

Faculty Council Meeting, September 13, 2019

Opening Comments

Lloyd Kramer

Professor of History and Chair of the Faculty

I'm pleased and honored to welcome you to this first meeting of the UNC-Chapel Hill Faculty Council for the 2019-20 academic year. When people ask why I'm serving as Chair of the Faculty Council, I stress the same point I make with each colleague who joins our UNC community. I believe that the faculty must be deeply involved in the governance of the university because our work expresses the core mission of higher education: teaching, research, and service—so we have to care about what is happening in American Universities in general and at UNC in particular.

Our connected missions require the policies, vision, and hard work that are embodied by Faculty governance. We may complain about specific aspects of our work or institutional policies, but when we compare our social positions to the social and economic positions of most people on the planet or even in North Carolina we can see that we're very privileged people. And these privileges, in my view, carry responsibilities for the kind of institutional and public engagement that comes partly through faculty governance.

So this is my pep talk for the new year: we all have opportunities to make a difference; and I thank you for being part of the Faculty governance process. I look forward to working with you and with all the people who care about this University—both on our own campus and far beyond. I want to work in constructive ways with our University leadership team—including of course Interim Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz and Provost Bob Blouin, as well as various deans and other administrative colleagues.

I also want to listen and learn from the other essential groups in our UNC community, including the staff members who manage and creatively facilitate all of the many activities that take place at our University. And I value my conversations with the talented students who come to UNC as well as the alumni and retired faculty: everyone has views that matter.

As faculty members one of our main responsibilities is to stand firmly for the core academic values of tolerance and openness to all people and different points of view. These values extend from the classroom to our own departmental cultures to the debates of Faculty Council. We'll be discussing and debating important university issues today and in future Council meetings. But no matter which issues or disagreements emerge, I believe that as faculty we must defend *free speech and academic freedom* as essential to the history and continuing development of university life.

I particularly want to affirm the value of the liberal arts for student education at UNC and elsewhere. At the same time, I want our University to serve the needs of our state far beyond our own classrooms; and I hope to strengthen faculty exchanges with people outside the university who want to learn more about what we do and from whom we also need to learn as we seek to strengthen the University's place in the state.

I hope that we can develop more interactions with members of the Board of Trustees, with the UNC System's Board of Governors, with government officials, and with other people around NC whose views and policies influence our work and institutional vitality. Faculty views and engagement will be essential as we look for new funding, diverse ways to interpret the University's mission, and future leaders in numerous University positions.

The search process that will lead to the appointment of a Chancellor has begun, and I encourage you to attend one of the public forums on the "traits we need in a University Chancellor," which will take place on Sept. 17 at 3:30 pm and on Sept. 18 at 5:30 pm.

As I noted at our pre-semester Council Orientation meeting, we're living in an era when too many public leaders dismiss the value of scientific knowledge, academic scholarship, cultural diversity, the arts and humanities, and our international exchanges with people around the world.

I believe that as Faculty we must therefore constantly explain how our core University values enhance and express the core values and processes of a democratic society. Democratic institutions can never be taken for granted, and the university must be one of the foundations of democratic life. The University's strength depends on the work of all our colleagues, including both fixed-term and tenured faculty; and I want to conclude my comments today by asking Nancy Fisher from the Department of Microbiology and Immunology to say a brief word about a special fall-semester initiative for our Fixed-Term colleagues.

Now I want to pass the microphone to Interim Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz for some remarks about our current situation and for some introductions of new people who have joined our UNC community.

Faculty Council Meeting, October 11, 2019

Opening Comments

Lloyd Kramer

Professor of History and Chair of the Faculty

Welcome to the October meeting of the UNC Faculty Council; we've had another busy month of Carolina activities and I want to begin by noting why we have reasons to celebrate events that will strengthen future faculty work. In recent weeks we've received very good news about major gifts to Carolina, including a \$25 million gift from the Hussman family to what will now be called the Hussman School of Journalism and Media;

An anonymous donor has committed \$25 million to the College of Arts & Sciences for the specific purpose of supporting future graduate students; new funding for graduate students is a pressing need in the College, and this gift offers new opportunities to deal with a funding gap with peer institutions that offer better support for their PhD students.

The Morehead-Cain Student Scholarship program has received a \$10 million challenge gift to match new gifts for Morehead-Cain student scholarships; and the arrival of more talented students will enhance faculty work too. So people are continuing to make major contributions for the future of our University.

In other good news, which will also strengthen UNC in the future, I want to mention the celebration of the opening of the Carolina Latinx Center on Oct. 4. This Center, which is now located in Abernethy Hall, has developed through the hard work of many colleagues, including Paul Cuadros in the Hussman School of Journalism and Media and the Center's Director Josmell Perez. The Latinx Center offers new opportunities to explore the importance of our Latinx community at UNC and far beyond.

Another long-developing project has come to fruition with the official launch of UNC's new information and news website "The Well," which is providing constant updates about UNC events, people, and faculty/staff issues. The creation of the "The Well" marks a turning point in campus communications because the historic "University Gazette" will soon disappear. Like many other print publications, it is now giving way entirely to on-line communications and "real-time" updates.

I want to thank Jane Calloway and others for their work in developing innovative ideas for "The Well," but I also want to give a special thanks to the people who have produced the now-disappearing University Gazette in recent years. Imaginative leadership and writing have come from the editor Susan Hudson, the senior editor Gary Moss, and the senior content manager Scott Jared; they have worked very hard to maintain a high quality print and on-line publication; and they will continue to work on University news in other ways.

I want to remind you that tomorrow is University Day; Interim Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz will discuss his views of the University and public service; and our colleague Giselle Corbie-Smith in the Department of Social Medicine will receive the 2019 Edward Kidder Graham Faculty Service Award. I hope many of you can attend this event at Memorial Hall; you should plan to gather near the Old Well at around 10:30 am; and please note that faculty can nominate colleagues for the 2020 Graham Faculty Service Award through Oct. 21.

