**Faculty Council**

**Minutes of April 29, 2021 Meeting**

**Voting Members Present**

**(Ex Officio)**: Joel Avrin (President); Susan Harden (President-Elect); 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); Sharon Gaber (Chancellor); Joan Lorden (Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs); Rick Tankersley (Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development); Kevin Bailey (Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs); Jose Gamez (On Behalf of COAA Dean); Jennifer Troyer (COB Dean); Fatma Mili (CCI Dean); Teresa Petty (COED Dean); Ron Smelser (On Behalf of COE Dean); Catrine Tudor-Locke (CHHS Dean); Nancy Gutierrez (CLAS Dean); Tom Reynolds (Graduate School Dean); Anne Moore (Library Dean); John Smail (UCOL Dean)

**(Unit Representatives)**: Oscar de la Torre (AFRS); Catherine Fuentes (ANTH); Thomas Forget (SOA); Jeff Murphy (ARTS); Melanie Harris (BIOL); Kexin Zhao (BISOM); Christopher Bejger (CHEM); Craig Paddock (COMM); Wenwen Dou (CS); Jack Culbreth (CSLG); Sam Dewitt (CJUS); Doug Hague (DTSC); Krista Saral (ECON); Ayesha Sadaf (EDLD); Yong Zhang (ECE); Jake Smithwick (ETCM); Juan Meneses (ENGL); Yilei Zhang (FINN); Craig Allan (GYES); Joyce Dalsheim (GLBS); Ella Fratantouno (HIST); David Verrill (KNES); David Boyd (LACS); Catherine Tingelstad (LIB); Karen Ford-Eickhoff (MGMT); Shaoyu Li (MATH); Jerry Dahlberg (MEES); Warren DiBiase (MDSK); Florence Okoro (SON); Rick Moll (PAS); Lisa Rasmussen (PHIL); Menelaos Poutous (PHYS); Ben Radford (POLS); Andrew Case (PSYC); Lauren Wallace (PHS); Tracy Rock (REEL); John Reeves (RELS); Travis Hales (SOWK); Phil Rutledge (SOCY); Sunshine Niu (SIS); Shawnee Wakeman (SPED); Carlos Cruz (THEA); Amy Colombo (WRDS)

**Voting Members Absent**

**(Ex Officio)**: James Tabor (FEC, CLAS)

**(Unit Representatives)**: Paul Tanyi (ACCT); Dustin Puett (AERO); Robert Reid (BINF); Brett Tempest (CEGR); Delia Neil (DANC); Charles Bodkin (MKTG); Caitlin Moore (MSCI); Fred Spano (MUSC); Ertunga Ozelkan (SEEM)

**Guests Present (Not Voting)**

Dean Adams (Performing Arts Services); Dick Beekman (Student Government Association); Cathy Blat (College of Engineering); Kim Bradley (Chancellor’s Office); Jody Cebina (Distance Education); Janet Daniel (OASES); David Dearden (Office of Undergraduate Education); Concepcion Godev (Graduate Council Chair); Katherine Hall-Hertel (Graduate School); Jesh Humphrey (V.C. of Institutional Integrity and General Counsel); Kimberly Laney (Enrollment Management); Heather McCullough (CTL); Xiaoxia Newton (Competitive Grants Committee Chair); Malin Pereira (Executive Director, Honors College); Garvey Pyke (CTL); Jay Raja (Academic Affairs); Jon Reece (Registrar); Diana Rowan (Associate Faculty Ombuds); Beth Rugg (OneIT); Sam Sears (Office of Legal Affairs); Susan Sell (College of Health and Human Services); Todd Steck (Faculty Ombuds); Johnna Watson (Graduate School); Greg Weeks (College of Liberal Arts & Sciences); Madi Williams (Student Government Association); Matthew Wyse (Academic Affairs); Leslie Zenk (Academic Affairs)

(Attendance chart attached)

The meeting began at 1:00 P.M.

1. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Faculty Council.** Wyse noted a possible amendment is needed based on an email from Representative Andrew Case. The draft minutes state, “The revisions to the Declaring Undergraduate Majors and Minors Policy were approved unanimously”. However, several representatives opposed or abstained in the chat. The motion carried, but was not unanimous. Harden moved to amend. Ford-Eickhoff seconded. The motion to amend carried. Ford-Eickhoff moved to approve the minutes. Harden seconded the motion. The minutes for the March 25, 2021 meeting were approved unanimously, as amended.
2. **Report of the Chancellor.** Dr. Sharon Gaber gave the following report:

* On campus vaccination clinics are going well; however, there is diminishing demand. We are continuing to encourage employees and students to get the vaccine. COVID-19 exit testing will be offered to employees and students ahead of the Summer break.
* North Carolina’s mask mandate has changed; masks are no longer required outside. The mass gatherings limit is 50 to 100 indoors and 100 to 200 outdoors.
* Commencement will be held in the football stadium and live streamed. May 13th at 6:00pm is the Class of 2020. May 14th at 9:30am is the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences and the College of Engineering. At 6:00pm is the College of Business, College of Health and Human Services, and College of Computing and Informatics. May 15th at 9:30am is the College of Arts + Architecture, College of Education, and Graduate School. We are likely going to require masks due to the sheer number of people.
* With the voluntary vaccine disclosure, we are trying to determine the share of our campus community that is vaccinated. Only a couple thousand have responded to this voluntary vaccine disclosure. We believe the actual number is much higher. I encourage you to complete the disclosure. I will be doing so myself shortly.
* Tomorrow is April 30th, a Day of Remembrance at UNC Charlotte. [Ninernationremembers.uncc.edu](https://ninernationremembers.uncc.edu/) has a list of activities including, yoga, art opportunities, walk/jog/run, and an interactive exhibit. The remembrance program will live stream, will be on Facebook, and will be held in-person from the football stadium. The selected design for the permanent memorial will be revealed on this day.
* The strategic plan’s framework was approved by the Board of Trustees. Now we are creating objectives for each goal. Our goal is to have the full plan ready to share in Fall.
* Cabinet level news – The Vice Chancellor for Business Affairs search is being chaired by Kim Bradley. The national search for the Chief Diversity Officer position is chaired by Kevin Bailey.

Gaber opened the floor for questions.

Q: Are there financial incentives for returning students get vaccinated?

A: Yes, some. There may be a parking incentive. Those who have been vaccinated no longer have to fill out the daily health check.

Q: Is there a list of the DEI Search Committee members?

A: We are getting this posted soon. Within the next week or two. Information on the Chief Diversity Officer search can be found here: <https://diversity.uncc.edu/news/national-search-chief-diversity-officer-commence>

Q: Will the chairs of dissertation committees hood the Ph.D. graduates?

A: Dean Reynolds answered that students will either self-hood or come in already hooded.

