

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE
FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
October 12, 2023; 3:15 pm, Laurel Forum, Karpen 139

Members: D. Eggers, A. Laughlin, K. Boyle, M. Mahoney, R. Berls, J. Brown, B. Butler, S. Dittenber, B. Felix, S. Kapur, T. Meigs, B. Sanft, R. Tatum, E. Tomberlin, R. Vandaie, L. Ward, C. Whitlock, S. Williams.

Visitors: K. van Noort, A. Boakye-Boaten, C. Boone,, M. Cameron, R. Criser, L. DeHaan, J. Dougherty, L. Horgan, M. Johnson, T. King, J. Konz, K. Piccirillo, G. Reynolds, T. Rizzo, A. Shope, A. Strickland, D. Traywick, C. Yau.

I. Call to Order and Welcome by Faculty Senate Chair Dee Eggers

II. Election from among the alternates for a Senate vacancy
Ramin Vandaie was confirmed as completing term 2023-25 without dissent.

III. Interim Chancellor Kim van Noort Remarks

Kim van Noort thanked the campus for their patience during construction. She knows it is disruptive. Campus classroom upgrades in teaching and learning spaces are high on the docket. Some have been completed while there is a lot left to do and faculty and staff input is crucial.

She knows that we are all reeling from events in Israel and Gaza now. The Chancellors discussed this on their call today. They are concerned that students on our campuses may be affected by the draft by the Israeli government. They are monitoring this carefully. She asks faculty to please let her know if there is anything we need to be doing. As she has said, they are monitoring very carefully on campus to make sure that we know any students in need or if there is anything that is pending.

They had a big Board of Trustees meeting a couple weeks ago. They are hoping to have a draft of a new proposal for event planning so that is up and running again soon. Sylvia Meyer over in University Events is coming up with a draft process. They will circulate that to various groups across campus, including this body (Faculty Senate) and the Chairs and Program Directors. They would like to get this rolling this Spring.

Last week, they rolled out a program called Access Asheville. This is a an attempt to better market and communicate to students who need the information regarding the fact that between the combination of grants that they are qualified for and between some scholarships that we have here at the university, we can guarantee that if your family makes \$80,000 or less, you will not have to pay tuition or fees at the university. We already do this for quite a few students that qualify. This is done through how they package financial aid. There are some conditions like you have to be North Carolina resident because that is a requirement for some of these grants they have access. You must maintain satisfactory academic progress and you must be enrolled in 15 hours per semester. This is an attempt to try to really signal to the students that this is what you need to do to graduate in four years. There will be an appeal process, and they have funding to help people catch up in the summertime to achieve the 30-hour requirement over the year. There will still be the board expense for many students. This program is to help and support students so they can graduate in four years. They have gotten

incredibly good feedback and she has had calls from all community college presidents saying this is fantastic that they are offering this to transfer students as well that she thinks is important since transfer students start at Community College for financial reasons.

They are not saying this is all free, this is not free, the student must do certain things to keep the funds. They are using funds from various sources. She has had quite a few questions from General Assembly. There was a big fluff when Chapel Hill announced a similar program a few months ago. However, we have revealed what we are doing and how as well as why we are doing this – the population of students that we are trying to help so they understand that they can go to college.

Ted Meigs asked if this was distinct from NC Promise Program that some UNC System schools have.

Kim van Noort that this is fully distinct from the NC Promise Program. NC Promise covers some of the tuition but does not cover fees. Our way is we do not have NC Promise here, but we can still figure out a way for student to attend here at a reasonable cost. There is a report she can show regarding the statistics regarding NC Promise schools. Initially, they all went up the first two years and now are flat and one of the school's numbers are going down. One theory for this is there is a finite population of students who are interested in going to those schools at that price. She found the report interesting and was surprised as well for NC Promise is available for out of state as well as in state students at rates where we are spending more money on out of state students.

Dee Eggers asked if there was wiggle room regarding 15 hours since many of our programs models are 4-credit hour courses meaning they would take 16 hours a semester.

Kim van Noort agreed there will have to be some flexibility. This is one of the reasons she believes we need to look over the academic year rather than by semester.

Dee Eggers asked if any aid packages involve loans.

Kim van Noort replied not in this Access Asheville package. Some students will probably take out loans to pay for housing.

If faculty have any questions of her, contact her office.