A special election for the General Education Oversight Committee is also taking place now, and all members of the voting faculty have received a ballot via email; you have until midnight on Oct. 21 to cast a ballot.

In other news that affects faculty, I want to note that Harry Smith has stepped down from the position of chair of the UNC Board of Governors; and Randall Ramsay has now become the chair. Chair Ramsay also serves with Wendy Murphy as co-chair of the search for a new UNC-system President; and their committee is collecting input from UNC faculty about the presidential search. You have until Oct. 14 to respond to questions that we sent out from the Office of Faculty Governance earlier this month.

Meanwhile, the budget impasse continues at the state legislature, and so there is no new information on salary increases that might enhance faculty support; the current plan of the General Assembly provides for a paltry ½ of 1% increase for UNC faculty and staff. This is a major problem, but not something we can solve here.

Finally, I want to mention an issue of major concern that has attracted attention from many faculty colleagues as well as our top University administrators. I'm referring to the US Department of Education's strong critique of our Title VI-funded Duke-UNC Consortium for Middle East Studies, which is managed through our Center for Middle East and Islamic Studies.

As you know, the Education Department charged that the Middle East Studies Consortium has been violating the terms of a Title VI grant by focusing too much on culture and the arts rather than on pure language instruction and by putting too much emphasis on positive views of Islam while overlooking the mistreatment of other religious groups.

Our Vice-Chancellor for research, writing on behalf of the University, clearly refuted the key criticisms by showing how many students are taking language courses, how full-time faculty are involved in teaching our courses, and how our students go into many different careers and professional fields; and his defense of our Middle East programs is valuable and essential. But I also want to stress that most faculty see this government critique of our Center for Middle East and Islamic Studies as a challenge to our core values of academic freedom and intellectual autonomy.

The claim that cultural traditions and the arts are less important than other "geopolitical forces" for understanding other societies is a specific ideological judgment about what faculty should be teaching or how they should approach or analyze the role of languages in human cultures. Similarly, the charge that programs and outreach activities have focused too much on the positive aspects of Islam and Islamic religious traditions is another ideological judgment about the content of our programs.

To put this most simply, I think that we must continue to explain why the faculty view this critique of our Middle East Center as a disturbing, unusual intervention by a government funding agency in how faculty should interpret the languages, cultures and religions of other societies and in how we should understand and teach the meaning of national security. The Education Department has, in effect, issued a critique of important academic ideas about the role of culture and "soft power" in international relations. But it's also worth noting that the Title VI funding has recently been renewed and continued for the 2019-20 academic year.

So amid the good internal news that I've mentioned, I think we have to recognize that we are working in a complex political and cultural context that will continue to provide bad news that can affect our work and our goals as faculty members. But now I want to give the mic to Interim Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz, so that he can offer some good news to celebrate as we honor this year's Hettleman Fellows.

Comments at University Day Celebration

October 12, 2019

Lloyd Kramer

Professor of History and Chair of the Faculty

I'm honored to serve this year as Chair of the Faculty, and I appreciate the opportunity to work with our University leaders, including Interim Chancellor Guskiewicz, Provost Blouin, Interim President Roper, members of the Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees as well as those who represent our hard-working staff, our great students, and the faculty in all units of the University.

I bring greetings on behalf of more than 3800 talented faculty colleagues whose wide-ranging activities and achievements place them among the best teachers, researchers and contributors to the public good in the entire United States. We understand that we are building on traditions of great teaching and scholarship that our UNC predecessors have developed over the past two centuries, but we also understand that we must go beyond our past history as our University becomes more diverse, more global, more technological, and more engaged with the challenges and opportunities of our own time.

Although the professors at UNC-Chapel Hill pursue very different research and teaching interests, we share a deep commitment to the value of public education and public universities. We are therefore privileged to work at this first Public University because we recognize that higher education and well-informed scholarship contribute essential services to the social and cultural vitality of our state and nation.

As faculty members at this constantly evolving university we believe that our core academic values express and strengthen the human actions that sustain a democratic society, which include ongoing debates about all ideas and the use of fact-based evidence in public discussions and public institutions.

Our mission and responsibilities have never been more important, and we strongly affirm and celebrate the enduring public importance of this University because we also affirm the political processes and human rights that undergird democratic societies. Happy Birthday to UNC as we move forward "with the public and for the public" in twenty-first century North Carolina.

Faculty Council Meeting, November 8, 2019

Opening Comments

Lloyd Kramer

Professor of History and Chair of the Faculty

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 226th 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 20th-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.

Faculty Council Meeting, December 6, 2019

Opening Comments

Lloyd Kramer

Professor of History and Chair of the Faculty

Welcome to the December meeting of the UNC Faculty Council; today we're going to discuss issues that have generated lots of recent faculty concern, including the Board of Governor's agreement for the transfer of Silent Sam.

But first I want to note that we've come to the end of another very busy semester and that we work in a constantly flowing, creative stream of great teaching, imaginative research and enduring service to people outside the University. It may seem that controversies and conflicts dominate the life of the University, but we know that every day the great work of the University flows onward, reshaping lives and generating creative new ideas. I mention this mighty stream of University work, because we should celebrate it as we conclude our fall semester classes and as we continue our discussions of difficult issues.

At last month's Faculty Council meeting I called attention to the upcoming Symposium on the Collective Memories and Legacies of 1619, when the first enslaved Africans arrived in Virginia. This Symposium took place on November 11 and provided an excellent example of the hard historical and cultural work that is needed to honestly confront the history of slavery and racism in American society. I congratulate Joseph Jordan and all of our Colleagues at the Sonya Haynes Stone Center for their great work on that important Symposium.