1. **Motion to Award Degrees – Spring 2021.** Harden moved to approve. McCarter seconded the motion. The motion to award degrees was approved unanimously.
2. **Request to Award Degree in Memoriam to Ruth Dereje Zewedu.** Harden moved to approve. Whitaker seconded the motion. The request to award a degree in memoriam to Ruth Dereje Zewedu was approved unanimously.
3. **Request to Award Degree in Memoriam to Angelo Buliro.** Harden moved to approve. Whitaker seconded the motion. The request to award a degree in memoriam to Angelo Buliro was approved unanimously.
4. **Graduate Standardized Tests Policy Proposal.** Graduate Council Chair Concepcion Godev explained the rationale. This proposal does not prevent programs from requiring test scores. Currently, the Graduate School requires standardized test scores for admission to the Graduate School. Programs have to request a waiver if they don’t want that requirement. This policy proposal does the reverse. Programs that want to require test scores, will request a waiver. Students do not have to have standardized test scores unless the program requires it. Dewitt asked if there is a framework for requesting this waiver and asked if the waiver will allow for requiring test scores in certain situations and not requiring in other situations. Godev answered yes to both. A question was asked regarding the percentage of programs that require tests currently. Johnna Watson answered that pre-pandemic a little more than half had some kind of waiver in place for tests. Now with the pandemic almost all programs have some kind of waiver in place for tests. There is a growing movement to not require tests. A question was asked how this affects international students from ESL countries. Godev said it depends on the program, but the ESL proficiency program is not being waived. Dewitt moved to approve the proposal. The motion was seconded. The Graduate Standardized Test Proposal Policy was approved.
5. **Review of the Five-Year Academic Calendar.** Avrin explained the change the FEC made to the 2024-2025 calendar. The FEC has had discussions over the years about why Spring Recess/Spring Weekend are always around Good Friday and Easter. This falls at very different times each year and can be considered favoring one religion over another. The FEC decided, starting with the 2024-2025 calendar, to untie Spring Recess from Easter. The Registrar’s Office made this change and adjusted the schedule to incorporate it. Students lose a day off from classes for Spring weekend, but gain a day off from classes for the Day of Remembrance. This proposed five-year calendar reflects this in 2024-2025. Several concerns about this change were raised by Faculty Council members. Some worried that students will skip classes on Spring weekend if not given a break. Jarrett added that students of his already ask why we don’t celebrate Easter Monday too. Smail noted that there is a provision for students to be able to take religious holidays appropriate for their faith. Avrin explained that we are seeking preliminary approval for 2024-2025. The calendar is revisited each year and can be adjusted again if necessary. Harden moved to approve. Whitaker seconded the motion. The motion to approve the Five-Year Academic Calendar and recommend approval to the Chancellor carried. There were approximately seven abstentions.
6. **Revisions to Standing Rules of the Faculty Council.** Competitive Grants Committee Chair Xiaoxia Newton explained the rationale for updating the part of the Standing Rules that reference the Competitive Grants Committee (Article V, Section 3, K). Harden moved to approve. Whitaker seconded the motion. The revisions to the Standing Rules of the Faculty Council were approved unanimously.
7. **Authorship Dispute Resolution Policy Proposal.** Lisa Rasmussen gave background on this item. We want to foster a climate of research integrity across campus. This proposal idea came from Dean Reynolds. It is an important policy to have. If dispute arises, the journal would remand it back to the institution to handle. Therefore it is good to have a way to handle. Rasmussen asked if there were any questions. None asked. Rasmussen stated that she will recuse herself from the vote. Whitaker moved to approve. McCarter seconded the motion. The motion to endorse the Authorship Dispute Resolution Policy and recommend approval to the Chancellor was approved unanimously.
8. **Discussion of Plans for a Faculty/Staff Ombuds Position.** Avrin indicated that staff want to have an ombuds person. Staff President Celeste Corpening has brought a proposal to the Chancellor for a combined staff and faculty ombuds. The Chancellor agrees with this proposal. A number of institutions have a combined staff and faculty ombuds. If you combine, then it can become a full-time position. Some argue that faculty issues are so different that it is necessary that a faculty member who understands the unique faculty issues is the ombuds. We have invited Steve Prevaux, who is the ombuds at the University of Central Florida, to come talk with us to give his insights and answer our questions. Faculty Ombuds Todd Steck is here today to talk about what an ombuds does. Steck said the Faculty Council setup the Ombuds Office in 2012 with a Faculty Ombuds position that is half-time. In 2017, they added an Associate Faculty Ombuds position to have an ombuds in training. The ombuds acts as a resource. They give confidentiality. They empower faculty to help come up with solutions. They teach conflict resolution. Associate Faculty Ombuds Diana Rowan added that she is pleased that this attention is being given to the ombuds role. She is happy the administration is wanting to hire a full-time ombuds for faculty and staff, but is concerned that the hired ombuds may not be fully aware of faculty issues, if they are not a faculty member themselves. Avrin noted the Chancellor has expressed wanting to move forward with this proposal. Avrin would like the FEC and faculty to be part of this decision. Harden shared a document on the screen that posed two important questions. Harden proposes that the faculty dig into these two questions in May and hold a vote in June. Asked if there were any questions about that plan and none were expressed.
9. **Report of the Provost.** Dr. Joan Lorden gave the following report:

