

July 28, 2020

Mimi V. Chapman, MSW, Ph.D.  
Chair of the Faculty, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Dear Dr. Chapman,

Thank you for your thoughtful letter outlining your concerns about a return to on-campus operations. I realize that there are others who share your sentiments and I am sure you realize that there is no easy solution in these unprecedented times.

After hearing regularly from our community and infectious disease experts, I am in agreement with Chancellor Guskiewicz and other campus leaders that the best Carolina experience is one that occurs on campus. I believe they have a plan in place that enables that experience as safely as possible.

I also believe that the University's Fall 2020 Roadmap lays out a very thorough plan, that is being updated as more is learned. The Chancellor and Provost have made it clear in every way possible that faculty, students, and staff will have options for how they teach, learn, and work this fall. As unpredictable and challenging as the COVID-19 has been to all of us, I think the Roadmap is a very thoughtful, highly informed, and comprehensive plan for Carolina.

The Roadmap's [guiding principles](#) and [goals](#) frame plans for a safe re-entry for on-campus operations, as well as the [community standards](#) which outline stricter wellness, hygiene and physical distancing protocols, while staying true to the University's mission and values.

Although the Roadmap was established based on a set of assumptions and principles, the University has continued to refine its protocols and procedures as circumstances have changed and new information becomes available. To cope with these unpredictable times, they have also established a series of off-ramps that will drive decision-making as circumstances unfold. As has been said many times, if conditions change and the situation warrants, the plan will be modified, in consultation with public health experts and the Orange County Health Department. The safety, health and well-being of our campus community will always be paramount in the University's decision-making.

The Community Standards and University Guidelines are the bedrock of the Roadmap that will create the circumstances for the campus and community to come together successfully to live, work, teach and learn. The University requires all students to acknowledge that they will abide by the public health guidelines and the University's COVID-19 Community Standards and University Guidelines as a condition of enrollment for the Fall 2020 semester. All students,

regardless of the mode of instruction, must complete the acknowledgement or they will jeopardize their participation in on-campus and remote learning.

This fall semester will look and feel different from the past. The University recognizes that many in our community will need to work and learn remotely, for a variety of reasons, and I have been assured there will be as much flexibility as possible. Of course, no one can predict what will happen in the coming months, and if at any point it is felt that in-person instruction is not safe, there will be an adaption to the then current conditions.

In planning for a return to full on-campus operations, the University has adopted stringent cleaning protocols, increased health trainings, and provided appropriate personal protective equipment for employees. Next month, all students and employees will also receive campus care kits with masks and hand sanitizer. Directional signage is now being placed in campus buildings to help with social distancing measures.

In addition, the University is working to de-densify residence halls by offering maximum flexibility and allowing on-campus residents to cancel their housing contracts without penalty until August 2. There has been a high demand for this option and a significant number of students are choosing to study away from campus this semester. The University administration will also continue to evaluate and refine testing and tracing protocols and will continue to do so as circumstances change in order to provide the highest level of care to the community.

While the pandemic is causing a host of budgetary concerns for the University, we are doing all we can to mitigate the financial concerns of our students. The University has put more than \$16 million in emergency federal funds to use and is working to identify other sources of aid. We also continue to work with the UNC System to refine our budget projections.

I am immensely grateful to the faculty and staff across campus who have made great contributions and sacrifices to prepare our campus for the coming semester. I know that work will continue in the weeks and months to come, and I look forward to seeing the University reap the fruits of that labor in the form of degrees granted, research conducted and lives improved.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard Y. Stevens".

Richard Y. Stevens  
Chair, UNC-Chapel Hill Board of Trustees

cc: Randy Ramsey, Chair, UNC Board of Governors  
Members of the Board of Trustees  
Interim UNC President Bill Roper  
Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz