

Faculty Council

Minutes of February 20, 2025, Meeting

Voting Members Present

(Ex Officio): Xiaoxia Newton (President); Debra Smith (President-Elect); Denis Jacob Machado (Secretary); Beth Murray (FEC, COAA); Emily Makas (FEC, COAA Faculty Chair); Jack Cathey (FEC, COB); Barbara Knight (FEC, COB Faculty Chair); KR Subramanian (FEC, CCI); Heather Lipford (FEC, CCI Faculty Chair designee); Ryan Miller (FEC, COED); Dawson Hancock (FEC, COED Faculty Chair designee); Aidan Browne (FEC, COE); Matthew Whelan (FEC, COE Faculty Chair); George Shaw, Jr. (FEC, CHHS); Katryna McCoy (FEC, CHHS Faculty Chair designee); Elizabeth Stearns (FEC, CHESS); Heather Perry (FEC, CHESS Faculty Chair); Kevin McGoff (FEC, COS); Tonya Bates (FEC, COS Faculty Chair); Catherine Tingelstad (FEC, Library); Abby Moore (FEC, Library Faculty President); Sharon Gaber (Chancellor); Jennifer Troyer (Provost); John Daniels (V.C. for Research); Kevin Bailey (V.C. for Student Affairs); Jose Gamez (COAA Dean); Artie Zillante (on behalf of COB Dean); Bojan Cukic (CCI Dean); Malcolm Butler (COED Dean); Robert Keynton (COE Dean); Catrine Tudor-Locke (CHHS Dean); Christopher Boyer (CHESS Dean); Bernadette Donovan-Merkert (COS Dean); Johnna Watson (on behalf of Graduate School Dean); Malin Pereira (Honors College Dean); Lee Gray (Library Dean); Teresa Petty (University College Dean)

(Unit Representatives): Pat Mynatt (ACCT); Catherine Fuentes (ANTH); Mike Turner (APHC); Ming-Chun Lee (SOA); JB Burke (ARTS); Denis Jacob Machado (BINF); Antonis Stylianou (BISOM); Jordan Poler (CHEM); Jessica Waldman (CEGR); Bibi Reisdorf (COMM); Taghi Mostafavi (CS); John Stogner (CJUS); E.E. Balcos (DANC); Harish Cherukuri (DTSC); Gang Chen (EEGS); Rob Roy McGregor (ECON); Jamie Kudlats (EDLD); Madhav Manjrekar (ECE); Maciej Noras (ETCM); Tiffany Morin (ENGL); Deborah Beete (ECH); Dolly King (FINN); John Cox (GLBL); Elena Platonova (HMP); Karen Flint (HIST); Ertunga Ozelkan (ISE); Kai Werbeck (LANG); Dawn Schmitz (LIB); Karen Ford-Eickhoff (MGMT); Alireza Golmohammadi (MKTG); Oleg Safronov (MATH); Hilary Dack (MDSK); Dylan Savage (MUSC); Hali Hutchison-Houk (PAS); Martin Shuster (PHIL); Menelaos Poutous (PHYS); Regina Branton (POLS); Lori Van Wallendael (PSYC); Erin Washburn (REEL); Kent Brintnall (RELS); Matthew Mills (SOWK); Jill Yavorsky (SOCY); Sunshine Niu (SIS); Chris O'Brien (SPCD); Carlos Cruz (THEA); Debarati Dutta (WRDS)

Voting Members Absent

(Ex Officio): David Dalton (FEC, CHESS)

(Unit Representatives): Matt Flynn (AERO); Dorothy Smith-Ruiz (AFRS); Richard Chi (BIOL); Jack Culbreth (CSLG); Regina Vrikis (MEES); Joseph Frederick (MSCI); Tonya Anderson (SON)

Guests Present (Not Voting)

Maria Arkhypova (COMM); Heather Bastian (Undergraduate Education); Kim Bradley (Chancellor's Office); Amanda Brock Morales; Kiran Budhrani (CTL); Kimberly Bunch-Crump (SPCD); Julie Cannon (COMM); Tyler Cline (LIB); Sandra Clinton (EEGS); Joyce Dalsheim (GLBS); Sandra Dika (EDLD); Shari Dunn (Executive Communications); Dan Dupre (HIST); Sarah Edwards (Legal Affairs); Tarek Elshayeb (ISSO); Peter Ferdinando (HIST); Anthony Fernandes (MATH); Wilfredo Flores (WRDS); Ella Fratantuono (HIST); Sara Gagne (EEGS); Joel Gallegos (OIP); Emilia Glaser; Susanne Gomoluch (LANG); Amy Good (REEL);