* This has been such a year of turmoil. We have gotten good at changing and adapting. I hope you get to take a well-deserved break.
* The next step of the Strategic Plan is to generate ideas that will guide the implementation of the plan’s objectives. Faculty input is essential. Faculty are invited to brainstorming town halls facilitated by our consultant, Dr. Sharon McDade. The four sessions are: Thursday May 6 at 9:00-10:30 for College of Liberal Arts & Sciences; 11:00-12:30 for College of Business, College of Education, and College of Engineering’ 1:00-2:30 for College of Arts + Architecture, College of Computing and Informatics, and College of Health and Human Services; and Friday May 7 at 11:00-12:30 open to all. I encourage you to attend a session. We would like your feedback.
* We are recruiting our new class of students. Admissions is doing a good job at that. Looks like we will have a good class in the Fall. At the graduate level, admissions is looking good. Where I am concerned is with the class that started this year. We are lagging considerably with freshmen retention. We need to think about how we reach out to these students and help them.
* We are working with units on opportunities to help with degree completion and retention.
* Special thanks to Joel Avrin for the exceptional job he has done. The best Faculty President I have worked with in my eighteen years.

Lorden fielded questions.

**Q:** What do we know about faculty retention?

**A:** We have been fairly effective in retaining our professors. Sometimes when our professors are very successful, they will get recruited away. That is a positive sign and we wish them well.

1. **Report of the President-Elect.** Dr. Susan Harden agreed with Provost Lorden’s words regarding Faculty President Joel Avrin. Harden took a few moments to recognize the great work and service of Joel Avrin as Faculty President. She read a list of his accomplishments, and remarked that Joel is generous, thoughtful, funny, and great to work with. All the challenges we have faced, Joel has seen us through. Next Harden announced there will be a strategic planning and agenda setting meeting on Thursday May 13 at 1:00-3:00. She asked the Faculty Members to attend, if possible, or send an alternate.
2. **Report of the President.** Dr. Joel Avrin thanked everyone for the kind words, made some humorous remarks, and said he was turning his gavel over to Harden.
3. **New Business.** None.

Whitaker moved to adjourn. Hague seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 2:17 P.M.

