

**Faculty Executive Committee
Annual Report to the Faculty Council**

Report for calendar year 2021

Prepared by Helena Knego, Office of Faculty Governance
Submitted to the Faculty Council by Chair of the Faculty Mimi V. Chapman, PhD
April 8, 2022

2021 Membership

Elected members, 2021-22:

Deb Aikat (Journalism and Media), term ends 2022
Rumay Alexander (Nursing), term ends 2023
Misha Becker (Linguistics/Arts & Sciences), term ends 2024
Anthony Charles (Surgery/Medicine), term ends 2024
Barbara Entwisle (Sociology/Arts & Sciences), term ends 2024
Sue Estroff (Social Medicine/Medicine), term ends 2023
Jennifer Larson (English and Comparative Literature/Arts & Sciences), term ends 2022
Elizabeth Mayer-Davis (Nutrition/Public Health), term ends 2023
Eric Muller (Law), term ends 2023
Joy Renner (Radiologic Science/Medicine), term ends 2022
Viji Sathy (Psychology and Neuroscience/Arts & Sciences), term ends 2024
Meg Zomorodi (Nursing), term ends 2022

Elected members, 2020-21:

Deb Aikat (Journalism and Media), term ends 2022
Rumay Alexander (Nursing), term ends 2023
Julie Byerley (Pediatrics/Medicine), term ends 2021
Wendy Cox (Pharmacy), term ends 2021
Barbara Entwisle (Sociology/Arts & Sciences), term ends 2021
Sue Estroff (Social Medicine/Medicine), term ends 2023
Benny Joyner (Pediatrics/Medicine), term ends 2021
Jennifer Larson (English and Comparative Literature/Arts & Sciences), term ends 2022
Elizabeth Mayer-Davis (Nutrition/Public Health), term ends 2023
Eric Muller (Law), term ends 2023
Joy Renner (Radiologic Science/Medicine), term ends 2022
Meg Zomorodi (Nursing), term ends 2022

Ex Officio members:

Mimi Chapman (Social Work), Chair of the Faculty and committee chair, term ends 2023
Jill Moore (Government), Secretary of the Faculty, terms ends 2026
Vin Steponaitis (Archaeology, Anthropology/Arts & Sciences), Secretary of the Faculty, term ended
June 2021

Committee Charge: According to § 2-10 of *The Faculty Code of University Government*, Faculty Executive Committee has the following powers and duties:

- 1) to exercise the consultative powers delegated to the Faculty Council by §§ 2- 8(b)(3) and 2-8(b)(4) [of the Code] subject to such restrictions or instructions as the Council may from time to time establish;
- 2) when prompt action is required, to exercise the legislative powers delegated to the Faculty Council by §§ 2-8(a)(1) and 2-8(a)(4) [of the Code], subject to confirmation by the Council at its next regular meeting;
- 3) to serve as an advisory committee to the chair of the faculty;
- 4) to represent the Faculty Council and the General Faculty in advising the University administration with respect to issues, such as planning and the setting of University priorities, that the committee deems important to the University's mission;
- 5) to work with the various officers and groups within the University toward the realization of goals set in actions of the Faculty Council;
- 6) to report to the Council at regular intervals, including reporting annually on the status of the implementation of resolutions of the Faculty Council; and
- 7) to serve as members of the Faculty Council as provided in § 2-2(b).

2021 Meetings:

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| ▪ January 11 | ▪ July 19 |
| ▪ January 25 | ▪ August 4 (Special meeting) |
| ▪ January 31 (Special meeting) | ▪ August 30 |
| ▪ [February 15: canceled; Wellness Day] | ▪ September 13 |
| ▪ March 1 | ▪ September 27 |
| ▪ March 15 | ▪ October 11 |
| ▪ March 29 | ▪ November 1 |
| ▪ April 12 | ▪ [November 15: canceled; Mental Health Summit] |
| ▪ April 26 | ▪ November 29 |
| ▪ May 10 | ▪ December 13 |
| ▪ May 24 (Special meeting) | ▪ December 23 (Special meeting) |
| ▪ June 14 | |

The committee met remotely on Zoom for all of 2021.

Summary:

In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect the campus community. Many Faculty Executive Committee meetings featured updates and information from infectious disease experts, the senior administration, and other faculty governance committees, and committee discussions addressed issues including student mental health, grading policies, vaccine regulations, COVID-19 testing and safety, and effects of the pandemic on faculty careers. Another significant topic of discussion was the delayed vote on tenure for Nikole Hannah-Jones. The committee continues to advocate for stronger shared governance and transparency, and for delegated authority for the chancellor.