IV. Approval of Minutes: September 7, 2023
Minutes from September 7, 2023 passed without dissent.

V. Introductions and Reports to Senate
Staff Council: Lauren DeHaan for Chair Emily Greene

Lauren DeHaan, Chair Elect to Staff Council, made the report from Staff Council this month. She works in the Career Center.

She gave a few quick updates. The first one is that Leaves of Gratitude is going to be announced soon. They are currently working on getting everything together to send out and launch in November. This year they made one change in that anytime someone submits a Leaf of Gratitude, the honored person's supervisor will also receive an email to let them know what was sent so they also see the positive feedback that folks are getting on their team. We are excited about that change this year.

They also have some restructuring happening on staff council with some of their specific subcommittees. They also decided to add a new Executive Committee member and that is the Vice Chair for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion that is now held by Carlton Smith. They also have

DEI Committee as well., The idea behind the restructuring is we want to have a little bit more involvement from Staff Council and provide more structure for Staff Council around movement within leadership positions.

The last thing she brought up was Staff Council is chatting through options for possibility of offering childcare for folks on campus. The idea has certainly been visited before. They want to offer childcare for faculty, staff and students who might need it. They are currently in discussion with some different folks around campus to kind of see what might be feasible. Michael McNamee, who is the Director of Alumni has been diligently leading the efforts here since he has the best communication with a childcare facility that had interest in partnering with the university. Though they are currently digging into that, but no major updates other than the fact that exploration is in progress.

Annual Open Enrollment:

Karla Piccirillo,
Associate Director Employment Benefits

Karla Piccirillo asked for a moment to speak before the Faculty Senate to remind everyone that it is time for open enrollment that is our time to review our family's benefits and make changes. We have until October 27 to make these changes for the calendar year 2024.

Regarding changes, the plans are not changing much at all this year. We have 3 dental rate tiers to choose from: low, mid and high options where the low and high tiers are receiving small increases in their premiums. However, the middle, which is what most of us have, is staying the same.

This year they will not be sending out your state health plan cards like they have in the past so you will need to hold on to the ones you have for now. If you make a change to your state health plan, then they will send you new cards.

Remember, everyone goes back to the 70/30 plan. If you want the 80/20 plan, you must take action before October 27. Similarly, they apply a smoking fee to your health premium of \$60 per month. You have to take action in order to have that removed by either attesting that you are not a smoker, or you can say that you are a smoker who will engage in a counseling session and upload the requested documentation. A \$60 monthly credit may not sound like much, but that adds up to a savings of \$720 not coming out of your paycheck a year so it is important to get that completed. This year there are not one but two portals you must complete for open enrollment. The first portal has the health plan and the smoking attestation. The second portal is called Emphyrean and has the NC flex benefits. The good news is most of your NC flex benefits will transition over if you don't make any changes, except for flexible medical plan as well as your dependent care.

Basically, what are you going to do, you will log in single sign on make your health plan selection and complete the smoking attestation. Once you complete all the screens and receive your confirmation statement, then you go to next portal, log in there and review NC Flex benefits. Once you make your changes and save, you will again receive confirmation. You are then done.

You only have until October 27. If you have questions, contact Karla Piccirillo or Melanie Johnson. They are glad to help anytime. She opened the floor up for questions.

Ted Meigs asked about flex spending accounts. If faculty or staff do not want flex spending next year, do they have to go in the new portal and declare they do not want it.

Karla Piccirillo replied that the fund drops to zero per IRS guidelines. You must go in and put the amount you want for next year, which the maximum for next year is \$3,050.

VI. Executive Committee: Faculty Senate Chair Dee Eggers
Edit to [SD5423S, Establishment of Task Force to Review the Liberal Arts Core](#)

Dee Eggers presented the proposed edit to SD5423S, Establishing the LAC Task Force. When the LAC Review Taskforce was established, the document did not include the Senate Chair as a member. Since the document's passage, members of the Senate Executive Committee have been asked why the chair was not put on the task force. They realized that our previous General Education Reviews have included the Senate Chair as a co-chair or a member of the review body. The document also indicates that all Senate Committee Chairs would take part and Senate Executive Committee is a committee of Senate also. After further deliberation, we think that the Senate Chair should be on the committee because the omission of the Senate Chair could set a problematic precedent and erosion of Senate participation in future reviews. The Senate Chair understands that the other three Senate Committees have discussed this in their meetings and so this is now brought before the full Senate for consideration.

