**Faculty Council**

**Minutes of May 13, 2021 Meeting**

**Voting Members Present**

**(Ex Officio)**: Susan Harden (President); Joel Avrin (Past President); Debra Smith (Secretary); Chris Jarrett (FEC, COAA); Dongsong Zhang (FEC, COB); Heather Lipford (FEC, CCI); Dawson Hancock (FEC, COED); Jay Wu (FEC, COE); Susan McCarter (FEC, CHHS); Anton Pujol (FEC, CLAS); Beth Whitaker (FEC, CLAS); Katie Howell (FEC, LIB); Joan Lorden (Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs)

**(Unit Representatives)**: Catherine Fuentes (ANTH); Thomas Forget (SOA); Jeff Murphy (ARTS); Melanie Harris (BIOL); Kexin Zhao (BISOM); Christopher Bejger (CHEM); Craig Paddock (COMM); Wenwen Dou (CS); Sam Dewitt (CJUS); Doug Hague (DTSC); Krista Saral (ECON); Yong Zhang (ECE); Juan Meneses (ENGL); Yilei Zhang (FINN); Craig Allan (GYES); David Verrill (KNES); Catherine Tingelstad (LIB); Karen Ford-Eickhoff (MGMT); Charles Bodkin (MKTG); Shaoyu Li (MATH); Jerry Dahlberg (MEES); Warren DiBiase (MDSK); Caitlin Moore (MSCI); Florence Okoro (SON); Menelaos Poutous (PHYS); Ben Radford (POLS); Andrew Case (PSYC); Travis Hales (SOWK); Sunshine Niu (SIS); Ertunga Ozelkan (SEEM); Carlos Cruz (THEA)

**Guests Present (Not Voting)**

Dick Beekman (Student Government Association); Kaitlyn Collins (Student Government Association); Celeste Corpening (Staff Council); Yvette Huet (ADVANCE); Victoria Scott (Psychological Science); Madi Williams (Student Government Association); Matthew Wyse (Academic Affairs)

Faculty President Susan Harden called to order the special meeting of the Faculty Council at 1:00 P.M.

1. **Review of the Agenda.** Harden shared the agenda for today’s meeting. Harden wants the meeting to generate feedback. A link to a feedback form was provided in the Zoom meeting chat.
2. **Review of the Role of the Faculty Council.** Harden shared presentation slides. She explained the policy-making responsibilities and authority of the Faculty Council. Some of the responsibilities within the purview of the Faculty Council include setting minimal general degree requirements for the University, setting minimal University admission standards, establishing academic plans and curricula and developing and reviewing proposed new programs, and establishing academic policies concerning grading, withdrawal, suspension, retention, academic credit, granting of degrees, and much more. The Faculty Council also has consultative responsibilities in such areas as the academic calendar, salary increases, academic workloads, appointment of administrators, grants and contracts, and much more. Harden asked if anything was missing from these lists, that perhaps we should consider adding to our bylaws. Harden explained that this year we will be receiving legislative reports from time to time and will be sharing them at Faculty Council meetings. Please share with your colleagues. Hopefully this will help keep everyone informed. The Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) will have a “News of the Faculty Council” blurb about every two weeks within the weekly OAA News Digest. Keep a lookout for that information. Harden announced that we are going to be getting a Twitter account. Look for that if you are a Twitter person. The Twitter handle will be announced in the OAA News Digest.
3. **Report from the Student Body President (Dick Beekman).** Beekman is the Student Body President for 2021-2022. He shared a presentation about the academic goals of Student Government. He began with a little about himself. He is a rising Senior, double majoring in History and Political Science, and a student Veteran. Beekman says the Student Government vision for the upcoming year is a return to normal, to implement lessons learned from the pandemic, and continue work left off prior to the pandemic. Academic goals listed by Beekman including re-establishing 24-hour library hours, greater university-wide recognition for high achieving students, implementation of a syllabi deadline, increase in use of open source textbooks, and improved relations with GPSC, Faculty Council, and faculty. Beekman said the relationship between Student Government and the Faculty Council during this pandemic was great and wants to continue to build this relationship. He also is proposing student and faculty participation in college specific roundtables. He noted that Kaitlyn Collins and Madi Williams of Student Government Association are also present at today’s meeting. Beekman opened the floor for questions.

**Q:** You indicate that students are not notified that they have made the Dean’s List or Chancellor’s List; they are not aware?

**A:** Correct. Students are not sent a letter or notification that they have made the Dean’s List or Chancellor’s List. Instead, they have to look it up for themselves. Provost Lorden added a note in the chat indicated that making the Dean’s List and Chancellor’s List does appear on a student’s transcript.

