

Meeting Minutes, Faculty Senate, full meeting, February 24, 2026

In attendance:

Osasohan Agbonlahor (A), Phoebe Ajibade, Md Monzurul Alam (S), Ayanna Armstrong (S), Phoebe Ajibade, Trevor Brothers (S), Dewayne Brown (S), Chantel Simpson Carroll (S), Subrata Chakrabarty (A), Arvind Chandrasekaran (S), Seho Cho (S), Mike Cundall (S), James Daniels (S), Sherrie Drye (A), Gerard Dumancas, Robert L. Ferguson (S), Yvonne R. Ford (S), Sherell Fuller, Etta Gravely, Joseph Graves Jr. (A), Scott Harrison (S), Floyd James, Margaret Kanipes, Joy Kennedy (S), James Kribs (S), Roland Leak (S), Buffie Longmire-Avital, Blessing Masasi (A), Lauren Mayo (S), Adam L McClain (S), Nicole R. McCoy, Ahmed Megri (S), Hamidreza Moradi (S), Cephas Naanwab (A), Xiuli Qu (S), David Rachlin (S), Ginger Redd, Craig Rhodes, Flourice W. Richardson (A), Jennifer Ross (A), Ryan Russell (A), Mohammad Salehin, Mashooq Salehin (S), Amy Schwartzott (S), Musibau Shofoluwe (S), Devin Smith, Nichole Smith, Natasha Spellman (S), Kate Stepaniuc (S), Ayesha M Swinton (S), John Teleha (S), John Paul Ward (S), Tammy T. Webb (S), Meeshay Williams-Wheeler, Charlotte Wood (S), Binbin Yang (A)

A call to order was done by Dr. Scott Harrison at 3:00 pm. A roll call was taken, overseen by Professor Daniels. The agenda was presented. A motion was made by David Rachlin and seconded by Dr. McClain for the agenda to be approved. The motion passed unanimously. Prior meeting minutes were then presented, and presented for approval. A motion was made by Dr. Cundall and seconded by John Teleha for the minutes to be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

An update regarding activities within the UNC System and Faculty Assembly was then presented. The upcoming regulation on academic freedom was discussed. Recent developments on the academic freedom regulation had involved recent additions and changes of content that had not undergone the same degree of debate and discussion as what had been first put forward, and what had been previously endorsed by various faculty bodies including our Faculty Senate. Dr. Harrison then mentioned an opportunity for faculty to present feedback on “evidentiary guidance” that was under some development and review. It was then mentioned that process efficiency was a current objective of the UNC System to consolidate how processes may happen in a more robust and less expensive manner, and that this related to how payroll is now being issued via the UNC System and not through our individual institution. The floor was then opened for comment and discussion. It was mentioned that ISAF processing has had some issues at the institution, and a concern was mentioned as to whether more complexity (i.e., more hoops to jump through) would result if this now goes through another organizational layer.

A draft proposal for the Academic Technology Working group was then presented for discussion, and the involvements of Dr. Lyubov Kurkalova, Dr. Xiuli Qu, Dr. Kristen Rhinehardt, Dr. Flourice Richardson and Dr. Scott Harrison and their work with the information technology services office indicated. The timeline of announcing the Academic Technology Council (ATC) and its established membership is oriented upon the final Faculty Senate meeting of the year in April. The ATC is oriented toward not working in a silo, but rather engagements with the faculty community multiple times each year. The leadership model under discussion has been to have a co-chair model involving the faculty and a member of information technology services. There may in addition be subcommittees that engage various members across our university community including students, for example, as feeds into what this committee may ultimately rise to.