Minutes submitted by Matthew Wyse, Faculty Governance Assistant

(Attendance chart attached)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Unit/Title** | **Representative** | **Present (Initial)** | **Alternate** | **Present (Initial)** |
| **Faculty Executive Committee Members (ex-officio)** | |  |  |  |
| Faculty President | Joel Avrin | **X** | n/a |  |
| President-Elect | Susan Harden | **X** | n/a |  |
| Secretary | Debra Smith | **X** | n/a |  |
| Arts + Architecture | Chris Jarrett | **X** | Aspen Hochhalter |  |
| Business | Dongsong Zhang | **X** | Xiuli He |  |
| Computing & Informatics | Heather Lipford | **X** | Xi Niu |  |
| Education | Dawson Hancock | **X** | Greg Wiggan |  |
| Engineering | Jay Wu | **X** | Sukumar Kamalasadan |  |
| Health & Human Services | Susan McCarter | **X** | Travis Hales |  |
| Liberal Arts & Sciences | Anton Pujol | **X** | Lisa Rasmussen |  |
| Liberal Arts & Sciences | Beth Whitaker | **X** | Dale Grote |  |
| Liberal Arts & Sciences | James Tabor |  | *vacant* |  |
| Library | Katie Howell | **X** | Marc Bess |  |
| **Chancellors and Deans (ex-officio)** |  |  |  |  |
| Chancellor | Sharon Gaber | **X** |  |  |
| Provost and Vice Chancellor for AA | Joan Lorden | **X** |  |  |
| Vice Chancellor for Research & Econ Dev | Rick Tankersley | **X** |  |  |
| Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs | Kevin Bailey | **X** |  |  |
| Dean, College of Arts + Architecture | Brook Muller |  | Jose Gamez | **X** |
| Dean, College of Business | Jennifer Troyer | **X** |  |  |
| Dean, College of Computing & Informatics | Fatma Mili | **X** |  |  |
| Dean, College of Education | Teresa Petty | **X** |  |  |
| Dean, College of Engineering | Robert Keynton |  | Ron Smelser | **X** |
| Dean, College of Health & Human Svcs. | Catrine Tudor-Locke | **X** |  |  |
| Dean, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences | Nancy Gutierrez | **X** |  |  |
| Dean, Graduate School | Tom Reynolds | **X** |  |  |
| Dean, Library | Anne Moore | **X** |  |  |
| Dean, University College | John Smail | **X** |  |  |
| **Academic Unit Representatives** | | | | |
| Accountancy | Paul Tanyi |  | Hughlene Burton |  |
| Aerospace Studies | Dustin Puett |  | Jacob Morton |  |
| Africana Studies | Oscar de la Torre | **X** | Veronica Robinson |  |
| Anthropology | Catherine Fuentes | **X** | Jon Marks |  |
| Architecture | Thomas Forget | **X** | Mona Azarbayjani |  |
| Art & Art History | Jeff Murphy | **X** | Bonnie Noble |  |
| Bioinformatics & Genomics | Robert Reid |  | Wei Sha |  |
| Biological Sciences | Melanie Harris | **X** | Matt Parrow |  |
| Business Info. Systems & Oper. Mgmt. | Kexin Zhao | **X** | Ram Kumar |  |
| Chemistry | Christopher Bejger | **X** | Jerry Troutman |  |
| Civil & Environmental Engineering | Brett Tempest |  | Srinivas Pulugurtha |  |
| Communication Studies | Melody Dixon |  | Craig Paddock | **X** |
| Computer Science | Wenwen Dou | **X** | Jing Yang |  |
| Counseling | Jack Culbreth | **X** | Pamela Lassiter |  |
| Criminal Justice + Criminology | Sam Dewitt | **X** | Bruce Arrigo |  |
| Dance | Delia Neil |  | Kim Jones |  |
| Data Science | Doug Hague | **X** |  |  |
| Economics | Krista Saral | **X** | Paul Gaggl |  |
| Educational Leadership | Ayesha Sadaf | **X** | Stella Kim |  |
| Electrical & Computer Engineering | Yong Zhang | **X** | Aba Ebong |  |
| Engineering Tech. & Construction Mgmt. | Jack Smithwick | **X** | Carlos Orozco |  |
| English | Juan Meneses | **X** | Ron Lunsford |  |
| Finance | Yilei Zhang | **X** | Ping Hu |  |
| Geography & Earth Sciences | Craig Allan | **X** | Larianne Collins |  |
| Global Studies | Joyce Dalsheim | **X** | John Cox |  |
| History | Ella Fratantouno | **X** | Jurgen Buchenau |  |
| Kinesiology | David Verrill | **X** | Sarah Hess |  |
| Languages & Culture Studies | David Boyd | **X** | Noha Ghali |  |
| Library | Catherine Tingelstad | **X** | Nikki Thomas |  |
| Management | Karen Ford-Eickhoff | **X** | Torsten Pieper |  |
| Marketing | Charles Bodkin |  | Brian Whelan |  |
| Mathematics & Statistics | Shaoyu Li | **X** | Qingning Zhou |  |
| Mechanical Engineering & Engr. Sci. | Jerry Dahlberg | **X** | Brigid Mullany |  |
| Middle, Secondary & K-12 Education | Warren DiBiase | **X** | Susan Harden |  |
| Military Science | Caitlin Moore |  | Hayden Hoffman |  |
| Music | Fred Spano |  | Dylan Savage |  |
| Nursing | Florence Okoro | **X** | Teresa Gaston |  |
| Performing Arts Services | Rick Moll | **X** | Beth Yoder |  |
| Philosophy | Lisa Rasmussen | **X** | Shannon Sullivan |  |
| Physics & Optical Science | Menelaos Poutous | **X** | Vasily Astratov |  |
| Political Science & Public Admin. | Ben Radford | **X** | Tom Barth |  |
| Psychology | Andrew Case | **X** | Alyssa McGonagle |  |
| Public Health Sciences | Lauren Wallace | **X** | Crystal Piper |  |
| Reading & Elementary Education | Tracy Rock | **X** | Amy Good |  |
| Religious Studies | John Reeves | **X** | William Sherman |  |
| Social Work | Travis Hales | **X** | Suzanne Boyd |  |
| Sociology | Phil Rutledge | **X** | Webster Murray |  |
| Software & Information Systems | Xi (Sunshine) Niu | **X** | Tonya Frevert |  |
| Special Education & Child Development | Rob Pennington |  | Shawnee Wakeman | **X** |
| Systems Engineering & Engr. Mgmt. | Ertunga Ozelkan |  | Gary Teng |  |
| Theatre | Carlos Cruz | **X** | Robin Witt |  |
| Writing, Rhetoric and Digital Studies | Amy Colombo | **X** | Mia Eaker |  |