But many complex issues continue to flow through our University, creating their own streams of conflict and calling for new kinds of creative work. For example, we recently received the disturbing Clery Review from the Department of Education, describing campus security issues during the period between 2009 and 2016. This review criticized UNC's under-reporting of some serious crime statistics (including our handling of sexual assaults) and our failure to describe some campus sites in our crime reports as well as our failure to issue timely warnings about security threats. We've invited our new Police chief David Perry to today's meeting, so that he might provide some updates on current approaches to campus security and safety.

The University has also reached a new agreement with the US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights in response to complaints about last spring's conference on "Conflict Over Gaza: People, Politics, and Possibilities." We've agreed to give closer attention to intolerance, with a particular emphasis on the dangers and harassment of anti-Semitism. As I understand the agreement, we have not stated any specific wrongdoing at the conference, but some faculty are still concerned about the details of this agreement and its implications for academic freedom. Chancellor Guskiewicz may want to provide further clarification about what this agreement says we will do in the future, and how the agreement also protects our commitment to academic freedom.

But the biggest new issue since last month is the recently announced BOG agreement to transfer the Silent Sam statue to the NC "Sons of Confederate Veterans," and to set up a Trust Fund of \$2.5 million that the SCV can use to house and protect the monument in one of the 86 NC counties where there is no UNC system university. I stressed in last month's discussion of

the 1619 Symposium that the legacies of slavery have continued throughout the centuries to 1719, 1819, 1919 and 2019. And now we're facing another example of this legacy with the BOG agreement that transfers Silent Sam and obliges UNC to give the Sons of Confederate Veterans millions of dollars for a trust fund—which strikes many faculty as a kind of “reparations payment” to a group that claims it was somehow damaged by the removal of Silent Sam from our campus.

As Chair of the Faculty I want to briefly summarize why so many faculty colleagues have good reasons to be angry about the finances of this Agreement. This anger comes partly from frustrations about spending such money when faculty, staff, and students face ongoing funding and salary needs. But I want to refer mainly to the broader concerns I've heard.

Although our faculty, staff, administrative leaders, and students overwhelmingly agree that Silent Sam should not be returned to our campus (as the Agreement ensures), people are angered to see our much-needed University money go to an organization that tells lies about the Civil War and promotes the legacy of White Supremacy in our state.

The SCV's website turns history upside down by stating that the “preservation of liberty and freedom was the motivating factor in the South's Decision to fight” what it calls the “Second American Revolution.” The Confederacy was actually established to preserve racist oppression and the continuing enslavement of millions of people; and historians have been explaining this historical reality with clear evidence for generations.

Yet the lies of groups like the SCV have long influenced public opinion; and a recent poll at Elon University found that 49% of North Carolinians still believe the Civil War was mainly about states' rights; only 44% said the Civil War was about slavery and the defense or destruction of the slave system.

The University is thus giving Trust Fund money to an Organization that lies about history and describes the Confederacy's defense of a white supremacy slave system as a campaign for the “preservation of freedom.” Our University is committed to the systematic pursuit of truth and knowledge through the careful examination of empirical evidence. *Giving money to the SCV thus goes against our own core values.*

Many North Carolinians may share the SCV's views of the Civil War, just as there are people who deny the historical truth of the Holocaust or the scientific evidence for climate change. There are also people who believe the earth is flat. But the University would never set up a \$2.5 million trust fund for the Flat Earth Society or for a group that denies the Holocaust.

This trust fund becomes all the more problematic when we read a letter from the “Commander” of the SCV, Kevin Stone that says: “What we have accomplished is something that I never dreamed we could accomplish in a thousand years, and all at the expense of the University itself.”

I'm pretty sure that the Commander is referring to the University's financial expense, but faculty are angered that the cost of this agreement goes far beyond the 2.5 million dollars. It also carries a steep cost to our respect for knowledge and the search for empirical truth; and it contradicts our own strongly avowed rejection of racism and white supremacist ideas and groups.

The BOG must have never consulted with historians or others who could explain that we are giving money to a group that lies about the past and still defends the racist Confederate lost cause in the present.

So this is our challenge as a University: how do we find a constructive way forward? How do we honor and support and promote the work of those who are challenging the racist legacies of 1619 and the slave system and the Confederacy?

In November, I noted the great work of people like this year's Distinguished Alumni Award recipient Nikole Hannah-Jones and our well-informed historians, including my colleagues *William Sturkey* and *Jim Leloudis* who interpret history for both public audiences and our University; and I noted Chancellor Guskiewicz's plan to develop a UNC commission on "History, Race, and a Way Forward."

As we examine the implications of the BOG's Agreement with the SCV, this work becomes all the more urgent. Silent Sam is like the Zombie of our University: it carries the legacy of the Confederacy, and it keeps reappearing as a symbolic expression of slave-system armies and of the pervasive racism in Jim Crow-era NC. So our challenge for the New Year is this: How can we escape this awful Zombie that haunts UNC, even as we try to get rid of it forever?

There are no simple answers or solutions, but the discussion and the search for a different future must continue through bold actions. Colleagues on the Faculty Council want to introduce a Resolution on this issue for our consideration today; and we'll continue to discuss faculty views as we consider this proposal.

But first I would like to pass the mic to Kevin Guskiewicz, so that he can offer further explanations of our current situation; and I should note that the Faculty Executive Committee has developed a list of questions that has already been given to him as a way to launch today's discussion.

Faculty Council Meeting, January 17, 2020

Opening Comments

Lloyd Kramer

Professor of History and Chair of the Faculty

I welcome you to the January meeting of the UNC Faculty Council. We're here to launch our discussions for the new year, which (like all years) will bring us both enduring and unexpected issues to consider; and the new year will bring us new opportunities. And this week we celebrate the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Much has happened in the world since we last met in December, but the appointment of Kevin Guskiewicz as our permanent chancellor is definitely the most important recent event for our University community. I therefore want to begin this meeting by *congratulating Kevin* on behalf of the faculty and by stressing that this is an appointment for all of us to celebrate.

