

OPEN SESSION MINUTES

March 14, 2025 | 9:00 a.m.
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

TRUSTEES PRESENT

*Denotes voting Trustee

*Peter Juran, Chair
*Rhoda Griffis, Vice Chair
*Jonah Bokaer
*Jeffery Bullock
*Jerri Irby
*David Neill
*Graydon Pleasants
*Jack Sargeant, Student Body President
*John Wigodsky
Sandi MacDonald, *ex officio*

TRUSTEES ABSENT

*Eric Flow
*Nia Franklin
*Ches McDowell
*Kyle Petty
Tom Kenan, *emeritus*
The Honorable Pam Cashwell, *ex officio*

OTHERS PRESENT

Bill Watson, Foundation Board
Representative

STAFF PRESENT

Brian Cole, Chancellor
Patrick Sims, Ex. Vice Chancellor and
Provost
Jim DeCristo, VC and Chief of Staff
David Harrison, VC and General Counsel
Wendy Emerson, VC for Finance and
Administration
Lissy Garrison, VC for Advancement
Karen Beres, Vice Provost and Dean of
Academic Affairs
Amanda Balwah, AVC and University

Secretary
Endalyn Taylor Outlaw, Dean of Dance
Ryan Bellanger, IT Audio Visual Support
Anthony Hromada, IT Audio Visual Support
Jeff George, Faculty Council Chair
Laurel Donley, Assistant Dean of Student
Affairs
Kory Kelly, Vice Chancellor for Strategic
Communications
Ginger Caston, Ex. Assistant to the Chief
of Staff
Michael Kelley, Dean of Design &

Production

Cory Billings, Audit Manager
Heidi Mallory, Director of Budget
Steve Martin, AVC for Facilities Management
Tamar Pandi, Interim Chief Information Officer
Rich Whittington, AVC for Advancement
Katherine Johnson, Director of Media Relations and Communications
Victoria Nash, Staff Council Chair
Valerie Thelen, Chief Compliance Officer and Director of Title IX
John Langs, Dean of Drama
Cindy Liberty, Executive Director of the

Foundation

Deborah LaVine, Dean of Filmmaking
B. Afeni McNeely Cobham, Associate Vice Chancellor and Vice Provost of Institutional Engagement
Patrice Goldmon, Associate General Counsel
Rachel Williams, Dean of Division of Liberal Arts
Martin Ferrell, Headmaster and Dean of High School Academics
Melissa Upton-Julio, Digital Content Producer
Cameron McManus, Community and Summer Programs

CONVENE OPEN SESSION

Chair Peter Juran convened the March 14, 2025 meeting of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts Board of Trustees at 9:04 a.m. A quorum was confirmed. Chair Juran reminded all members of the Board of their duty under the State Government Ethics Act to avoid conflicts of interest and appearances of conflicts as required by this act.

Chair Juran reported that Trustee Nia Franklin got married last Friday and is on her honeymoon.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The approval of minutes from the December 2024 meeting are tabled until the May 2025 meeting.

REPORT FROM CHANCELLOR COLE

Chancellor Cole welcomed the Trustees to the third meeting of the 2024-2026 academic year. He highlighted the many accomplishments of UNCSCA alumni, including Paul Tazewell, who just won an Academy Award for costume design for *Wicked*. Mr. Tazewell is the first UNCSCA alum to win a stand-alone Oscar. Several alums have been nominated and have won as part of a team for work on feature films. Paul Tazewell will serve as UNCSCA's commencement speaker on May 17th.

Chancellor Cole went on to report Joe Mantello's \$1M gift to the School of Drama. Mr. Mantello is a 1984 alum. His gift will fund two initiatives: a scholarship for School of Drama students and a creative catalyst to support student driven productions.

Chancellor Cole highlighted numerous alums who have been nominated and/or won prestigious honors during the current awards season including Tonys, Academy Awards, Emmys, and Grammy.

UNCSCA Media just released a recording of "Firebird." Design and Production faculty member Jason Romney recently completed a 24-speaker installation that features the recording in Dolby Atmos, but sounds in a 3-dimensional space.

Chancellor Cole wrapped up his report by inviting Trustees to listen to his new podcast, "The Arts & Everything" and to attend the upcoming Spontaneous Sound: A Festival of Jazz and Improvised Music.