Associate Vice Chancellor Bill Barlow of facilities then joined the meeting. Associate Vice Chancellor Barlow spoke of how the master plan was continually updated about every five years. Much of it is contingent on what can be funded in alignment with the campus master plan, what appropriations may be available for new buildings, and what debt servicing of new construction is possible in relationship to fees. Repair and renovation is another of the several major areas of consideration as well, and maintenance of roofing and core mechanical components are primary areas of expenditure as relates to a limited budget for repair and renovation. A general approach to the campus master plan that is developed and communicated upon to the UNC System includes how a focused set of larger projects would be indicated for subsequent consideration by the UNC System and State of North Carolina. Dr. Graves spoke poignantly about the need for firm academic foundations and to not “build a house on sand”. When there are large enrollment programs such as biology that are very active as well in research working in some of the most abject facilities on campus, and with biology being a foundational discipline to notable areas and initiatives at the university surrounding health and human sciences and agriculture, it does not appear that building construction priorities are being well-considered. Why have faculty members’ thoughts about these issues been historically disregarded? Dr. Harrison queried Associate Vice Chancellor Barlow on how to best approach university leadership about serious realities of building circumstances in terms of the kind of frequency and manner of engagement that would be helpful. Associate Vice Chancellor Barlow expressed an interest in opening up more dialogue oriented upon correcting issues and improved usage of the work order systems. Associate Vice Chancellor Barlow proposed that quarterly meetings with faculty would likely aid how the facilities team could further understand and approach challenges. Further comments from the floor then proceeded. HVAC was mentioned as an ongoing concern for some particular buildings, and Associate Vice Chancellor Barlow responded that there was serious attention being given to HVAC but that resources remained limited. Security issues surrounding buildings such as Proctor Hall were then mentioned, including addition of doorways and presence of security surrounding those teaching evening classes. Associate Vice Chancellor Barlow concurred with security being a vital topic and suggested further communication with the university police department be pursued. Dr. Mayo requested whether the campus master plan and its further development could be further communicated upon and more connected with feedback from faculty, and then queried about parking. Associate Vice Chancellor spoke about the campus master plan being on the website, and also acknowledged there to be some modifications that would occur to the campus master plan, including as could address emergent roof issues that occur over time. He mentioned more than several parking updates near residence halls, Dudley Street, the War Memorial parking lot, parking decks, and the role of parking fees in helping bring about continued updates to the parking situation overall. He further spoke about an objective to have parking be well-situated in campus locations to aid access to the university campus. This part of the session with Associate Vice Chancellor Barlow concluded with Associate Vice Chancellor Barlow emphasizing again a shared goal for safety on campus and with gratitude expressed to Associate Vice Chancellor Barlow from Dr. Harrison.

Administrators from the Honors College – the Honors College Dean Dr. Margaret Kanipes, the Honors College Associate Dean of Research and Program Innovation, Dr. Gerard Dumancas and Dr. Buffie Longmire-Avital. Dr. Kanipes spoke about the national standard for honors colleges to provide shared experiences and engagement for students who have applied and are admitted to an honors college. Students can enter the Honors College starting from their first year up until their junior year. An overview of the vision and mission of the Honors College at the university was for it to be the preeminent institution for honors education that prepares high-achieving students to become transformational leaders within their chosen profession who value integrity and are committed to excellence in the Aggie legacy to serve humankind. Dr. Kanipes spoke about the composition of Honors College students and indicated that there currently about 940 Honors College students. Honors College

students entering the university as freshmen overall had a very high average high school GPAs and Honors College students, on average, persisted in their academic excellence at the university with a high GPA throughout the course of our studies. The Honors College provided a unique opportunity to draw students together from across the different colleges of the university. The three areas of experience within the Honors College are curricular, co-curricular and community. The curricular part of the Honors College experience is built upon 24 credits that are to occur within the overall 120 credit undergraduate degree program structure. These credits encompass both experiential learning and honors-specific coursework, and provide for pathways including community work, internships, and study abroad opportunities. Honors contracts were then mentioned as well regarding how students could develop works in cumulative or creative scholarship and expression within their regular courses of study if there was support from the course instructor. A goal for further discussion and development of honors contracts was then put forward. Honors College students are also encouraged to pursue accelerated bachelors to masters programs, and the graduate-level courses they would take for that during their undergraduate courses would count for credit within the Honors College curriculum. An embedded cohort model was being developed in departments as well where Honors College students would have some opportunity for working and studying together in specific sections of specific course offerings. Dr. Dumancas and Dr. Longmire-Avital then proceeded to discuss further happenings in the Honors College. Merit scholarships within the Honors College were described as very competitive among top academic performers across America. There are about 30 events oriented upon research that are happening annually within the Honors College. Some of these events are oriented upon training students on how to get started with research and pursue research careers with an understanding of the international/global context of research as well as professional development in how to develop a CV and cover letter. A recurring Honors College conference and forthcoming Honors College research journal were then described. There was an ongoing and measured approach toward gauging student satisfaction, student engagement, faculty and staff engagement, and levels of scholarly deliverables such as manuscripts produced within the Honors College. In addition, there is a board that gives guidance on organizational approaches and development within the Honors College. The Honors College also actively helps support applications to external scholarships and fellowships. Faculty were invited to learn more about opportunities within the Honors College in terms of serving as mentors, serving as judges and facilitators at Honors College events. It was further described how the Honors College was actively working to ensure that faculty receive recognition and consideration for their involvements. Some faculty reported having varied experiences with receiving support and funding surrounding course sections specific to Honors College students. It was preferred that faculty reach out to the Honors College for discussion so that they may help follow up with departmental and college leadership accordingly. A discussion then proceeded toward what was distinct about Honors College courses. Common attributes described were for seminar-style approaches, writing intensive opportunities, and hands-on learning. There was a proposal document that was described that could be provided to give guidance across these expectations. There was a general approach as well to support outstanding students outside the Honors College to connect with opportunities in Honors College course sections if there are openings. Dr. Woods suggested that there be further forums for interested faculty to learn about and engage more specifically with the Honors College. Dr. Harrison thanked Dr. Kanipes, Dr. Longmire-Avital and Dr. Dumancas for their time, guidance and work with helping build connections with students at the university.

