

## Meeting Minutes, Faculty Senate, full meeting, November 25, 2025

### In attendance:

Phoebe Ajibade, Md Monzurul Alam (S), Jeffrey R. Alston (S), Letycia Nunez Argote (S), Ayanna Armstrong (S), Jose Azucena (A), Trevor Brothers (S), Chantel Simpson Carroll (S), Subrata Chakrabarty (A), Arvind Chandrasekaran (S), Eunho Cho (S), Seho Cho (S), Daphne Cooper, Mike Cundall (S), James Daniels (S), Shea Dunham (S), Robert L. Ferguson (S), Yvonne R. Ford (S), Galen Foresman (A), Valerie Giddings, Joseph L. Graves, Jr. (A), Scott H. Harrison (S), Brittany Ingram (S), Brittany Ingram (S), AKM Kamrul Islam (A), Floyd James, Stephanie Kelly (S), Joy Kennedy (S), James Kribs (S), Lyubov Kurkalova (S), Roland Leak (S), Laura Marshall, Blessing Masasi (A), Lauren Mayo (S), Adam L. McClain (S), Nicole Renee McCoy, Ahmed Megri (S), David Rachlin (S), Kristen Rhinehardt (S), Craig Rhodes, Flourice Richardson (A), George S. Robinson, Jr., Jennifer Ross (A), Mashooq Salehin (S), Amy Schwartzott (S), Musibau Shofoluwe (S), Nichole Smith, Natasha Spellman (S), Kate Stepaniuc (S), Ayesha Swinton (S), John Teleha (S), John Paul Ward (S), Charlotte Wood (S), Alex Yin

(S): Senator

(A): Alternate

Call to order was done by Dr. Scott Harrison at 3:00 pm. A roll call was taken, overseen by Dr. Daniels. The agenda was presented. A motion was made by Dr. Cundall and seconded by John Teleha for the agenda to be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

A moment of silence and remembrance then followed in remembrance of a faculty member who had passed away at another UNC System institution while walking and being hit by a motor vehicle. This moment of silence and remembrance was also put forward with respect to acknowledging other struggles and challenges happening across the faculty community.

Comments on mental health and well-being then proceeded. The university's employment assistance program (EAP) was mentioned as providing resources for connecting with resources for supporting and navigating life and attending to goals for well-being. Dr. Phoebe Ajibade was indicated as the chair of Faculty Welfare, being engaged on this topic overall, and someone to be communicated with in general regarding the topic of Faculty Welfare.

Dr. Ayanna Armstrong was then recognized. It was indicated that communications were still happening with campus leadership on parking, and that further information on the traffic parking survey was intended to be presented in an upcoming meeting. It was mentioned that the parking code was now being enforced 24x7, all days of the year, and that this would likely lead to more consistent access by those who paid for parking permits. Dr. Wood inquired about how hosted events might be managed during evenings and weekends, as there could be times at which enabling visitors to campus would be helpful for university activities. This was discussed as a potential item to bring up during the next meeting's discussion on parking. Dr.

Chandrasekaran concurred on there being a need to effectively host visitors to campus regarding academic work.

An initiative regarding an Academic Unit Leader Feedback Survey was then discussed as would relate to regular review and report on work of academic unit leaders such as chairs and deans. Dr. Harrison mentioned that some initial dialogue across the university had included some department chairs expressing appreciation for what the survey could mean in terms of informing them on how they are doing and how they could develop areas in a way that is informed. Prior dialogue across faculty and administrators had wondered how it is that the university does not presently have this kind of process, but it was then commented that there had been such a process over a decade ago. Dr. Harrison recommended that an effective process seek to be constructive regarding those being evaluated. A draft version of a chairperson survey was presented having about eight areas for evaluation. It was commented that it may be difficult for faculty to review academic unit leaders on the active providing of resources if faculty do not have an opportunity to have input on resources that are needed. Questions about whether the chairperson was assisting faculty to achieve high standards in research and teaching needs to be clarified as to how active the chairperson was themselves with group-related activities of research and teaching in the department. It was then commented that a handbook or guide surrounding activities of chairpersons would help faculty to consider baseline expectations that a chairperson is supposed to fill. It was suggested that the rating scale ("Excellent", "Satisfactory", etc) be refined, reworded and/or explained regarding the context of each question. Dr. Richardson indicated there were likely to be some grammatical suggestions and document design relating to the current draft. Further discussion ensued surrounding how the survey would be distributed and how data would be collected. Term limits for academic unit leaders were also discussed, and it was suggested the data would have value for academic unit leaders whose service extended beyond their supposed term limit. It was commented upon that those faculty with expertise in survey design and psychometrics could help guide further the intended survey. It was then asked about, for instance, how strong performance in many areas would relate to some deficiencies found in perhaps just two areas and a satisfactory level of feedback in a few other areas. How would such scenarios be evaluated in terms of continuation? It was inquired upon regarding who receives the data and for what purpose, and it was mentioned that current situation would benefit from more accountability overall. It was also mentioned that the data would serve to provide support for the work that effective chairpersons were doing. It was also affirmed by many that feedback should be provided with respect to college deans, and further suggested that feedback and evaluation may help with respect to other service-facing units. It was further asserted that policies and procedures be further developed at the university to promote competency from academic unit leaders. A point of concern was raised about how the institution needed to do more in terms of shared governance in general, and that deans may disregard the survey regarding chairperson performance. A shared governance document put together at the university was then described from two years ago that could be considered as may address this larger scale concern. In particular, a gatekeeping committee had been proposed that could more directly engage those situations where shared governance needed to be happening.