REPORT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Graydon Pleasants, Committee Chair, reported that the Finance Committee met yesterday and a quorum was present.

Wendy Emerson, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, reviewed the Enrollment

Status portion of the funding model. A key change for UNCSCA is the integration of summer school enrollment, which aligns with the other UNC institutions. If UNCSCA's performance continues to improve, the model could generate between \$100k and \$200k or recurring dollars for UNCSCA.

Ms. Emerson shared the UNC System Long Session Operating Budget Priorities for the 2025-27 biennium, highlighting the areas that would impact UNCSCA, as well as an overview of UNCSCA's debt profile.

Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities, Steve Martin, reviewed the Capital Projects Update.

REPORT FROM THE ENDOWMENT FUND BOARD

Chair Juran reported that the Endowment Fund Board met the day prior and a quorum was present.

Vice Chancellor Emerson reviewed the UNC Management Company Flash Report and the UNCSCA Endowment Fund Investment Summary as of December 31, 2024. The report reflects an overall net return of 3.6% for the 2025 fiscal year to date. Likewise, UNCSCA's investments had an increase with an overall net return of 4% for the current fiscal year.

The Board approved an endowment distribution allocation of \$1,843,477.12 for 30 endowments for the upcoming 2025-2026 academic year. The funds support the university's professorships, visiting artists, and scholarships.

REPORT FROM THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Jeffery Bullock, Committee Chair, reported that the Personnel Committee met on March 13th and a quorum was present. Angela Mahoney, Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Human Resources Officer, reported that there were 27 new hires since the last report – 16 Exempt Professional Staff (EPS), 1 Faculty, and 10 SHRA employees. There have been 20 separations since the last report. Ms. Mahoney introduced Sharon Hill as a new member of the HR Team.

The annual policy review period opened on January 21, 2025. All faculty, staff, and non-student temporary employees had until February 28, 2025 to complete the review.

Senate Bill 195, known as the UNC Omnibus Bill, provided a change in statute exempting from most provisions of the NC State Human Resources Act for all remaining SHRA university employees designated as FLSA exempt (exempt from overtime) to have the option to transition to Exempt Professional Staff (EPS). HR has contacted SHRA FLSA-exempt employees and offered them the option to transition to EPS.

There are two updates to leave (Bereavement Leave/Personal Leave). The new Bereavement Leave allows eligible employees to use 40 hours of leave for the loss of an immediate family member (as defined by the sick leave policy). This leave can be used for

any loss that occurred between September 27 and October 31 because of Hurricane Helene. In partnership with IT, a dynamic form for employees to apply online has been created. Employees have 180 days to use the time.

The new Personal Leave is for Exempt Professional Staff (EPS) hired on or after January 1, 2025. The difference between the current annual leave (vacation) and the new personal leave is that at the end of the year, employees currently carry 240 hours over, and any excess is rolled to sick leave. Under the new personal leave, employees carry 160 hours, and any excess is forfeited. Additionally, EPS employees hired prior to January 1, 2025 have been given the option to convert to the new Personal Leave.

Human Resources continues to offer various training courses in both online and in-person formats to support employee growth and skill development. This includes the “Learning of the Month” in the campus announcements each month providing a short yet impactful insight or reflection to encourage personal and professional growth. HR has received positive comments in the evaluation for the offerings and the facilitators.

The university has expanded counseling services through ComPsych from 5 to 12 sessions at no cost to the employee. Headspace (previously Ginger) has been discontinued due to cost considerations. There will be an Employee Social on March 17th to foster connections, strengthen relationships, and enhance workplace morale.

Victoria Nash, Staff Council Chair, reported that Staff Council continues to strengthen the foundations of past achievements in staff engagement and recognition while introducing new initiatives that improve the lives of staff members and the campus community.

REPORT FROM THE ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE

Chair Juran reported in Kyle Petty’s absence. The Advancement Committee met on March 13th and a quorum was present. Vice Chancellor Lissy Garrison reviewed the Advancement division’s current strategic framework. She and her team provided updates in Staffing, Alumni Engagement, Fundraising, and Campaign Development.

Director of Alumni Engagement, Rebecca Burkeen, shared UNCSA’s remarkable accomplishments so far this year in engaging alumni across all four aspects of engagement, including huge growth in the number of meaningful communications with alumni over the past two years.

