ANNUAL REPORT: UNC Faculty Assembly 2007-2008

Membership: A list of Faculty Assembly delegates, alternates, terms and affiliations is attached, along with a list of members of the Faculty Assembly Executive Committee.

Meetings: The Assembly met in Chapel Hill at General Administration on five occasions during the year (September 28, 2007; November 16, 2007; January 18, 2008; April 4, 2008; and May 2, 2008). In addition, the Faculty Assembly Executive Committee met on the evenings preceding regular meetings, the mornings of regular meetings, and on several additional occasions (August 16-17, 2007; October 25-26, 2007; February 14-15, 2008; April 17-18, 2008; and June 19-20, 2008).

Major Areas of Focus: The Assembly focused on the following topics during the 2007-08 academic year.

1. *Assembly Governance Changes*. The Assembly's self-study task force recommended changes in its charter and by-laws. The Assembly submitted charter revisions to the campuses at the end of the 2006-07 year and the requisite number of campuses adopted them. The task force also recommended changes in bylaws and the Assembly discussed these recommendations at several of its meetings. Changes in the bylaws relating to elections were adopted at the November 2007 so that these provisions could be implemented in spring 2008. The remainder of the proposed bylaw changes were adopted with some limited modifications at the January 2008 meeting. The Assembly also established a caucus of faculty senate chairs who met together during each of its meetings to explore issues facing their campuses.

2. *Changes to Chapter 6 of the University Code and Post Tenure Review Policies*. A committee appointed by General Administration reviewed and recommended changes in Chapter 6 of the University Code (relating to faculty appointments, tenure, discharge, due process rights, and rights of special faculty). The Faculty Assembly Executive Committee met with the chair of the committee and recommended substantial changes in the committee draft. The Assembly adopted a resolution transmitting the Assembly's recommendations to campuses for comment in September 2007, and then discussed related issues at its November 2007, January 2008, and April 2008 meetings. The General Administration and Board of Governors adopted substantially all of the Faculty Assembly's recommendations. In March 2008, President Bowles issued regulations promulgating a revised post-tenure review policy that substantially incorporated recommendations from the Faculty Assembly developed in spring 2007.

3. *Cost of Textbooks*. In 2006, the Board of Governors and General Administration developed policies designed to address the rising costs of textbooks. Among the measures contemplated by their action were calls for campus bookstores to develop guaranteed buy-back or book rental policies, and calls for faculty to submit book orders in a timely fashion. In spring 2008, the Board of Governors

received an updated report on steps taken by campuses to address these issues. The Assembly adopted a resolution in April 2008 indicating its support for reasonable efforts to keep costs of textbooks down, but criticizing the methodology developed by General Administration and bookstores for tracking faculty timeliness in submitting book orders.

4. *UNC-Tomorrow.* The Assembly was actively involved in several aspects of the UNC-Tomorrow initiative. It requested opportunities for faculty members to voice their ideas in listening forums around the state, and an additional set of listening forums was organized for this purpose. It heard from a member of the Scholars Council that played an integral role in the development of the UNC Tomorrow Commission's report and recommendations, and discussed this initiative and its implementation on several occasions with President Bowles, Senior Vice President Harold Martin, UNC Tomorrow project directors Norma Houston and Tony Caravano, and Board of Governors Chair Jim Phillips. The Assembly also adopted several resolutions calling for involvement of faculty on the campuses in developing implementation plans and recommendations about next steps.

5. *Non-Tenure-Track Faculty.* The chair of the NCSU faculty senate called on the Assembly to address issues relating to the rights of non-tenure-track faculty members and the proportion of non-tenure-track faculty members being employed there and elsewhere. The Assembly's Executive Committee asked Senior Vice President Harold Martin and others in General Administration to establish a joint task force that would look at a range of related issues, including the rights and protections afforded non-tenure-track faculty members, the numbers and roles of non-tenure track faculty members (on campuses, in on-line education, and potentially on "branch campuses"). The Assembly began discussions by reviewing a 2002 report from a General Administration task group on this topic, and asked delegates to report on campus developments.

6. *Budget Issues.* The Assembly's budget committee developed detailed recommendations that called on General Administration to place "Budget 101" informational resources on-line so that faculty members could become more familiar with the content and timing of budget recommendations. It also called for a larger faculty voice in developing budget recommendations at the campus and system level.

7. *Joint Initiatives between UNC Faculty Assembly and NC Community Colleges Faculty Association.* The Assembly worked with faculty colleagues from the community colleges in two arenas. Meg Morgan (UNCC), chair of the Assembly's faculty development committee, worked closely with leaders of the NCCCA to create a "Seamless Higher Education Summer Institute" that drew together faculty, administrators, advisers and others to develop strategies for making transfer of credits between community colleges and university campuses

more seamless. The report of recommendations from this Institute was forwarded to the leaders of the UNC System and the NC Community College System.

8. *Sustainability.* The Assembly established a task force on sustainability to explore ideas for fostering sustainable practices on the campuses.

9. *Program Planning*. The Assembly followed developments in the Board of Governors and General Administration concerning new proposals for a program planning policy that would set the framework for consideration of future proposals for new degree programs on the campuses and give General Administration a larger role in recommending that campuses consider on-line offerings and otherwise respond to the state's needs. The Assembly recommended that the policy incorporate a clearer and most substantial role for faculty input on the campuses and across the system. Related changes were made.

10. *Welfare and Benefits*. The Assembly adopted a resolution proposed by the Welfare and Benefits committee, calling for efforts to provide benefits to same-sex partners. Dennis Daley (NCSU), chair of the committee, also served on a system-wide committee that considered proposals for a "substantially equivalent" human resources management system to be developed covering staff.

11. *Shared Governance.* The Assembly's governance committee urged General Administration to collect information on the role of faculty members in commenting and advising on the performance of administrators on the campuses. Information was collected and provided to the committee. The Assembly's officers also assisted campuses on several occasions in dealing with local shared governance issues. The Assembly's leadership also stressed to General Administration the importance of building cultures of shared governance on historically minority campuses, many of which have had new chancellors appointed during the past year.

12. *Academic Freedom and Tenure.* The Academic Freedom and Tenure committee considered issues raised by faculty members on several campuses regarding acceptance of major gifts affecting the curriculum.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Welch Wegner, UNC-CH, Faculty Assembly Secretary
Approved May 2, 2008