Dr. Laura Marshall, chair of the New Programs and Curricula (NP&C) committee, then presented an update. She commented on the presence of some NP&C committee members on the working University and Academic Program Curriculum Committee (UAPCC), and further steps toward transitioning the general work of UAPCC in the NP&C. Dr. Marshall demonstrated some of the current interface being

used to track and evaluate curriculum changes, and encouraged continued feedback from faculty overall with respect to communications from Dr. Nichole Smith who been doing steadfast and amazing work in leading current efforts with respect to university-level curriculum review from faculty.

Dr. Etta Gravely and Dr. Swinton were then invited to the floor. They described recent conversation with students and the great feedback received on updating further the student course feedback survey instrument. The length and sequence of questions within the survey were modified accordingly along with reducing the number of many open-ended questions. A meeting attendee spoke about the general need to boost survey participation at the university relative to what they have encountered at other insitutions. A small rate of participation impacts how responses from a single student can skew the general feedback ratings provided. Dr. Sherrell Fuller spoke about the dialogue and intended training to be provided to academic unit administrators (including deans and associate deans) on how student course feedback data would be effectively understood. A shared concern was discussed about how student course feedback data would be fairly treated regarding faculty performance. The timing of when, during the semester, the feedback process would be initiated was discussed, and some discussion around a midpoint during the semester then occurred. A potential need to effectively differentiate feedback survey approaches between in-person courses relative to asynchronous online courses was mentioned. may It is intended for the updated student course feedback survey to be launched in Fall 2026.

Further committee reports then ensued. A report from the Faculty Welfare Committee were then presented, with Dr. Phoebe Ajibade as the Faculty Welfare Committee chair. The recent opening of the Faculty Commons in Bluford Library was described along with upcoming meetings of the Faculty Welfare Committee. Dr. Yvonne Ford then presented on upcoming nominations and elections surrounding the position of Faculty Senate Chair, and positions for representation within the UNC Faculty Assembly, with the nominations process hereby beginning and leading up to elections during the March 24 meeting.

New business then proceeded. Dr. Harrison then mentioned that a newer innovation in communication from the Provost's Office was a "Weekly Five" e-mail communication being sent out and showed an example of a recent set of five announcements per this newer communication scheme. Dr. Harrison acknowledged with appreciation the work of Devin Smith in the Provost's Office in support of the "Weekly Five" e-mail communications being put forward.

As another item of new business, Dr. Harrison mentioned multiple reports and concerns from faculty regarding post-tenure review and how substantial discussion and feedback remained needed in response to a substantial report from a summer working group committee on post-tenure review (PTR) involving Dr. Corey Graves and Dr. Nicole McCoy, as well as an issued letter from the Faculty Senate during the policy review process. The summer working group produced an extensive report that examined goals for conformity with a UNC System mandate, had researched and reported through comparative analysis upon more than 20 other PTR policies around the country. General concerns were that the current PTR policy gives college deans too much prerogative, and that the policy development overall did not have the level of debate and discussion that would typically underly an effective policy. Urgency was mentioned, along with the substantial and recognized role faculty have regarding both tenure review and post-tenure review, that indicated the Faculty Senate ought consider putting forward a further recommendation on the post-tenure review policy to the university leadership including the Chancellor and Provost.

Dr. Wood mentioned that there was recent communication with potential changes surrounding general education. It appears that the freshman success course (FRST 101) may be moving to two credits. This seems to implicate substantial adjustments be proposed with departmental curricula starting this Fall 2026 so that implementation would foreseeably start in Fall 2027. Dr. Harrison then spoke further on committee rosters and committee communications in general, and referenced the education policy committee as perhaps aiding further input and evaluation of this issue. Dr. Ginger Redd spoke on a concern surrounding further action needed for renewing contracts for NTTFs on campus. The meeting concluded with a motion to adjourn that was then seconded. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting concluded shortly before 5 pm.