The appointment of a long-serving UNC faculty member to the chancellor's position is extremely valuable for us, because we are now assured of having a longtime colleague in this key leadership role. We definitely need a leader who understands our community, who shares our values and commitments as teachers and researchers, and who understands how the faculty at a public university serve students and other people across all of North Carolina—and far beyond.

In recent years, we've seen how political leaders and governing boards can swoop on to campuses to appoint chancellors or presidents who have virtually no knowledge of University life or the work that faculty do. Last year in South Carolina, for example, the governor and others decided that the University of South Carolina needed an Army general to bring leadership and order to that campus; and a long-serving Lieutenant General suddenly became the President.

Similarly, at the University of Iowa, state leaders decided to bring in a senior corporate executive whose career gave him outsider views of the meaning of a public research university; and similar patterns of outside leadership appointments have been common at other universities. Generals and Corporate executives have distinctive leadership skills, but they come from cultures that differ from Universities.

We have arrived in a very different situation, however, with a talented researcher, longtime colleague and experienced academic leader in the chancellor's office! As faculty colleagues, we have much to celebrate in Kevin's appointment; and I want to thank him for taking on this very challenging and important role. Thank you Chancellor Guskiewicz.

We know that our newly appointed chancellor has lots of energy and ambitious plans to advance our UNC work and mission. He has strongly affirmed the importance of our service to the state as the "University *for* North Carolina," and he has set out to strengthen our statewide mission through initiatives such as the faculty bus tour and statements in defense of academic freedom. He has also advanced the fundraising Campaign for Carolina and reached out to alumni around the country. And he has already been faced with challenging, disruptive actions by the Board of Governors—especially the misguided BOG settlement for Silent Sam.

But amid the many issues that have attracted Kevin's attention, he has continued to meet with faculty, students, and staff and to develop strategic plans for the future, some of which we'll discuss today. I want especially to emphasize two recently announced initiatives: (1) the Creation

of the “Commission on History, Race, and a Way Forward,” which will be led by our colleagues Jim Leloudis and Pat Parker, and (2) the launch of a new \$5 million “Build our Community Fund.”

Jim and Pat will tell us more about the History Commission later in this meeting, so I’ll simply note that the Commission will develop new historical research and curricular ideas that can contribute to an ethical reckoning with the history of our University from the earliest decades to the recent past. History is empowering, because knowledge of the past can give us insights into the best pathways toward the future.

“The Build Our Community Fund” will help support this initiative, and its purpose is to develop a stronger “welcoming community, where everyone feels emboldened to do their best work” in an “environment of inclusive excellence.” This ambitious goal will require lots of faculty and staff work as well as the \$5 million that the chancellor has now committed.

Much of this plan, including the Commission on History, emerged before the announcement of the BOG’s Silent Sam Settlement in late November; but the BOG’s actions gave a new urgency and significance to these initiatives. As we all know, our campus-wide response to the BOG’s decision to make our University give almost \$2.6 million to the Sons of Confederate Veterans has been far-reaching, angry, thoughtful, and ongoing.

In addition to the Faculty Council’s Condemnation in our Resolution on Dec. 6, more than 30 different departments, academic centers, and other faculty groups have issued strong critical statements. We’ve collected these statements and posted them on the website of the Office of Faculty Governance—where you can find the whole collection in a single pdf document.

I also sent all of these statements to UNC System president Bill Roper and to the Chair of the BOG, Randy Ramsay. I wanted them to see how our University community views this settlement as a violation of our core commitment to the search for accurate knowledge and as an appalling transfer of funds to an organization that defends the historic institutions and legacies of white supremacy in our state. I also asked the President and BOG chair if they would like to respond to these statements, but so far they have not responded.

President Roper has noted, however, that ongoing litigation prevents him from commenting; and we know that various legal challenges are still under court review. I’ve talked with colleagues who understand the law much better than I do, and some think that there may still be court rulings that alter the current settlement or the plans for trustee management. But we can’t know what will happen in the court appeals, and meanwhile we have to find our own way forward.

Some members of the Faculty Executive Committee have described the current problem of faculty morale as a kind of depression that often emerges in abusive relationships. When people feel powerless to alter their situation or when circumstances feel like they can’t be changed, people fall into low morale or into a feeling of helpless depression; and BOG actions have clearly affected faculty morale.

But we have to recognize that our situation is by no means unusual or beyond hope; we are in a very typical historical situation; and this is why we now need history and the humanities to help us move forward. Karl Marx famously wrote in the 1850s that “*People make their own history, but they do not... make it under circumstances they choose, but under already existing*

circumstances... transmitted from the past.” Even those who deeply dislike Marx’s other ideas, may agree that this statement summarizes our own relation to history. This is also the historical reality of 2020, because we must now make our own history, though not under conditions we have chosen for ourselves. We have to find ways to change our history.

So for another perspective on our situation I want finally to note the ideas of the U of Chicago philosopher Martha Nussbaum, who visited our campus about three years ago to discuss her book, *Anger and Forgiveness*. Nussbaum discussed the role of anger in public and private life; and she stressed how anger rightly emerges when a terrible crime is committed or when people face enduring injustices and abuses. The evil or injustice has already taken place, and this fact cannot be changed; no present or future action can make the past action different. But the anger about this past injustice must be expressed and transformed through some kind of future action.

Nussbaum described what she called three kinds of *Anger Action*. The first is simply “payback anger” which seeks revenge; a kind of “eye for an eye, and tooth for a tooth”; this may briefly make people feel better, but revenge does not alter the situation or lead to a different and better future. And it’s not usually possible for people in weaker or more vulnerable positions.

Nussbaum described the second “anger reaction” as “status reduction” actions, which seek to humiliate or punish the offending persons or groups by reducing their social position or freedom: this takes its most typical form in the imprisonment of people who have committed crimes or in other actions such as firing people or trying to get control of their money through legal actions.