Ethan Gullede (ANTH); Asher Haines (School of Professional Studies, Associate Provost); Sungil Han (CJUS); Susan Harden (MDSK); Eric Heggstad (Faculty Affairs); Scott Hippensteel (EEGS); Fushcia-Ann Hoover (EEGS); Charles Houck (GLBS); Jesh Humphrey (Legal Affairs, General Counsel & V.C. for Institutional Integrity); Kendra Jason (SOCY); Sara Juengst (ANTH); Tina Katsanos (RELS); Amal Khoury (GLBS); Claire Kirby (Enrollment Management); Luca Lai (ANTH); Christin Lampkowski (LIB); Paula Landerreche (PHIL); Kimberly Laney (Enrollment Management); Lydia Light (ANTH); Maryrica Lottman (LANG); Wade Maki (Chair, Faculty Assembly); Denise Medeiros (ISSO); Marty Metzl (COMM); Erin Miller (REEL); Pedro Monque (PHIL); Joseph Nicholson (LIB); Brittney Nix-Crawford (COMM); Amanda Pipkin (HIST); Ritika Prasad (HIST); Kimberly Rodgers (Undergraduate Education); Dylan Savage (MUSC); Caitlin Schroering (GLBS); Carmen Serrata (EDLD); Jamie Sheppard (Enrollment Management); Tina Shull (HIST); Dale Smith (GLBS); Carmen Soliz (HIST); Gregory Starrett (ANTH); Brett Tempest (COE); Barbara Thiede (RELS); Deb Thomas (Division of Research); Debbie Thorne; Peter Thorsheim (HIST); Lisa Walker (Undergraduate Education); Virginia Walker (SPCD); Evan Wantland (MATH); Sharon Watson (ANTH); Coral Wayland (University College); Greg Weeks (CHESS); Matthew West (OneIT); Mark Wilson (HIST); Tabitha Wood (HIST); Matthew Wyse (Academic Affairs)

1. **Call to Order.** Faculty President Xiaoxia Newton called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.
2. **Roll Call/Quorum Check.** Members and guests used the Google form to record their attendance. A quorum was pronounced when the live Google form results reached the quorum threshold.
[Attendance notes: 82 members and 77 guests.]
3. **Adoption of Agenda.** Ford-Eickhoff moved to adopt the agenda, and that motion was seconded by Cathey. The agenda was unanimously approved as presented.
4. **Report of the Chancellor (Dr. Sharon Gaber).** Gaber gave the following report:
 - A lot has happened in the last month
 - We officially received R1 research tier status February 13th
 - Immigration and ICE activity
 - Research funding and grants being cut
 - Memo from UNC System on General Education requirements and degree requirements with focus on majors and what courses are required as opposed to electives
 - We are busy getting answers. You will hear from John Daniels and Deb Thomas from the Division of Research and hear another presentation from ISSO.

Q: In College of Education, we do a lot of DEI work. How do we seek a waiver?

A: Right now, waivers will be decided on a case-by-case basis. The situation is fluid right now in the sense that DEI is not yet clearly defined, and we are still working to understand the

implications of different memorandums and requirements. For certain majors, elements of DEI are core to that major. This will be compared with majors across the System. Africana Studies certainly seems that it would require some of this taught.

Q: I'm concerned that granting waivers lends credence to the misguided thought we are teaching certain things. DEI is not defined in this memo. The perception is not reality. I would prefer they tell us which courses they object to and for what reasons, and we can then explain to them what is actually being taught in those courses.

A: I like that a lot, but I didn't create this process. We are collecting information at this point and we don't know yet what will need or will not need a waiver.

5. Report of the Provost (Dr. Jennifer Troyer). Troyer's report covered the following:

- Requirements in the majors and in the General Education program are what the System is focused on. Our General Education is fine. We are working with individual units. We are not trying to get in the way with what faculty are teaching in their classrooms.
- I have been asked if there will be tenure research clock extensions. It is too early to tell.

Q: What happens if a class is not flagged but a student thinks otherwise?

A: We don't know how that will be handled yet.

Q: What definition of DEI is the University using to flag certain classes?

A: We are using the terms that came up most often when talking with the UNC System.

Newton asked if the body wanted to extend the time allotted for questions of the Report of the Chancellor and Report of the Provost to 1:30 P.M. A motion was made to extend the time and was approved.

Q: Please explain the waiver process.

A: The Chancellor said the waivers come to her, then if approved the Chancellor's Office sends them to the UNC System Office.

Q: What if we submitted every class for a waiver? Or no classes for a waiver?

A: The Chancellor said there would likely be people held accountable.

6. Reports of Officers.

a) Faculty President (Dr. Xiaoxia Newton):

- It was suggested I hold office hours. The Faculty Council leadership team has decided to do this. The team is working on setting this up.

b) President-Elect (Dr. Debra Smith) & Faculty Secretary (Dr. Denis Jacob Machado): No report.

