

## **Faculty Council Meeting, November 8, 2019**

Opening Comments

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Welcome to the November meeting of the UNC Faculty Council; we're going to focus today on several issues that Faculty Council members described as issues of concern during our Council orientation meeting in August. You may remember, for example, that there was lots of discussion about faculty morale as we faced continuing uncertainties about the state budget, the challenges of recruiting new faculty, and the need to retain long-serving UNC colleagues. We still don't have a new state budget for 2019-20, and the uncertainties about salaries and benefits continue.

So today we're going to look at some broad patterns of faculty satisfaction and dissatisfaction, as they emerged in the COACHE survey of tenured faculty; we'll have a similar report on the COACHE findings of satisfaction among fixed term faculty within two months—augmented by the findings of another survey of fixed term faculty this fall.

Another issue of concern emerged in the August discussions of campus safety; and we've recently learned a great deal about the experiences of students who participated in the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct. These issues have a deep impact on the wellbeing of students and also on the faculty who work with them; and we'll look today at how faculty behavior and sexual harassment affect UNC students.

But these surveys examine only part of what has been happening at UNC in recent months or years, and our conversation in August also included discussion of how we might go forward after the recent conflicts over Silent Sam and move far beyond our University's long history of racist exclusions and hierarchies. I therefore want to note other complex issues that have been important for our community in recent events such as University Day and the Faculty Bus Tour. Both of these events took place shortly after our last Council Meeting; and both offered valuable perspectives on our work and lives as UNC faculty members.

The University Day celebration focused on how our faculty and students are serving the people of North Carolina; and service to the state was also a major theme of the faculty bus tour. Most of us are not really aware of the diverse ways in which our faculty colleagues are engaged with people in all parts of the state; and this faculty service ranges widely from health care and public education to community building, economic development, legal services, literary conversations, and many other activities that we don't hear much about. Later in this meeting we're going to look briefly at what our colleagues learned from their bus tours; and I hope that such tours might become an ongoing part of the faculty experience at UNC.

Both University Day and the bus trips stimulated helpful discussions of UNC's history, which we need to explore and understand by looking at the worst aspects of this historical legacy as well as the best and most constructive aspects. Chancellor Guskiewicz is now working with a faculty group that is developing new initiatives to help us confront the enduring influence of racism, slavery, and Jim Crow laws in the history of UNC.

This project, led by History Professor Jim Leloudis and others, is entitled “History, Race, and a Way Forward,” and it will become part of our broader efforts to confront historical legacies both honestly and constructively. Understanding the past will help us change the future.

We celebrated the 226<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UNC’s founding at the University Day events in October, but I want to note some other foundational events that have shaped our university’s legacy. In August of 1619 a ship carrying more than 20 enslaved Africans arrived in Virginia; these enslaved persons were sold to European settlers, launching a long-enduring system of racism, white supremacy, racial exclusions, and oppressive social policies.

This slave system was part of our own University’s history from the day that UNC was founded; and this complex history is a difficult legacy that we are now trying constantly to understand and to move beyond. I want to note an example of this process by calling your attention to an important Symposium that our colleagues have organized at the Sonya Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History; it will take place on next Monday, Nov. 11, and it’s called “1619 Collective Memory (ies).”

This symposium will include speakers and participants who represent many communities of people who were thrown together and transformed by the legacies of 1619: this includes Native/Indigenous peoples, African Americans, Africans, and Europeans; and the legacy of 1619 has remained part of our state’s history down to this time—affecting others who continue to arrive from Asia, Latin America and elsewhere. Anyone who works in education, government, business or modern social institutions is still interacting with the legacies of 1619, which are even more profound than the legacies of the Mayflower ship arrival at Plymouth in 1620.

One of the University Day recipients of a Distinguished alumna award this year was Nikole Hannah-Jones—a graduate of the Hussman School of Media and Journalism—who wrote the lead article earlier this year in the *New York Times Magazine* special issue on 1619. Nikole Hannah-Jones is an example of how UNC’s graduates are contributing to the honest encounter with a history that we’ll continue to confront for as long as any of us are at UNC.

The history that began in 1619 continued in 1719, when the first two shiploads of enslaved Africans arrived in the French colony of Louisiana; and this history continued in 1819, when Thomas Jefferson and his fellow white Virginians founded the University of Virginia to promote Enlightenment ideals amid the blatant contradictions of slavery; 1819 was also the year when the town of Chapel Hill was established next to UNC, and both town and gown depended on the labor of enslaved people. This history continued in 1919, six years after a Confederate statue was placed at UNC, when white rioters in Chicago killed black migrants who had fled from the Jim Crow South; and hundreds of black-owned homes and businesses were destroyed.

I mention this history of events in 1619, 1719, 1819, and 1919, because it is the framework for our own social, political, and educational struggles in 2019; and so I thank Joseph Jordan and Nikole Hannah-Jones and all our other UNC colleagues who are bringing more knowledge of this historical legacy into our work and critical-minded discussions at UNC.

This history of the 19s brings me back to the bus tour, because our traveling colleagues in 2019 also encountered this historical legacy in the eastern, southeastern and western counties of North Carolina—from Robeson County to Charlotte to Greensboro. The travelers on the southeastern bus visited the International Civil Rights Museum in Greensboro on the last day of

their tour; and I think that was an especially valuable bus stop because the Civil Rights movement is also part of the legacy of 1619 and part of the legacy of 20<sup>th</sup>-century graduates of UNC-Chapel Hill.

History continues to happen at UNC as we come to terms with the injustices that have evolved since 1619, but our UNC colleagues and graduates are working to challenge and transform such legacies through remarkably hard work in all parts of our state—as some 90 faculty travelers saw on the bus tour. It may seem in 2019 that we have reached a kind of nadir in our national culture, but our work at the University and our service to people throughout North Carolina is actually continuing to expand and even soar in the current context.

So I encourage you to attend the important Monday Symposium on the legacies of 1619 at the Stone Center; but I also hope that you will find ways to join our new Carolina programs on “History, Race and a Way Forward” and to expand the UNC service that is flourishing across NC and challenging complex historical legacies.

I think we’re responding to history by building pathways to a different future; and I now want to pass the mic to Chancellor Guskiewicz for his views on what has been happening at UNC in recent weeks. Chancellor Guskiewicz.