had also been recommended that described action plans of academic program review be pursued in some communication and consultation with the faculty senate. This feedback was not incorporated into the final APR policy. Dr. Harrison indicated that there was severe concern among many faculty about whether this is leading to the kind of university to be hoped for in terms of

whether faculty would be effectively involved in academic programming. Faculty provide an essential basis of scholarship at the university with, for instance, many having terminal degrees across essential disciplines and a wealth of insight on outcomes for students. This severe concern has been communicated upon to university leadership.

Other upcoming education policy matters were then mentioned including potential usage of a "Simple Syllabus" technology within blackboard as well as a student wellness day proposal. A set of seven questions have been sent to the provost's office regarding the Simple Syllabus technology following a presentation and discussion on this technology at a prior faculty senate meeting. General elements of a student wellness day proposal were then presented. The idea is that students will be able to select a particular day for many of their individual courses each semester where they would not be physically present in class so as to address their own considerations of wellness.

Additional discussion occurred regarding shared governance. There has been a recent follow-up with the Division of Research and Economic Development (DORED). Some time ago, it had been requested that a set of faculty be identified to have more engaged dialogue with DORED. This list of faculty has been sent to DORED again. Also, a recent proposal from the Provost's office to identify "case studies" was described concerning where shared governance could be further addressed. Dr. Randle mentioned that there were faculty centers and shared governance initiatives around the country. Finding case studies that resulted in a positive policy change should not be difficult to find. Academic program review was then discussed further in this regard. Other topics were raised. These included a department that never puts anything to a vote. Further mention was also made of advancing a recognized faculty role and rank of professor of practice. Finally, a shared governance committee report was mentioned where one of the recommendations was to have a shared governance "gatekeeping" committee that would review and provide guidance on situations needing better approaches to shared governance.

Minutes were then presented for the November 2024 meetings. Some updates on the attendance list were indicated. Dr. Ford suggested that these updates be considered as part of the minutes being approved. A motion was then made by Dr. Gravely and seconded by Dr. Kelly for the minutes to be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. James asked about new rules from the UNC System regarding academic minors. Dr. Harrison indicated this would be looked into by the education policy committee. Dr. James also communicated on the lack of clarity with curriculum changes. There no longer seem to be specific rules involving departments and the Faculty Senate. Is there a protocol for a curriculum change and expected timeline? Dr. Harrison responded that Dr. Nichole Smith would be the one to communicate with.

The meeting concluded with a motion to adjourn by Dr. Nunez-Argote that was seconded by Dr. Qu. The motion passed unanimously.