7. Faculty Assembly Presentation (Wade Maki, Chair of Faculty Assembly). Maki noted that there are active links within his presentation slides that provide additional information. Maki started with the structure of the UNC System. Provosts and faculty are advisory according to the structure. However, we do have levers. Legislative levers, BOG levers, and President levers. All levers may be

used to achieve compliance. Not all directives are official. Note the multi-layer authority alignment – Feds, State, and BOG. SACSCOC accreditation standards place primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of the curriculum with its faculty. Higher Learning Commission standards state that faculty participate substantially in oversight of the curriculum offered. Faculty have primary responsibility; we don't own it but have primary responsibility. Maki provided links to background readings to familiarize us with how we got here. These readings include impermissible concepts of NC law, the UNC System equality policy, Federal contracting compliance memo, dear colleague letter, hiring pause at NCSU, Florida General Education takeover, and NC DOGE committee. The next slides covered what's happening now and where we are now. There is a directive to scrub all campus websites of DEI, remove any required courses that are about DEI, campuses are being warned of scrutiny due to faculty comments reported to press, and EEO complaints over PHD project. This is political. Campus administration is our strongest ally. Making recommends being aware and preparing to engage strategically when the time is right. Keep powder dry, actions have consequences.

Q: Silence is complicity. We should vocalize our concerns in the right way. And we should do this often, not hold back.

A: Faculty Assembly is working on resolution and a letter directing President Hans. Share with me what you are thinking to help us strategize.

Q: What levers do faculty have?

A: Public perception. There are a lot of faculty members. We vote. Courts have not even had a chance to weigh in yet.

Q: Are the ACLU or other groups organizing and willing to help us?

A: So far, I have heard nothing. There has been a week or so of shock. We are in the awareness phase. We can start organizing and strategizing. You have Faculty Assembly delegates. Go through them or to me directly (w_maki@uncg.edu).

Chancellor Gabor noted that the Higher Learning Commission has been identified as possibly the next accreditation body after our SACSCOC accreditation cycle ends in 7 to 8 years.

8. **Federal Changes on Research (John Daniels, Vice Chancellor for Research; Deb Thomas, Associate Vice Chancellor; and Jesh Humphrey, General Counsel).** Daniels presentation focused on Federal changes on research and the impact on our Federal funding. On the screen was a research snapshot. \$242.9 million of active grants and contracts portfolio as of July 1, 2024. Nearly 90% of this (\$211.7 million) is from the Federal government. We have seven stop work orders. Most are not DEI related. Some are international. Projects vary. We are working with the PI's and holding lots of individual meetings.

Jesh Humphrey, General Counsel, also shared information about the situation.

Thomas says we recognize the depth of incredible research being done. Please take care of one another and be in-community. We have sent out four communications to try to keep you as up to date as possible. We have a website (<https://research.charlotte.edu/executive-actions-and->

[federally-sponsored-research/](#)) where you can access resources. We had four open town hall Zooms and numerous one-on-one meetings. Each project/situation is different.

Cox moved to extend the meeting by 10 minutes. The motion was seconded and approved. The meeting end was extended to 2:25 P.M.

Q: Has anyone remarked about the immense pain and stress that staff, students, and faculty members are experiencing? To combat the fear we are feeling?

A: Provost Troyer said there are lots of things happening publicly and behind the scenes. We are working with the Deans and Chairs and having individual meetings with faculty. There are limits of the types of campus messaging we can do due to the neutrality requirement.

9. **International Student and Scholar Office (ISSO) Presentation (Tarek Elshayeb, Director of ISSO; and Denise Medeiros, Associate Director of ISSO).** Elshayeb stated that Spring 2025 enrollment has 1,807 international students. OPT and STEM-OPT total is 1,626. Optional Practical Training (OPT) is post-completion employment authorization in the US but students are expected to maintain F-1 compliance. Visiting scholars and faculty is 150. That is a total of 3,583 that the ISSO serves with programs and services. We update them with all the changes.

Medeiros talked about the programs and services. Immigration and advising services include informing, educating, and alerting students. NAFSA are the experts we have received training from. We also regularly benchmark from our peer-institutions. We assist scholars as well, not just students. Pathway to U.S. permanent residence. Most teaching and/or research positions qualify after one year of employment.

Newton asked the body to send their questions to the ISSO office.

New Business.

10. **Consent Agenda.** Newton asked if there were any requests to remove an item(s) from the consent agenda for further discussion. There were no requests for removal. Ford-Eickhoff moved to approve and Cathey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The following consent agenda items were approved:

- a) Minutes of the Faculty Council meeting of January 23, 2025
- b) Request to award a posthumous degree to John E. Holmes, III
- c) Revisions to UNC Charlotte Academic Policy: Honors Programs
- d) Revisions to Honors Council Structure and Election

11. **Announcements.** Skipped.

12. **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 2:24 P.M.

Pending questions that could not be addressed in the allocated time were gathered by the Faculty Secretary and forwarded after the meeting to President Newton and the presenters.

Minutes taken by Matthew Wyse, Faculty Governance Assistant, with assistance from Faculty Secretary Denis Jacob Machado.