The FEC met monthly with Provost Bob Blouin to discuss initiatives to improve operations and efficiencies at Carolina that are part of the Carolina Excellence Initiative. The provost continued to share information on the data science initiative, pandemic protocol, and various leadership searches on campus (e.g., deans and the vice chancellor for communications).

Additional topics discussed in 2021 included:

- Vandalism at the Campus Y and against a student publication (Carolina Review)
- The Graduate School withholding tuition remission in spring 2021
- Advice on open meeting regulations from University Counsel
- The Fayetteville State University chancellor search and issues concerning System chancellor searches
- COVID-19 safety and the UNC-CH administration's ability to implement it
- COVID-19 vaccinations: requirements, encouragement, and rates
- Chair of the Faculty membership on the Board of Trustees
- Appointments, promotions and tenure policies during COVID-19, and concerns about Board of Trustee actions on tenure conferral
- Proposed school of data science and society
- Campus safety issues
- A report by a group of faculty associated with the Institute for Arts and Humanities with recommendations about increasing faculty voice and strengthening faculty governance; taking equity and diversity issues seriously; and the integration of scholarship and leadership
- Honorary degrees and special awards, including the Board of Trustees' regulation changes and subsequent suspension of changes for the conferral of distinguished alumni awards and honorary degrees, and the complexity of the Thomas Jefferson Award
- Updates and input on leadership searches: provost, vice chancellor for communications, several deans
- Campus mental health, especially regarding several student deaths in the fall; how to help students, faculty and staff negotiate these tragedies and the increasing burnout as a result of the pandemic
- Caregiving Work Group updates
- Pandemic life and how it affects the University in many ways
- Plans for spring 2021 in terms of the Omicron variant
- Support for the University Libraries

Formal actions taken by the Faculty Executive Committee as statements and resolutions

January 2021: The FEC held a special meeting to discuss vandalism that had taken place at the Campus Y and the related statement released by the Campus Y co-chairs in response. The Committee passed a *Resolution in Support of the Campus Y*. [full text on p. 5]

April 2021: The FEC submitted a resolution on the hiring of chancellors to the Faculty Council for a vote at the April 16 meeting of the Faculty Council and the General Faculty. *Resolution 2021-5. On the Hiring of Chancellors* was submitted by the Committee and passed by the faculty. This resolution was referred to in a later resolution that the Faculty Council passed in support of Chancellor Guskiewicz and shared governance in July 2021. [full text on p. 6]

July 2021: After learning of and discussing possible irregularities with a faculty appointment on the UNC Press Board, the Committee released a *Faculty Executive Committee Statement Regarding Academic Freedom and the UNC Press Board*. [full text on p. 7]

August 2021: The Committee held a special meeting to discuss the desire for the chancellor and provost to have delegated authority to make the best decisions for this campus in dealing with issues around COVID-19. The Committee passed a *Resolution Requesting Delegated Authority to Respond Effectively to COVID-19*. [full text on p. 8]

October 2021: The Committee charged the Educational Policy Committee to study class cancellation issues with a *Resolution On Charging the Educational Policy Committee to Study Class Cancellation Policies and Procedures* [full text on p. 9]

November 2021: The Committee discussed concerns about provost selection and released a *Statement of the Faculty Executive Committee Regarding the Selection of the Provost*. [full text on p. 10]

Resolution in Support of the Campus Y

Rationale

As one of the oldest student organizations in the United States, the Campus Y embodies the best of UNC Chapel Hill. Members of the Campus Y commit themselves to “reflective and ethical service”, “honest and inclusive relationships,” and “promoting campus-wide coalitions to further social justice.”

Commitment to such values makes all the more troubling the destructive incident over the weekend of January 23-24, 2021 in which someone broke into the Campus Y building, drew swastikas on the floor, left racial epithets on white boards, damaged property inside the building, and left menacing messages for the co-chairs of the organization. Acts such as this, no matter their origin, threaten the sense of belonging and common purpose we aim for on this campus.

We appreciate so much the Campus Y Co-Chairs statement dated January 26, 2021 in which they express both dismay about the crime and concern for the individual or individuals who perpetrated these crimes. We admire our student leaders for their nuanced thinking at such a difficult moment.

Resolution

Be it resolved that the Faculty Executive Committee affirms and supports the members and leadership of the Campus Y in the wake of the disturbing and hateful attack on their offices. We condemn actions that target marginalized groups whenever and wherever such actions occur.