Vice Chancellor Garrison reviewed year-to-date fundraising:

- UNCSA has surpassed \$8.1 million in fundraising so far this year. The school is on track to meet, or get very close to, the goal of \$15.1 million.
- There is continued growth in the area of Major Gifts.
- Vice Chancellor Garrison reported on the very generous gift made by Drama alum Joe Mantello in January, establishing a full endowed scholarship and endowment to enable student-led work.

Associate Vice Chancellor Rich Whittington provided additional detailed insights into the areas of Annual Giving, Leadership Annual Giving, and Planned Giving – all of which are strong and on track to meet goals.

AVC Whittington also gave a detailed overview of this year's Days of Giving, which will take place April 2-3.

- Goals for this year's Days of Giving include \$315,000 in overall dollars raised, \$125,000 in challenge gifts, a total of 1,000 gifts overall, and 100% participation from all boards.

Vice Chancellor Garrison provided an update about campaign planning:

- Work is progressing well with the development of big ideas for the campaign.
- Campaign fundraising consultant Kathy Duff is in town this week working with deans and campus leadership.
- The team hopes to bring primary campaign consultant Jim Langley back to campus next fall to present to and work with our boards.

Executive Director Kevin Bitterman provided an update on the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts, highlighting its four-part strategic framework, which complements the UNCSA Forward Strategic Plan and strengthens the Institute's role as a programmatic partner at the intersection of UNCSA and the broader creative sector.

He shared insights on the Institute's founding, operating structure, and pilot programs, including recent investments in regional artists and western NC recovery efforts.

Mr. Bitterman also presented on the Institute's first comprehensive messaging and branding effort in over 15 years, featuring new institutional messaging and a refreshed visual identity designed to support future programs, services, and partnerships. This evolution, which is reinforced by the institute's recent planning process and will roll out later this year, positions the Kenan Institute's commitment to championing the transformative power of the arts at UNCSA and beyond, while fostering a resilient cultural ecosystem.

REPORT FROM THE ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Rhoda Griffis, Committee Chair, reported that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee met the day prior, and a quorum was present.

Jack Sargeant, Student Body President, provided an update on the work of UNCSA's Student Government Association. He highlighted the distribution of mental health goodie bags on February 14th for Valentine's Day and the town hall that occurred on March 4th. Mr. Sargeant provided an update on the renovations of the SGA office space, DLA Attendance Policy, and production evaluations. He also reported that SGA will soon have its own "swag" and marketing materials.

Faculty Council Chair, Jeff George, explained that the Faculty Searches Task Force has completed its recommendations, and he looks forward to developing a guidebook and

manual for faculty searches with the Deans and HR. He commended the work being done in the five standing committees of faculty council particularly with the pressures of reaccreditation and the development of a new schedule paradigm. Mr. George expressed the strong desire for inter-school conversations around schedule and workload as well as his desire to continue to seek out small-group conversations with faculty. The demands of the production calendar still weigh heavily on faculty minds, and he proposed that a comprehensive production calendar is built that includes full timelines (load in, tech, dress rehearsals, etc.). He then touched on the high school expansion project and talked about how our high school programs are unique and attractive to top-level artists around the country and world.

Vice Provost of Academic Affairs, Dr. Karen Beres, reported on the updated Peer Institutions list. UNCSA has identified 6 private and 6 public institutions and the only change from the last iteration is the UCLA has been replaced by Florida State University because they are a better fit for our size and more of our declined admissions are going to FSU. Each peer institution list provides a single collection of universities to be used for benchmarking and comparison. This list provides an objective point of review and departure for strategic planning. The peer institution lists are consulted for analyses of performance benchmarks, including, but not limited, to tuition and fees, retention and graduation rates, degree production, faculty workload, staff salaries, space utilization, private fundraising and endowments, student financial aid, institutional revenues, and distribution of institutional expenses. She then reported that there is a new minimum course enrollment policy for the institution that will be implemented in Fall 2025. High School and Undergraduate level courses have a new minimum course enrollment of 6 and graduate courses a minimum of four. These are the smallest numbers we can find at other institutions and honor the fact that we are a small conservatory.

