

Resolution 2018-7. On Supporting a Statement from UNC Black Faculty on Silent Sam

The Faculty Council resolves:

In light of the “Statement from UNC Black Faculty on Silent Sam” published in the *Daily Tar Heel* on September 6, 2018, we request the permanent removal of the statue and its base from the UNC campus.

Submitted by Prof. Frank Baumgartner

Rationale

The following events are pertinent as university leaders formulate a plan of action concerning the Confederate monument:

1. Resolution 2017-10 (“On Silent Sam”), in which this body requested the removal of the Confederate memorial from McCorkle Place (Appendix A),
2. The removal of the memorial on August 20, 2018,
3. The Chancellor’s statement of August 31, 2018 that “Silent Sam has a place in our history and on our campus where its history can be taught, but not at the front door of a safe, welcoming, proudly public research university” (Appendix B),
4. The statement from 450 members of the faculty from September 5, 2018 commending the Chancellor for her statement that the monument does not belong “at the front door” of the University, seeing that as an “important first step” and stating its determination that faculty shall continue to have a strong voice in the decision about the disposition of the monument (Appendix C),
5. The “Statement from UNC Black Faculty on Silent Sam” published in the *Daily Tar Heel* on September 6, 2018, signed by 54 UNC faculty colleagues, including these elements in particular:
 - a. that the presence of such a monument on campus creates a “racially hostile work environment” for Black faculty,
 - b. that reinstallation of the statue anywhere on campus would constitute a statement “for the nation and for the world that UNC is not a welcoming place for Black people”, and
 - c. that such a symbol “has no place on our 21st century campus” (Appendix D), and
6. The statement dated September 10, 2018, from 417 faculty colleagues endorsing and supporting the previous statement by our Black faculty colleagues (Appendix E).

Appendix A.

Resolution 2017-10. On Silent Sam.

The Faculty Council resolves:

We request the removal of Silent Sam from McCorkle Place and urge President Spellings, Chancellor Folt, the Governor, the North Carolina Historical Commission, the Board of Governors, the Board of Trustees, and the General Assembly to work together to make this move possible.

Appendix B. Message from Chancellor Carol L. Folt, August 31, 2018

Dear Carolina Community:

As you head into the Labor Day weekend, I ask you to think about an opportunity that has opened for us. I am very grateful because it may help us move toward healing and peace from a place of conflict and disharmony.

The Confederate Monument, known as Silent Sam, has been a focus of conflict for many decades. As the intensity of that conflict has accelerated, it has become apparent to all that the monument, displayed where it was, is extremely divisive and a threat to public safety, and the day-to-day mission of the University. More fundamentally, the disputes around the monument are about deeply rooted and profound struggles of race, inclusion, history and honor that our entire country needs to resolve. We see that those conflicts and the need for their resolution are as strong as ever, even with the statue toppled from its base.

So, what is the opportunity? Three days ago, for the first time, the UNC System Board of Governors gave the UNC-Chapel Hill Board of Trustees and me a clear path to identify a safe, legal and alternative location for Silent Sam. We are instructed to present our plan to them by November 15, 2018.

My senior team and the Board of Trustees have been working toward this opportunity and already have received many good suggestions. To move forward, we will be working in partnership with our faculty, students and staff and will be consulting widely and openly to evaluate all ideas and questions we receive – from our campus, our alumni, UNC System President Spellings, the Board of Governors, the legislature, the governor, other decision makers, as well as from citizens across the state and the nation.

We need to respect that, apart from the anger and hatred that has been expressed, there are different meanings attached to this monument by different people in our communities. Many may still be unaware of the devastating, racist commentary made at its dedication in 1913 by a member of the Board of Trustees. Our University repudiates those words and the system of oppression they represent. In forum after forum, the stories told by so many reveal the pain and hurt that come from that speech, and from the presence, at the front door of the University they love, of the monument they associate with it.

At the same time, we also hear daily from our community, citizens from across North Carolina and the country, who have always seen the statue as a memorial to fallen soldiers, many of them family members. I hope we can agree that there is a difference between those who commemorate their fallen and people who want a restoration of white rule. Reconciliation of our past and our present requires us to reach deep into our hearts and across the state to the people we serve.

Silent Sam has a place in our history and on our campus where its history can be taught, but not at the front door of a safe, welcoming, proudly public research university. We want to provide opportunities for our students and the broader community to reflect upon and learn from that history. Wide consultation, and lots of listening on campus and beyond, are necessary if we are

to move toward peace and healing. The plan they have asked us to prepare will be ready for presentation to President Spellings and the Board of Governors in November as they specified. We will be sharing details on a planning process with you as soon as we possibly can.