The actions of “Payback Anger” or “Status Reduction Anger” may bring some passing satisfaction, but they don’t change the enduring situation or the structures that created and sustained the injustices. At UNC-Chapel Hill, for example, we can’t really reduce the institutional status of the BOG, though many of our statements have tried to assert a kind of BOG “status reduction” by claiming that its leaders do not understand the University’s mission as well as we do.

Nussbaum herself proposed actions that grow out of what she called “Transition Anger,” and she found notable examples of this kind of action in the lifelong social justice campaigns of Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King, Jr., whom we honor this week.

Like other forms of anger, “Transition Anger” recognizes that evils and injustices have taken place and that anger is fully justified—even though the past can’t be changed. But “transitional anger” turns toward the future, looking for ways to alter the historical situations and structures that fostered the injustices; anger thus *pivots* toward future action. Transitional anger uses honest knowledge about the past as a foundation for transforming the legacies of social injustice.

Like all important philosophical and historical work, Nussbaum’s views provoke debate and disagreements, but I think the concept of “transition anger” may give us a way to define where we stand today as a University Community. We are angry about the injustice of the BOG’s Silent Sam settlement, but this settlement itself is all the more disturbing because it carries forward and rewards a legacy of racist injustices in our state and university.

But how do we use the anger and pain of recent weeks to help us pivot toward the future? How are we building new goals and new structures that will transform the future history of this University? How can we build a stronger community, how can we honestly confront our own institutional history, and how can we implement strategic plans that strengthen our desire to be the “University for North Carolina?”

This is the framework for today’s Faculty Council Meeting: How do we use our expertise and “transitional anger” to carry us forward through transitional and transformational actions? Like basketball players as well as philosophers and historians, we need to have strong ideas and clear strategies for a vibrant *pivot position*.

And I now want to make a simpler pivot by asking Chancellor Guskiewicz to share his evolving ideas about recent and transitional actions; and he’ll join with Bob Blouin to discuss the implementation of the new strategic plan before we come back to the “Commission on History, Race and A Way Forward.”

Faculty Council Meeting, February 14, 2020

Opening Comments

Lloyd Kramer

Professor of History and Chair of the Faculty

Welcome to the February meeting of the UNC Faculty Council. Every month brings new developments and events at our University; Today is Valentine's Day and love should be the subject of the day; but we have other feelings to discuss.

This week we've received the good news that District Court Judge Allen Baddour has overturned the Silent Sam Settlement that the Board of Governors made last November with the Sons of Confederate Veterans. This is a legal ruling to celebrate. I appreciate the efforts of the various students, faculty colleagues, alumni and lawyers who worked to develop legal questions and challenges for the November settlement.

We all remember our December Faculty Council Resolution, which condemned this settlement as a violation of our University's core mission to conduct careful research and teach carefully-established knowledge in all fields, including history. We've talked about how more than 30 different departments and University Units also condemned the settlement; and there have been ongoing efforts by faculty and students to explain why an agreement to pay more than \$2.5 million to a neo-Confederate organization was wrong.

We don't know what the Board of Governors will now propose as a solution for this Zombie Confederate Statue that seems always to reappear; but we must continue to emphasize in the clearest possible terms that we don't want the statue returned to our campus. I think our Chancellor will provide his perspectives on Judge Baddour's recent ruling, though he may still be uncertain (like all of us) about the likely next steps. For the moment, however, we can celebrate the Judge's decision to void the awful agreement which had required our University to give millions of dollars to an organization that defends the racist cause and armies of the Confederacy and that should never receive our own much-needed money

The latest legal ruling alters a recent injustice, but it does not alter our ongoing efforts to understand our University's long, complex history. Since our last Council Meeting, the "Commission on History, Race, and A Way Forward" has officially launched its work. As the co-chairs of the Commission, Pat Parker and Jim Leloudis, told us in January, they will pursue a comprehensive, difficult reckoning with our University's complex entanglement with slavery and later structures of white supremacy; and we don't know where their work will lead;

I want again to thank Chancellor Guskiewicz for setting up this Commission and for pledging to support its honest exploration of the past; and at the Board of Trustees meeting in January, I urged the members of the University Affairs Committee to respond positively and actively to the recommendations that will emerge from the Commission.

As we continue to engage with historical legacies, I want to mention that the annual African-American History Month lecture will take place this coming Monday, February 17, at 7:00 pm at the Sonja Haynes Stone Center. The speaker will be Beverly Guy-Sheftall, who is the Anna Julia Cooper Professor of Women's Studies at Spelman College in Atlanta and a leading expert on the history of African American women; This will be another important event in a

series of events marking African American history this month at UNC; and I encourage you to attend.

I want now to say a few words about the themes of today's Council meeting. We'll begin by honoring our colleague John McGowan who is receiving the Thomas Jefferson Award, and after some remarks from the Chancellor and Provost we'll discuss two reports on recent surveys of Students and Fixed Term Faculty. The Student survey explored student views about Free Expression and Public Dialogues on our campus; and the Fixed Term Faculty Survey explored how the non-tenure track faculty view their work and lives at UNC; both surveys offer a snapshot of current concerns. Our colleagues will provide reports on these surveys, so I won't summarize their themes now.

I do want to note, however, that our University community seems to resemble the wider society in that people are talking about a lot of fears. I hear about the fears of colleagues and students almost every day. Fear is of course a common emotion—and even on Valentine's day it can challenge love for emotional dominance. People have had all kinds of fears in every historical era. But in my recent conversations with faculty, students and staff I've been struck by the ways in which people are feeling so many deep fears in this winter of 2020.

You've probably also been hearing about a lot of fears when you talk with colleagues and students.

People fear that we're seeing the breakdown of democratic institutions and traditions in both our national and state governments; and we're often watching almost helplessly as these institutions become dysfunctional and face exceptional pressures.