Vice Chancellor and Provost, Patrick Sims, opened his report by celebrating the unprecedented number of contract reappointments and rank promotion cases this year of 42 faculty. He commends the incredible work of our faculty and was most impressed with their materials. He goes on to report that we are ready to make an offer to our new VPEM (Vice Provost for Enrollment Management) and looks forward to this new inaugural position at UNCSA. He shares gratitude for the hard work of our registrar, Sharon Hush who has been acting as the Interim Director of Admissions and explains that Jane Kamiab, director of financial aid retired at the end of February, Darren Chiott is the interim Director of Financial Aid. Provost Sims then shared that the work on CSI is going well and the consulting firm, David Kent Consulting did site visits in mid-February where they worked to collect feedback around the needs and challenges for each of the 7 areas and that we will soon be exploring the new schedule models they are producing and in Fall of 2026 we will implement a new schedule. Lastly, Provost Sims commended Design and Production's work on aligning their credit hours to the UNC System mandate of 120 course hours to graduate. D&P has done tremendous work to right size their curriculum so we no longer need an exemption to this UNC system policy.

The Vice Provost for Student Affairs, Laurel Donley provided updates on the wonderful work that student affairs have been doing. She explained that there have been difficulties in

rebuilding student life on campus post Covid and over the last couple of years there have been great strides to bring back a robust community experience across campus. She highlighted that the new resident hall, Artist Village, has provided a great space for students to be students, and this year alone there have been over 100 programs that have been instrumental in building community. The students look forward to programming and campus traditions and the intermission on Wednesdays has provided space for them to take a break mid-week. With yesterday's beautiful weather, students lined the courtyard and outdoor spaces which is always amazing to see and provided an opportunity for students to just be well. Laurel ended her report by sharing a video of "Pickles on the Town" which highlighted the incredible community outreach program designed by a high school student where students use their free time to visit local schools and retirement communities to share their art. Seeing our students and the kids light up has been a rewarding experience for all. Pickles on the Town will be an ongoing high school initiative to help foster relationships beyond the UNCSA gates.

REPORT FROM THE AUDIT, RISK, AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

John Wigodsky, Chair of the Audit, Risk, and Compliance Committee, reported the following from their March 13th meeting:

Jim DeCristo, Vice Chancellor for Economic Development and Chief of Staff, provided an Enterprise Risk Management update. He provided an overview of a new strategy related to employee compensation (a top 5 risk). The new strategy aims to shrink the salary gap for faculty beginning this year and continuing for the next 2 years and preview what might be possible with support from the State in its FY26 and FY27 budgets.

Tamar Pandi, Chief Information Officer, reported that the annual security awareness training was recently conducted. This year, there were 638 participants and 66% successfully completed the training. This training and ongoing cyber security education play a crucial role in achieving IT's goal of comprehensive campus security.

Valerie Thelen, Chief Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator, reported that UNCSA's Title IX Regulation and Title IX Grievance Procedures were updated based on updates in the Title IX regulations last year along with recent court rulings and new guidance for the Department of Education.

Wendy Emerson, Vice Chancellor for Finance & Administration, reported that the financial statement audit for UNCSA was recently completed. This was a clean audit with no findings or issues to report.

Rod Isom, Chief Audit Officer, and Cory Billings, Audit Manager, provided updates on internal audit work. A compliance review of the UNC System Office regulation of P-Cards was completed and resulted in no reportable observation or recommendations. Key updates and information related to the new audit standards were shared, which included IA's new strategic plan and essential conditions for the board. Internal Audit's external Quality Assessment Review (QAR), which is required every 5 years, has been completed and the

office received the highest rating of Generally Conforms with no gaps identified. IA will be commencing the annual risk assessment process this quarter that allows the unit to assess the current risk landscape and update the audit plan which will be presented to the ARCC for review and approval next quarter.

MOTION TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION

Jeffery Bullock moved that the board go into closed session:

To prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to North Carolina Administrative Code, Title 01, Chapter 30, Subchapter D – Designer Selection.

Jonah Bokaer seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION

Chair Juran reported that the Board went into closed session to consider a designer selection.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Juran reminded all Trustees of their responsibility to complete their annual Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) or No Change Form. All SEIs must be submitted to the NC State Ethics Commission by April 15th.

With no further business to discuss, the March 14, 2025 Board of Trustees meeting adjourned at 10:11 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Amanda G. Balwah

Associate Vice Chancellor and Assistant Secretary of the Board of Trustees