

## **Chair of the Faculty Nomination Remarks to Faculty Council**

**Mimi Chapman**

**March 20, 2020**

A few weeks ago, Vin let me know that I would need to prepare remarks for this meeting. At that time, I decided I would think about those remarks over spring break. And now any remarks that I'd thought about making seem quite inadequate to the current moment.

So, I thought I'd share with you a few thoughts about the national crisis and the university's role in it. To put it bluntly, universities have led the way. It was universities that realized the catastrophe that would take place with students, faculty, and staff flying around the globe and returning to campus.

Universities responded with concrete and far reaching choices based in fact and science – bringing students home from study abroad, pivoting to remote teaching in record speed, and problem-solving ways to be responsive to vulnerable students who had no good housing options or ways to return home. Those dramatic decisions and the compressed timeframe woke up the country to this crisis.

I have long believed that there is no part of the university that is more valuable than the other and that universities are laboratories for how to live and work well when different people from different points of view come together. The current crisis brings into sharp relief the interdependence of academic disciplines and the professions. The health sciences are in the spotlight right now. The arts, humanities, and social sciences are giving us historical, artistic, and literary perspective as we contemplate what it means to be social animals in the midst of social distancing. Law and government speak to the need for structures by which to make difficult decisions and ways in which government can and should lead in a crisis. Statisticians and public health professionals and academics help us process the data being thrown at us and provide tools for contact tracing, quarantine procedures, just to name a few. And, journalists, deeply committed to the truth, are keep us informed of changing circumstances and bring important analysis of the facts.

My profession of social work is boundary spanning profession, a profession that brings people together to solve problems and to create and test social interventions. We believe in the ability of communities both highly recognized and more importantly, those highly marginalized, to find solutions that work for pressing problems. And in social work there are foundational skills upon which every other aspect of our work rests. It is those skills that I think will make me an effective chair of the faculty. Those skills are deep, careful, and empathic listening; tolerance and acknowledgement of strong emotions; careful observation, and advocacy that gives voice to stories and points of view that have been overlooked or discounted.

Indeed, in the roles I've played in faculty governance, those are the qualities I have sought to bring to the table. I've chaired both the Faculty Grievance and the Faculty Hearings committee, two places in which very sensitive situations are considered. I believe I was successful in those

roles because of the qualities I brought to the table but more importantly because of you – colleagues from schools and disciplines across the campus that brought your own ways of looking at the world into the room consider high stakes, emotionally charged, challenging situations.

I have served on the faculty executive committee and currently on the Appointments, Promotion, and Tenure Committee. Each of these committees serve as microcosms of the larger University, places where many different perspectives come together and from that, to arrive at strong decisions.

To be elected faculty chair would be an incredible honor for me. For anyone elected to such a role, there will be a learning curve. I will surely not do everything perfectly. But I commit that I will listen deeply to all points of view and work to give voice to issues that are important to the faculty. I value transparency, integrity, compassion, and fact-based decision making. I will bring those values to this work and will ask you to hold me accountable if I am not living up to them. Thank you for your consideration and I'd be happy to talk with you individually if you care to contact me.

Thank you.

## **Chair of the Faculty Nomination Remarks to Faculty Council**

**Joy Renner**

**March 20, 2020**

I consider being nominated by peers for Chair of the Faculty one of the highest honors of my career. It is a position I never anticipated as a possible role for me at UNC. I thank the Advisory Committee and the faculty who nominated me for providing this opportunity to be on the ballot.

It took me several weeks to consider this nomination carefully. It is exciting and energizing to consider a position that would open so many opportunities to guide our faculty into positions to enact change and to chart the future of this great University. But with that excitement also comes the reality of the time, effort, and intentional respect for all faculty from all disciplines and perspectives inherent in this position. I say intentional respect because for me that means you do not assume you have heard and understood someone until you have reflected upon what you perceived to be their needs, concerns, fears, and ideas prior to taking action. This takes not just time to listen but time to reflect upon what you have heard, place that information in context, develop options and solutions, and seek feedback on those options and solutions. So while this would be an incredible opportunity I recognize that I must be willing to accept the heightened demands on my time and energy.

I have talked with several colleagues over the past months on both sides of campus. I felt fortunate when I realized that I have as many colleagues on main campus and other professional schools as I do in my own School. My colleagues felt my track record of service, knowledge of pan-university functions, and reputation among their colleagues would be assets in my success in the position. I was encouraged to continue in the election process and let the faculty decide if I am right to be their next Chair of the Faculty.

My leadership roles here at UNC have afforded me the opportunity to develop a wealth of faculty colleagues throughout the University. With each leadership position I learned a great deal about communication, human needs, preparation, humility, character and strength, and systems. Outside of UNC, I have chaired and designed from the ground up several professional projects from national curricula and practice standards to developing a new healthcare provider in the medical imaging environment. I have been involved with federal lobbying for the last decade and have negotiated contracts between health systems. Through my work with the Faculty Athletics Committee I learned much of my communication and listening skills and understanding of system design not just to solve issues but to provide a framework to avoid future issues. In my role with SACS reaccreditation reports and general education curriculum committees and working with other pan-University policies, I learned that having a wide breath of experience and perspective makes each task and product richer, comprehensive, and more representative of our campus. Chairing the Advisory Committee taught me the value of direct communication between faculty and administration. With each experience my goal was to

leave the role and organization in a better position than that in which I found it and to develop new leadership talent in the process to carry the organization forward far beyond my tenure.

I am sure every Chair of the Faculty has weathered difficulties and steered the faculty through challenging times. For me, one of the current challenges is the rebuilding of community—rebuilding a structure for intellectual discourse and debate on matters that could hinder the promise and progress of the institution and issues that could detract from the success of our faculty. Topics such as equality and fairness, integrity and transparency, financial stability and growth are foremost in my mind. Addressing these broad topics gets to the heart of students and faculty and staff feeling included and valued and respected, having trust in the guidance and policies from our administration, and meeting the financial needs of the institution, faculty, and staff such as facilities and salaries and explaining the process used to decide what is funded and how and when and why.

One goal I would have as Chair of the Faculty is to utilize fully the strong faculty governance structure that we have in place. The members of Faculty Council and members of our elected and appointed committees provide the framework for giving voice to the faculty, and I want that voice heard not only on this campus but with the Board of Trustees and with the Board of Governors. It is helping all the decision-makers not just hear but be able to listen to the faculty voices, those who have the lived experience, not hypothetical scenarios. So my job will be to build on the existing bridges with these groups and to make them stronger with more efficient communication links that lead to richer options and solutions before final decisions are made.

Whether I am successful in this election or not, I look forward to working with the faculty in any capacity where I fit and can be helpful. Good luck to all as we find our way during these challenging