Or people fear a global pandemic as the Coronavirus spreads through communities in Asia and into other places in Europe and America.

Students, faculty and staff alike fear the consequences of the rapid climate change and global warming that our political leaders are unwilling or unable to address.

Many people are promoting popular nationalisms in Europe and America that stress fears of immigrants or different religions or different ethnic and racial communities.

Within our own University there's a lot of fear about campus safety and the dangers of white supremacist groups who might bring guns into our community.

We'll talk today about specific fears that keep some students from expressing their beliefs in classrooms and campus events.

I also hear from colleagues about how they fear the policies of our University System's Board of Governors or the priorities of our state government leaders.

Faculty in fixed term positions fear the uncertainties of year-to-year employment and both faculty and staff fear the current health care costs for their families.

Some fear the influence of outside donors on the values of our University culture or the anti-intellectual dangers of a hostile political culture.

I'm sure you've heard and even felt many of these fears yourself. Fear is a powerful force in our national culture and even within our own University. But these widespread fears give University Faculty an essential social role, because our teaching and research offer alternatives to fear. Gaining new knowledge offers ways to demystify what people fear; and education is empowering because it provides skills to confront the forces that create our fears.

Political leaders and radical Nationalists thrive by stoking fears and urging people to be fearful of those who are different. *Universities at their best can reduce fears by building knowledge of and engagement with people who come from different cultures, different traditions, and different experiences.* Great Universities—when they are doing their work well—can become an antidote to the pervasive fears that polarize societies and foster obsessions with cultural and national difference.

Franklin Roosevelt recognized the problem of pervasive fears in his famous first inaugural address. I happened to read his speech recently, and it seemed that his views of America in 1933 might well be relevant for our University in 2020. *“This is preeminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly,”* he argued in 1933. And his claim about the nation could be applied to our University. *“This great nation [I’ll change the word to University] will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper. So, ...let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.”*

I'm sure that as critical-minded, skeptical scholars we could find flaws in Roosevelt's claims from 1933. But as we go forward in today's discussion about the University and the fears that people may be feeling—I'd like to propose that we also think about how the University can serve an essential public role as an empowering antidote to fear.

So Happy Valentine's Day, and let's move on from Franklin Roosevelt and his critique of pervasive fears to the achievements of our fearless Jefferson Award recipient for 2019-20. And I'll ask Chancellor Guskiewicz to introduce this recognition event.

Faculty Council Meeting, March 20, 2020

Opening Comments

Lloyd Kramer

Professor of History and Chair of the Faculty

Welcome to the March meeting of the UNC Faculty Council. I usually begin these meetings by noting important University events that have happened recently or will be happening in the near future. But all events have been cancelled, so I'll just focus on this meeting. Council members are participating via Zoom, but the usual livestream is available for everyone. I want to thank the great team at the Office of Faculty Governance for the work they've done to organize this event: *Thanks to Helena Knego, Lisa-Jean Michienzi, Kadejah Murray and Vin Steponaitis.*

I'm sure that there has never been a Faculty Council meeting in an almost empty room or on Zoom or in the kind of context in which we're now living. I began our February meeting with references to Franklin Roosevelt's speech about moving beyond Fear and recognizing that "All we have to fear is fear itself." But new fears have multiplied beyond what we could possibly have imagined last month, and we're struggling with the medical, economic, political, and educational crises of COVID-19. Roosevelt's speech from 1933 now seems even more optimistic.

Our University work nevertheless remains essential, even though much of our on-line teaching can't possibly be the same as our normal classroom interactions with students. Our usual research and service have also been completely altered, and we feel as if we're in a collective free fall because we don't know when normal activities will resume. Uncertainty pervades everyone's life right now, and yet we're still convening our March Faculty Council meeting—a small continuity!

Like elections and the public institutions in a democratic society, the institutions of faculty governance and faculty discussion must be sustained in times of crisis, because the University's mission continues. We now have to conduct our meetings online, and we know that this format reduces the usual interactions of faculty conversations.

Faculty exchanges like many other conversations lose important qualities when they take place entirely over the internet. We're likely to emerge from this crisis with major changes in our society and in the ways we do our work at Universities. Our world is changing in unpredictable ways.

Meanwhile, however, we have an important agenda for today's meeting, which will include brief presentations by the candidates for the next Chair of the Faculty, Mimi Chapman and Joy Renner. Our faculty elections are going forward in April, like the US political elections in 2020. We'll move from our Chair candidates to discussions with Kevin Guskiewicz and Bob Blouin, who will summarize the evolving policies and plans for coping with the Coronavirus and its effects.

We've received several questions in advance for the Chancellor and Provost, but Council members will also be able to ask questions over Zoom and others can send questions via text messages. After our discussion with the Chancellor and Provost, we'll have a panel conversation with experts who are deeply involved with campus responses to COVID-19; the panel will be

introduced by Vice-Chancellor George Battle, who is leading our risk management team. We have some pre-submitted questions for the panel, but you may propose other questions as well.

Following the panel discussion, we'll receive an update from University Librarian Elaine Westbrook, who will offer important information on recent negotiations with the Elsevier publishing company. We spend millions of dollars each year on Elsevier journals and other resources, but these expenditures can't be sustained. So Elaine will explain how the Library is planning to change these huge costs in the future.

We'll conclude today's meeting with a brief closed session to discuss future Honorary Degree recipients. The full agenda is on the Faculty Council website, and *the agenda includes a link to directions for how to send web or text messages*. You can text Council 320 to 22333 and text in your message.

The great resources of UNC are being mobilized to address the crisis of COVID-19; and some of the world's best epidemiologists and medical researchers are working on our campus to analyze the disease and find a vaccine for this virus. We need our Health Affairs colleagues and public health experts to continue this essential work and to help those who may become ill.