There was a question whether this needed a motion to waive the Comer Rule. Senate's Administrative Assistant replied to go ahead with that motion first to make ensure this is handled properly.

There was a motion to waive the Comer Rule to consider this on the floor of the Senate, which was seconded. No. Discussion.

The motion to waive the Comer Rule passed without dissent.

A motion was made to accept the editing SD5423S to include the Senate Chair as a member of the LAC Review Taskforce, which was seconded. No discussion.

The motion to add the Senate Chair to the LAC Review Taskforce passed without dissent.

VII. Academic Policies Committee: First Vice Chair Andrew Laughlin
[Decision Summaries](#)

First Reading

[APC 1](#) Change credit hours and revise description for IST 325
(Lisa Mann, IST)

[APC 2](#) Require the First-Year Seminar to be taken during the first semester,
and revise the FYS 178 description to reflect the change
(Regine Criser, FYS)

[APC 3](#) Revise the Academic Standing Policy
(Lynne Horgan, Regine Criser)

[APC 4](#) Change the title of PSYC 208
(Keith Cox, PSYC)

Andrew Laughlin presented that APC had four documents up for first reading. They passed APC unanimously. If faculty have any questions or concerns or hear about any potential questions or concerns about these documents, please contact him before they come up for a second reading. When they come up for second reading, since these were approved without dissent, they can be bundled to be approved with one motion. If a senator would like a document removed from the bundle for discussion before voting, please let him know. He concluded by drawing senators' attention to the Decision Summaries for more details regarding the decisions APC made.

VIII. Faculty Welfare and Development Committee: Third Vice Chair Melissa Mahoney
[Decision Summaries](#)

Approval of Appointment to Senate Standing Committee

There is a vacancy on the University Teaching Council (UTC). UTC serves the institution with respect to teaching in three main ways including facilitates improvements, methods, and techniques related to teaching awards funds to support teaching when available. In consultation with the advisors the CTL, FWDC nominates Eric Tomberlin.

A motion was made to confirm Eric Tomberlin's nomination to UTC, which was seconded.

The motion passed without dissent and Eric Tomberlin has been appointed to UTC for 2023-25 term.

Eric Tomberlin relayed his thanks and appreciation to Faculty Senate.

First Reading

[FWDC 2](#) Revise Guidelines for First Year Experience Advisory Committee
Faculty Handbook [Section 10.4.37](#)

[FWDC 3](#) Revise the Honors Program Description
Faculty Handbook [Section 11.2](#)

There are two first reading documents. FWDC 2 revises the guidelines for the First Year Experience Advisory Committee so that the Director of Student Success and be the Dean of Students can designate alternates to Co-Chair the committee in their place offering flexibility. FWDC 3 revises the handbook description of the University Honors Program in several important ways.

These are voted on at the next meeting so please let Melissa Mahoney and FWDC know in advance of concerns and questions, and they will be happy to address them within the next month.

Second Reading

[FWDC 1](#) Revise Faculty Handbook Guidelines for Program Changes
Faculty Handbook [Section 5.4.2](#)

FWDC 1 aligns the faculty handbook to ensure that new degree program proposals follow correct Senate approval. Further changes to Faculty Handbook Section 5.4 are forthcoming.

A motion was made to accept FWDC 1, which was seconded. No discussion.
FWDC 1 passed without dissent.

IX. Institutional Development Committee / UPC: Second Vice Chair Kirk Boyle

The Institutional Development Committee does not have a document to present at this time; however, they have met. They had a great conversation with Kevin Sanft, the Chair of the Computer Science Department regarding developing a minor in Data Science for the Math Department. They made some updates and gave some advice for revising for their APC proposal before submitting their final proposal by the deadline on Monday, October 15.

IDC also met to talk about academic program review that will be a recurring item on IDC's agenda this year. IDC will come up with guidelines and policies for departments and programs to review how they operate. Their next meeting is October 19 when they will have a couple of guests. One of them will be the Director of Institutional Planning and Accreditation Support, Deaver Traywick.

X. Announcements/Adjournment Faculty Senate Chair Dee Eggers
Faculty Senate Chair Dee Eggers adjourned the meeting at 4:00 pm.