Dr. Harrison invited those attending from ranks of academic leadership, including the Provost's Office, who were at the meeting to have follow-up dialogue or consider approaching the floor if there were any initial comments in response to what was being discussed. An administrator thanked the Faculty Senate for the opportunity to listen and affirmed the importance of improving better shared governance processes, especially surrounding effective use of limited resources. An attending academic unit leader (chair) then joined the conversation to concur that more shared governance is needed, and that an evaluation of chairs is long overdue. They felt a competent dean would not be ignoring input from faculty and that this information overall would help to inform chairs and improve the departments and colleges. Another administrator then spoke about the many duties and difficult work surrounding chairperson. For instance, presently considered, chair and dean-level positions can often times intersect with substantial teaching loads in addition to their administrative duties. A faculty member concurred with the administrator's concern on how the chairperson evaluation would work overall at the university – leaving the chairs potentially caught between a rock and hard place (between the administration and the faculty). Likewise, if the chair and the dean are just enacting the objectives of the Provost's Office, of what good then is the feedback? It was then inquired upon regarding the utility of having a dean or chair, if all directives are simply to do the Provost's bidding. Some of the fundamental structural change that is needed would be to have the review and evaluation happen similar to how faculty go up for promotion and retention.

Dr. Marshall, chair of the New Programs and Curriculum (NPC) Committee, then led the next item on the agenda regarding university curriculum-level review. Dr. Marshall reviewed the names of committee members and then described how university-level curriculum review was transitioning back to the Faculty Senate as well as her ongoing engagement with a current committee generally acting outside the Faculty Senate that had been conducting university-level curriculum review. Dr. Marshall described intended work on the NPC whereby many of the changes that had been occurring would likely be fairly small. At present, the current dynamic may be to help guide the Faculty Senate in terms of changes that may need greater discussion – such as new bachelor and master's programs. Dr. Nichole Smith, who has been chairing the current other committee spoke on the biweekly reviews and, as the transition process develops, to align these reviews with the Faculty Senate meetings. Discussion then proceeded as to whether the current structure of a dedicated committee was working and whether bringing the process back to the Faculty Senate would lead to complexity and interference with departmental initiatives. Careful attention to the design process was discussed so that the NPC committee would generally give guidance regarding a review of minor updates in the curriculum compared to those that may benefit from broader discussion. It was mentioned that a general objective was to reinvest in the values and virtues of a representative body, and to have university-level curriculum review involve elected faculty in the interests of shared governance.

Minutes were then presented for review and feedback from prior meetings. A motion was then made by Dr. Richardson and approved by Dr. Cundall to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

General updates were then provided by Dr. Harrison as follows. The Provost's Office has again been notified on the Handbook Revision draft that had been submitted earlier in the year. It is hoped that there is momentum on how it would be going to the Board of Trustees for their review and approval. Concerns on the current post-tenure review policy are being also expressed. The current situation with the policy seems to be that it allows for too much dominant a role to be played by the college dean. This is in contrast to recommendations both from a faculty summer working group as well as the Faculty Senate. Other general topics having continued consideration are academic program review, wellness day, student course feedback and accreditation. There is still a goal to have more direct involvement of the Faculty Senate with academic program review. This is all the more essential in the context of happenings elsewhere in the UNC System with some academic programs being shutdown. It is hoped that the Faculty Senate can be given more notification and opportunity for involvement with academic review so that the best outcomes possible may be realized for our students and university. For wellness day, Dr. Harrison's understanding is that it remains optional. It was mentioned how multiple faculty felt the Student Health Center would be involved for students who requested a wellness day. Other faculty had wanted to consider further the effectiveness by which course instruction happens, and that unneeded complexity or uncertainty about how students engage these courses can create challenges. Dr. Harrison mentioned that a student course feedback instrument was being finalized by an administrative office and would be presented for discussion and review by the Faculty Senate, with a general goal for shared governance. Finally, the new CPHE accrediting body was mentioned as being under development, and there was discussion within the Faculty Assembly on it. For the university, the next accrediting agency change, if it were to happen, would be in 2031, so an immediate decision does not seem to be needed. Dr. Harrison mentioned some concern about the minimalistic nature of the emergent CPHE standard which has been touted to have a lesser degree of financial evaluation of the institution, and also mentioned his understanding that individual institutions of higher education cannot be externally forced to pick any specific accrediting agency.

The new business part of the meeting then began. Dr. James inquired about course repeats and also withdrawals. One of the concerns is that an improved ability to identify the exact number of course repeats and withdrawals within the system is needed. This is a substantial issue relative whether degree progression can proceed further. Then, as another concern, the limit on there being a single course repeat is different than the past. Why is this different than what the UNC System policy allows for? Dr. Harrison indicated his understanding that some of the intended approach within the policy is for administrative engagement and intervention to identify and act upon student's request for a third course repeat. With multiple reports from different colleges indicating the limit on course repeat approach being taken, an attending member of the Provost's Office asked to be provided with what had been disseminated within colleges in order to follow up on this further.

The meeting then fully concluded with a motion to adjourn by Dr. Marshall that was then seconded by Dr. Armstrong. The motion passed unanimously.