We're also going to need the best insights of our economists, social scientists, legal experts and many others to help our state through the long, difficult recovery that will follow the coming economic crash. Our University's service to the state will become even more important during every phase of this vast upheaval.

I want to emphasize that we'll also need our artists, musicians, poets, and writers to help carry us through these disorienting times. And as a historian, I would also stress the value of the wide-ranging perspectives that come from all of the humanistic traditions.

I've regularly drawn on humanistic texts to find perspectives on complex problems such as the Confederate monument conflicts; and now I'm using history to find the past experiences and insights we need to remember as we struggle to make sense of the current crisis. Everyone has to find their own perspectives to cope with this upheaval, but some of my own solace has come from going back to the 14th-century Italian writer Giovanni Boccaccio, who described the plague that swept through Italy in 1348.

I've also returned to Albert Camus, the 20th-century French writer whose novel *The Plague* tells a story about how people responded to a modern plague in North Africa. Camus' novel was published in 1947 as a kind of metaphor for the awful Nazi virus that had recently afflicted and killed millions of Europeans; and it describes different reactions to the great crisis of a disease. So I'll conclude with brief quotations from Boccaccio and Camus to remind us that other human beings have dealt with much greater calamities than we face, and they've gone on to flourish.

In 1348 the plague came into Florence and other parts of Italy, killing between 1/3 and 1/2 of the entire population. This Plague caused terrible swellings and death within three days. And here's how Boccaccio described Florentine responses to the disease in his book *The Decameron* (written in 1353):

“Against these maladies, it seemed that all the advice of physicians and all the power of medicine were profitless and unavailing.... [The disease] caused various fears and fantasies to

take root in the minds of those who were still alive and well. And almost without exception, they took a single... precaution, namely to avoid or run away from the sick...

Some people were of the opinion that a sober... mode of living considerably reduced the risk of infection. They therefore ... lived in isolation from everyone else.... They refrained from speaking to outsiders... and entertained themselves with music and... other amusements they were able to devise.

Others... maintained that an infallible way of warding off this appalling evil was to drink heavily, enjoy life to the full, go round singing... and shrug the whole thing off as one enormous joke.

Many other people... steered a middle course.... Instead of incarcerating themselves [or drinking], these people moved about freely, holding in their hands a bouquet of flowers or fragrant herbs....

In the face of so much affliction and misery, all respect for the laws of God and man had virtually broken down... in our city.

Large numbers of men and women [simply] abandoned... their homes, their relatives, their estates and their belongings, and headed for the countryside.

Yet out of this terrible disaster, the people of Florence gradually revived their economy, maintained their republic, and went on to create many of the greatest works of Renaissance art, literature, and philosophy. Boccaccio's account of 14th-century Florence helps us connect our own challenges with the dangerous, disorienting experiences of human beings in past times. And like Boccaccio, we'll somehow find creative ways to move forward from the current crisis.

Finally, I want to note Albert Camus' description of Dr. Rieux, the doctor in his novel *The Plague*. This doctor works night and day to help patients who are dying of the disease; and his comments to a friend evoke for me the work of our own medical colleagues here at UNC:

"I have no idea what's awaiting me," Dr. Rieux says, "or what will happen when all this ends. For the moment I know this; there are sick people and they need curing.... I defend them as best I can, that's all."

The doctor's existential determination to keep working gives him his only certainty amid the great uncertainties in his city. *"There lay certitude,"* the narrator explains; *"there, in the daily rounds [of his medical work]. All the rest hung on mere threads and trivial contingencies. You couldn't waste your time on it. The thing was to do your job as it should be done."*

I hope that amid our current upheavals, we'll find new ways to keep doing "our jobs as they should be done." And although I've referred to great writers from the past, I now want to turn this meeting entirely toward the present and the future.

I ask our two candidates to come forward with social distance and briefly explain how they envision the work and challenges for the Faculty Chair in coming years. Our two highly qualified candidates are Mimi Chapman, a Professor in the School of Social Work, and Joy Renner, a Professor of Radiologic Science in the School of Medicine—and *I very much appreciate their willingness to serve in this position.*

Faculty Council Meeting, April 17, 2020

Opening Comments

Lloyd Kramer

Professor of History and Chair of the Faculty

Welcome to the April meeting of the UNC Faculty Council, which is our last Council meeting for the year and another extraordinary gathering on Zoom. We also have the usual livestream, though we are sharing today's video with people beyond the Council via Youtube, where there is also information below the video about how non-Council members can ask questions via a link or a text message. Council participants should note via the chat function that they have a question, and you will be recognized to speak through the usual zoom audio.

I want to begin this meeting with a hearty thank-you to the great team at the Office of Faculty Governance for the work they've done to organize the complex technology for this event: *Thanks to Helena Knego, Lisa-Jean Michienzi, Kadejah Murray and Faculty Secretary Vin Steponaitis*. They've worked very hard to organize this meeting; and I want to stress that Faculty Governance depends constantly on the amazing work that they do throughout the year—even when there is not a pandemic. I also thank Emily Blackburn for her assistance in managing the technology for questions at this meeting.

I said last month that there had never been a Faculty Council meeting in an almost empty room or on Zoom, but now I can say that we're carrying this social isolation to an even higher level; and I'm sure that our predecessors never convened a Faculty Council meeting at which not even two people were present in the same room. We're all living in Zoomland now, and it can wear us down.

As people in every community and institution keep repeating: we're truly in uncharted waters as we struggle to keep our personal lives and professional lives precariously balanced within the four walls of our scattered houseboats that are keeping us afloat in these choppy seas.

We are scholars and teachers who like to think that we can understand and explain many different aspects of the natural world and social world. But I'm sure that when we convened our first Faculty Council meeting of this academic year, nobody imagined the situation in which we would be convening our last meeting of the year in April.

