

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