1. **Report from the Staff Council President (Celeste Corpening).** Corpening is the Staff Council President. She gave a presentation on Staff Council and their goals. Staff Council was established to create and provide a more harmonious working environment for the staff of the university. Their website is <https://stafforg.uncc.edu/>. Corpening explained what the Staff Council does and who comprises the 2021-2022 Staff Council Executive Committee. She mentioned upcoming events and the 2021 Staff Council goals. Some of the goals include establishing an ombudsman advocate, facilitating training based on survey input, addressing salary disparities and compensation issues, building more Staff Council awareness on campus, and increasing shared governance with faculty and students. Corpening mentioned some current issues such as parking, safety, work from home options, and inequities in the workplace. She mentioned that Staff Council is working with the UNC Charlotte Racial Equity Task Force to propose resolutions to these issues. Some proposed resolutions include providing mentor and rehabilitation opportunities for non-violent offenders, generating reports breaking down salaries by race including education and years of experience, and employing a staff ombudsman on campus. Corpening said to feel free to contact Staff Council at staffcouncil@uncc.edu and opened the floor for questions. No questions followed.
2. **Items for 2021-2022 Agenda from the Provost.** Harden said the Provost has provided her with a draft agenda workplan. This workplan is the items the Provost would like to see the Faculty Council address this upcoming year. The workplan includes updating the procedures for resolving faculty grievances (carryover from this past year), conducting an academic policy equity review (carryover from this past year), reviewing policy on relationships between students and University employees, considering adding a violation to the Code of Student Academic Integrity, continuation of the Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) Task Force (carryover from this past year), consideration of relevance of the “H” grade, improving the Course Numbering and Status Policy to be clearer, consider giving the award of Chancellor’s List and Dean’s List in summer term, and reviewing five more policies due for their seven-year policy review. Harden opened the floor for questions. Whitaker suggested more use of the practice of brining complicated topics to Faculty Council for discussion one month and then voting on them the next Faculty Council meeting. This allows for more discussion. Harden agreed saying we can have first readings.
3. **SWOT Discussion in Break-out Rooms.** Harden then asked members to conduct a SWOT analysis on the Faculty Council. The meeting participants were placed in Zoom breakout rooms of 3 to 4 people to discuss. Harden reminded them to use the google form in the chat (<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSenmMGdH0Cc0fUU-a6MKbkBwxqguzquCH7rCW4Qz8qSP5a9gA/viewform>) to record the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and other comments. The breakout session lasted approximately 15 minutes.
4. **Faculty Focus Groups and Feedback from Pre-tenure Faculty (Yvette Huet).** Huet of ADVANCE presented themes from faculty focus groups. In Spring 2021, the UNC Charlotte ADVANCE Faculty Affairs and Diversity Office conducted focus groups of pre-tenure faculty members to gauge their needs in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants were drawn from all colleges. The idea was born from Rick Tankersley’s idea to figure out what we can do to help due to disruption by the pandemic. Feedback showed theses that include morale being low, a one-year extension of RPT requirements is not enough, feeling of being trapped with a lack of resources, experiences of compounded stressors, and suggestions for improved communication and messaging. Huet said it appears university messaging is now about Fall remote versus in-person. Huet opened the floor for questions. Harden called her presentation powerful. How should we respond as Faculty Council. Cruz said communication is critical. We need to make sure there is a conduit. Remove gaps that are there. Get us out of the silos we are in and back to a community. Zhao asked if we can share this presentation with others? Huet said yes. Harden said we will post it on the Faculty Council agenda site, if permitted. Huet said that was fine. Lorden said one message to take back is that every year people who have a challenge and need an extension on these decisions/reviews can make that extension request. We recognize that people do not make these requests frivolously, so we approve them. Lorden cannot recall ever denying an extension request. The one-year extension is not their only extension possible. The Faculty Council did come up with a simple kind of way to note the challenge of this year. I understand the challenge of new faculty members who have not had a chance to meet their colleagues in person. Lorden said we have had lots of discussions on how to help people. However, we need to hear from people, to know what is needed.
5. **Faculty Compensation Study.** Harden advocated for a salary compensation study. She believes UNC Charlotte faculty are high-performing, but increases in faculty compensation have not reflected faculty performance over the last ten years. We must look clearly at the data. Harden is seeking a long-term plan to address faculty compensation. UNC Charlotte admirably took on seven stretch goals and is performing well; exceeding the goals. Harden is worried about burnout and listed organizational factors know to lead to burnout including unsustainable workload, insufficient rewards for effort, lack of a supportive community, and lack of fairness. Harden shared a faculty salary study conducted by Western Carolina University that she first saw at Faculty Assembly. With salary losing ground versus inflation and the cost of living in the Charlotte area going up, we will be doing a similar study here at UNC Charlotte. It will be an ad hoc committee conducting this study co-chaired by Craig Depken and Rob Roy McGregor. Harden opened the floor for questions.

Q: Whitaker asked about joining forces with staff and doing a faculty & staff salary study.

A: Yes, the WCU study also looked at employee salary, not just faculty salary.

Q: Will the study show salary by field?

A: WCU plans to do that next. I will forward that request to the ad hoc committee.

Q: Dewitt asked if it is noted whether those listed peer schools are unionized or not unionized?

A: Not sure, but we could look at that.

Harden added that the WCU Board of Trustees were shocked by the study, they had no idea how behind on salary they were. I think we need to do this to make it visible. Volunteers, please contact me.

1. **Expanding and Coordinating Faculty Voice.** Harden proposed expanding the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) this summer to include the College Faculty Chair of each college. The reasoning is the FEC will likely be consulting on Fall planning and we need to ensure a coordinated and fully represented faculty voice. Avrin noted that we did a similar thing last summer. We added the College Faculty Chairs (both the outgoing chairs and incoming chairs) to the Future Planning Advisory Committee which was also composed of FEC members. McCarter moved to temporarily add the College Faculty Chairs to the FEC. Whitaker seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. The motion to add the College Faculty Chairs to the FEC for Summer 2021 was approved unanimously.
2. **Motion to Adjourn.** Whitaker moved to adjourn. Hague seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 2:57 P.M.

Minutes taken by Matthew Wyse, Faculty Governance Assistant