Passed on January 29, 2021

Resolution 2021-5. On the Hiring of Chancellors

The Faculty Council resolves:

We affirm the following principles: (1) that the process by which a chancellor is hired must have significant faculty influence; (2) that a campus-based search committee with strong faculty voice must play the primary role in selecting candidates; and (3) that a candidate who is hired must have the search committee's support. Processes and policies that undermine collaborative decision-making at either the institution or System level threaten shared governance, and should be revised to promote openness, transparency, fairness, and equity in decision-making in searches for senior leadership positions. These principles of shared governance are essential to the University of North Carolina System's continued excellence, national reputation, and accreditation.

Passed by the Faculty Council and General Faculty on April 16, 2021

Statement of the Faculty Executive Committee Regarding Academic Freedom and the UNC Press Board

As a matter of academic freedom and of UNC System policy, faculty members must be able to speak freely without fear of reprisal or retaliation. We write to express our dismay about the UNC Board of Governor's failure to reappoint Professor Eric Muller to the UNC Press Board, and failure to explain its rationale.

The UNC Press Board unanimously nominated Professor Muller for a third term of service, and unanimously reelected him to be its chair. His nomination was submitted to the UNC Board of Governors along with two others. The other two nominations were approved, but Professor Muller's was not. The UNC Press Board asked the UNC Board of Governors to explain the non-reappointment. To date, no explanation has been given.

In the absence of an explanation for this action, we are concerned that the failure to reappoint Eric Muller, an esteemed public scholar and thought leader, reflects disapproval of his public statements related to the University's disposition of the confederate monument and other matters related to race.

We expect decision-making to be accompanied by transparency so that affected faculty members and the University community understand why decisions were made. We expect decisions from our governing bodies to reflect mutual respect and regard for academic freedom, both at the Press and throughout the University system.

Adopted on July 20, 2021

Resolution Requesting Delegated Authority to Respond Effectively to COVID-19

The Faculty Executive Committee resolves:

We want a return to safe in-person operations on our campus this fall semester. We are also committed to doing our part to protect our community from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We are concerned that the recent surge in COVID-19 cases, primarily among unvaccinated people, poses a threat to our health care system, our town, and ultimately our campus and academic programs. Accordingly, we request that the UNC System delegate to the Chancellor and Provost of UNC-Chapel Hill the authority to require proof of vaccination from employees and students, and to adopt optimal masking guidance or requirements for gatherings based on community viral load and health care system capacity

Passed on August 4, 2021

Resolution On Charging the Educational Policy Committee to Study Class Cancellation Policies and Procedures

The Faculty Executive Committee resolves:

The development of standards and procedures for deciding to cancel classes in response to student and faculty needs is an important matter of educational policy. The matter is hereby referred to the Educational Policy Committee, which shall study the issues and make recommendations to the Faculty Council about a policy or policies addressing such cancellations.

The Educational Policy Committee's study should consider:

- 1) Existing policies and procedures for class cancellations;
- 2) Principles for determining when circumstances warrant class cancellation;
- 3) The appropriate person(s) to make the decision to cancel classes, and the persons or groups that should be consulted about the decision;
- 4) Any collateral effects of decisions to cancel classes on matters including, but not limited to, accreditation; and
- 5) Any other matters the committee finds relevant to a policy regarding class cancellation.

Rationale:

The Faculty Code of University Government gives the Faculty Council the authority to “determine the educational policies of the University and the rules and regulations under which administrators and faculty will conduct the educational activities of the University.” Sec. 2-8(a)(1). *The Code* provides that the Faculty Executive Committee may exercise this authority when prompt action is required, subject to confirmation by the Faculty Council at its next regular meeting. Sec. 2-10(d)(2). *The Code* further provides that the Educational Policy Committee advises the Faculty Council on matters of educational policy that are referred to it by the Faculty Council for study. Sec. 4-6(b)(1).

Passed on October 11, 2021.

Statement of the Faculty Executive Committee Regarding the Selection of the Provost

We write to express our concerns about the search process for the University's next Provost and to seek clarity from University leadership on the status of the search and the influences that are being brought to bear on it. We call for transparency in the search process and affirm our support for the idea that the Chancellor must be able to select the Provost. We reaffirm the principles in search processes that the Faculty Council supported in Resolution No. 2021-5, On the Hiring of Chancellors, which apply equally to the selection of the University's chief academic officer. We call on the Board of Trustees and the university administration to address this matter openly with the faculty.

Adopted on November 29, 2021