Although we're mostly dispersed in our own places now, we've all shared this disorienting experience in which the usual components of our lives are severely disrupted and we're forced to live with all kinds of uncertainties. Our undergraduate and graduate students are living this experience, but it's also the experience of our staff, our faculty, our administrators, and all of our families. So in a strange way, we're all learning about the many vulnerabilities of our lives and our institutions—even as we try to respond as creatively as we possibly can.

I want to thank everyone for the incredible work that you continue to do in these times; both faculty and staff alike are all learning about the meaning of resiliency as we deal with a looming budget crisis. I also want especially to note the challenges that our graduate students are facing as they lose summer research fellowships, travel grants, and job opportunities. This pandemic is affecting students at all levels, but it's a particular professional crisis for graduate students, as some explained in a list of concerns and demands during this past week.

There has also been a clear summary of concerns in a collective statement from the Senate of the Graduate and Professional Student Federation, to which the Chancellor, Provost and Dean of the Graduate School have responded. And I want to emphasize that faculty share the concerns that the Graduate Student Federation has summarized.

At today's Council meeting we're going to hear from the Chancellor and Provost about the University's evolving response to the Covid-19 crisis, which includes issues that may affect students, staff and faculty in different ways. But we'll also discuss some changing plans for the new Data Science program and the work of the Task Force on Promotion and Tenure, led by Ron Strauss. This working group has developed recommendations that are designed to provide greater flexibility in the ways we can recruit new colleagues and evaluate faculty for promotion. We'll also hear from the Chair of the Committee on Appointments, Promotion, and Tenure, Steve Crews, who will report on his Committee's support for these recommendations.

Before turning to the future, however, I want to stress that Faculty Governance has played an essential role throughout this year in addressing issues that arose *before* the Covid Crisis as well as issues that have arisen during the crisis. And these issues will continue to affect our University after we emerge from the current upheavals.

Both the Council and our many Faculty committees have responded to complex, controversial issues such as: (1) the creation of the Program on Public Discourse; (2) the Board of Governors' now-rescinded agreement to give Silent Sam and \$2.5 million to the Sons of the Confederate Veterans; (3) the AAU report on Sexual Misconduct; (4) the challenges of budget uncertainties and salary inequities as well as the specific concerns of fixed term faculty; (5) the student, staff and faculty concerns about campus safety; (6) the difficult engagement with our University's historical entanglement with slavery, racism, and discrimination; and (7) attitudes about Free Speech and diversity within the UNC community.

At the same time, the Faculty Council and Committees have been much engaged with the University's pivot toward the future, which includes: (1) the work of our Task Group on historical reckoning; (2) the innovative proposals for a new data science programs; (3) the implementation of the Strategic Plan, *Carolina Next*; (4) the roll-out of the future General Education Curriculum for undergraduates; and (5) the ongoing success of our ambitious fundraising campaign.

There are many other issues that I could mention—issues that raise new challenges as well as new opportunities. But my main point in noting issues we've addressed this year is to emphasize that Faculty have to be involved in the analysis and policy-making that accompany all important problems, controversies, and institutional changes. Faculty will also need to be deeply involved with the processes that will shape the transitions back to classroom instruction and campus research as well as the continuing refinement of on-line teaching.

The institutional structures for this involvement will come through Faculty Governance and the commitment to shared governance among both faculty and administrators. As I welcome our next chair of the faculty, Mimi Chapman (who will speak to us soon), I want to emphasize to all our faculty colleagues that she will depend (as I have) on the amazing work of people throughout every part of this very strong university.

We are especially fortunate in having University leaders who have wide experience as faculty members themselves; and I particularly thank Kevin Guskiewicz, Bob Blouin, and the deans of all our schools for their remarkable work in responding creatively to the vast consequences of the Covid-19 crisis. They will continue to face major challenges. But I know that they intend to work constantly with the faculty, staff, and students as we go forward into the still-unknown territory of declining economic resources, changing instructional patterns, and continuing uncertainties about when we can resume all of our normal public activities—from sports events and theatrical productions to state outreach and service programs. We have to be a collaborative team as we make our way through all of these complex transitions.

As we move now into the issues on today’s agenda, I want to say that it has been a great honor for me to serve this year as chair of the Faculty Council. I’ve learned from so many people and gained new insights into the incredible talents of the people who work and study at UNC. I’ve also developed a new appreciation for the people who held leadership positions at UNC in the past; and I’ve thought of myself this year as one of the baton carriers in the University’s great relay race toward the future.

Our predecessors have given the UNC baton to our generation, and we’ll pass this baton to others who will build on the work that we’re doing today—including our work during this pandemic. In a moment we’re going to honor colleagues who have died over this last year, and we’ll recognize them as some of people who have given us the institutional baton that we’ll pass on to others.

But I want to conclude my remarks today by quoting the wisdom of a wise philosopher. As I think you know from past meetings, I like to turn to humanistic traditions and writers to make sense of our current situations. Last month it seemed that Boccaccio and Camus offered especially useful perspectives for our current crisis.

But today I want to quote the Stoic thinker Epictetus, who lived in the era of the Roman Empire from about 55-135 CE. He had been born into slavery and though he eventually gained his freedom and became a teacher, he knew about all the adversities of the human condition—from physical limitations to the numerous obstacles that block people from achieving their goals or ambitions. His perspective on how to live a good life is worth quoting briefly as we move forward with our own struggles in 2020.

“What really frightens and dismays us [Epictetus explained] is not external events themselves, but the way in which we think about them. It is not external things that disturb us, but our interpretation of their significance.”

“The greater the difficulty, the more glory we have in surmounting it. Skillful pilots gain their reputation from storms and tempests.... Make the best of what is in our power, and take the rest as it occurs.”

May we all be “skillful pilots” as we sail together and with our University through this great Covid tempest. And now I would like to ask for a moment of Silence in our Zoom-bound homes as we recognize the colleagues who have died over this past year.