Campus leaders, faculty, students, and staff need to focus now on what we can do, and get it done. Let's bring the passion we share for teaching, research, justice, and our collaborative culture to take advantage of this opportunity for a resolution, 105 years in the making.

Respectfully yours,

Carol L. Folt
Chancellor

Appendix C.

Statement of 450 UNC-CH Faculty Re: Confederate Monument

Wednesday, September 5, 2018

To: UNC Board of Governors, UNC-Chapel Hill Board of Trustees, President Margaret Spellings, Chancellor Carol Folt, Provost Robert Blouin, and Leslie Parise, Chair of the UNC-Chapel Hill Faculty

Dear Colleagues,

The 450 faculty of UNC-Chapel Hill listed below have signed the following statement:

We, the undersigned faculty, commend as an important first step Chancellor Folt's August 31, 2018 statement that the Confederate monument does not belong "at the front door of a safe, welcoming, proudly public research university." We are determined to have a strong voice in the decision about the disposition of the monument. We are also encouraged by recent statements by clergy and business leaders in Chapel Hill that make clear their unequivocal opposition to the reinstallation of the statue in its former location. The civic, economic, emotional, and cultural well-being of our community, as well as the university's educational mission, will suffer continued damage by the presence of the monument on McCorkle Place.

Appendix D

Statement from UNC Black Faculty on Silent Sam

As UNC Black faculty, we occupy a unique position relative to the Confederate monument known as “Silent Sam.” When the Daughters of the Confederacy commissioned the monument for the University, when University donors offered resources to support its completion, when the University paid the remaining balance, and UNC Board of Trustees member Julian Carr delivered his racist remarks at its dedication, we doubt any envisioned Black faculty as vibrant and necessary members of the University’s intellectual, cultural, and social community. In 1913, the Confederate monument did not stand in opposition to the stated values and mission of the University. In 2018, it most certainly does. It has done so since the University chose to admit the first Black student or offer the first Black faculty member a contract for employment. We have witnessed a monument that represents white supremacy in both the past and present be venerated and protected at the same time that we have been asked to serve as examples of diversity and inclusion. That is a demoralizing burden.

A monument to white supremacy, steeped in a history of violence against Black people, and that continues to attract white supremacists, creates a racially hostile work environment and diminishes the University’s reputation worldwide. For us, arguments of moral equivalency are extremely problematic; there are not two morally valid sides to the history the monument represents nor to its current significance. Without brave acts of civil disobedience that changed the moral character of the nation and advanced the cause of justice, Black faculty, staff, and students would not be here. To reinstall the Confederate monument to any location on UNC’s campus is to herald for the nation and for the world that UNC is not a welcoming place for Black people.

We, the undersigned faculty, urge the Chancellor, Provost, Board of Trustees, and Board of Governors to permanently remove the Confederate statue and its pedestal from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. There is no way to re-erect the statue without valorizing an incomplete version of history. A symbol of racism, violence, and white supremacy has no place on our 21st century campus often called the “University of the People.”

Appendix E.

Statement 417 UNC Faculty endorsing the statement from UNC Black Faculty on Silent Sam, September 10, 2018

To: The UNC Community, including Board of Governors, Board of Trustees, and President as well as students, faculty, and administration of UNC-Chapel Hill

The undersigned 417 faculty of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, copied here, endorse and support the following position of 60 Black faculty members of the University, regarding the disposition of the confederate statue that formerly stood on campus:

Statement from UNC Black Faculty on Silent Sam [See Appendix D]

Appendix F

Partial list of other memorials to Confederate soldiers already on campus

1. The “Book of Names” recognizes Carolina alumni and students who have lost their lives in military service, including 287 who lost their lives in service to the Confederate States of America (see <https://alumni.unc.edu/news/war-memorial-complete-list/>).
2. Memorial Hall, which was designed to recognize UNC President David Lowry Swain, president during the Civil War, and to commemorate those who died in that war. It was later expanded to include memorial plaques to other prominent individuals associated with the University (see <http://unchistory.web.unc.edu/building-narratives/memorial-hall/>).
3. Within Memorial Hall, 4 prominent tablets list 260 Carolina-related Confederate soldiers. These are prominently placed to the left and right of the stage, but so elevated from the seats below that the names cannot be easily read. “As a memorial, both the tablets to the Confederate Dead and the building in its entirety are large, centrally located, and publicly facing, but their meaning and content frequently remains hidden...” (see <http://unchistory.web.unc.edu/building-narratives/memorial-hall/>).