

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

UNCSA Faculty Council 2019-2020 Annual Report

2019-2020 Faculty Council Membership

Mike Wakeford (Chair; Division of Liberal Arts)
Josh Selander (Vice-Chair; Design & Production)
Lauren Vilchik (Secretary;
Paul Sharpe (School of Music)
Jared Redick (School of Dance)
Quin Gordon (School of Drama)
Martha Golden (High School Academic Program)
Robert Rocco (Adjunct Faculty)
Christia Thomason (Library)
Dennis Booth (At-Large)

Krishna Marcano (At-Large)
Trish Casey (At-Large)
John Ferri (Chair, Faculty Development Committee)
Greg Walter (Co-Chair, Faculty Rank Committee)
Steve LaCosse (Co-Chair, Faculty Rank Committee)
Renata Jackson (Chair, Educational Policies Committee)
Saxton Rose (Chair, Faculty Welfare Committee)
Wade Wilson (Chair, Campus Development Committee)
Ellen Rosenberg (Faculty Assembly delegate; non-voting)
Elizabeth Klaimon (Faculty Assembly delegate; non-voting)

During the 2019-2020 year, UNCSA Faculty Council continued to work at an institutional and system level in accordance with the principles of shared governance embodied in Section 502D(2) of UNC Code, which charges the Chancellor with ensuring that conditions are in place for faculty to advise on matters of academic policy and institutional governance. Through the Faculty Council, the five Standing Committees, UNC Faculty Assembly, *ad hoc* task forces, search committees, and regular meetings between elected faculty leaders and upper administration, the UNCSA faculty were represented, and actively advised, in a wide range of campus-level decision-making processes.

This was a year that began in the unusual context of interim and/or transitional leadership in multiple high-level administrative positions, including Chancellor, Provost, Dean of School of Filmmaking, Dean of School of Music, and Vice Provost and Dean of Student Affairs. It was also a year in which any sense of normalcy that might have been achieved was abridged by the onset of the COVID-19 crisis and the broad front of emergency adjustments that this crisis necessitated. Both of these unique factors—a fluxing leadership structure, and now, a campus thrown into a state of constant reaction—illustrated the essential value of a strong shared governance culture in which institutional knowledge and faculty engagement in governance matters are as broadly distributed as possible.

The persistent issue of lagging faculty salaries and an unfunded rank salary structure continues to be the top priority for Faculty Council. After carefully pressing the issue with our Board of Governors liaison in the prior year, we began this year disappointed with a lack of tangible progress. We remained in close conversation with interim Chancellor Cole this year as he worked to articulate the urgent need for substantial salary increases to system level leaders. Though the absence of a state budget and COVID-19's economic impact complicates the effort, our own salary situation should not be tolerated, and Faculty Council will continue to ally with the administration to achieve progress.

In Faculty Council and various other settings, the multifaceted issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion were rightly emphasized. Interim Provost Peterson regularly consulted with Faculty Council on her office's impressive efforts to move the campus forward on EDI issues. Faculty Council and the Provost's office co-sponsored two Faculty In-Service days dedicated to faculty development around EDI issues and the closely connected subjects of building a campus culture of wellness, self-care, and belonging.

For the first time, Faculty Council had a small amount of clerical support this year. With the support of the Provost's office, an Arts dean released an administrative assistant for 2-3 hours per month to aid Faculty Council in the preparation of meeting minutes. Though not compensated directly, this individual will be rewarded with a professional development opportunity of their choice. This small development is nonetheless significant, as the Principles of Shared Governance under which we operate encourages the institution to provide "adequate" clerical support to Faculty Council. The absence of such discourages faculty from serving in certain governance capacities, and we hope that additional support might be available in the future.

Interim Provost Peterson and Interim Chancellor Cole were both regular attendees at Faculty Council meetings this year, and the FC Chair had regular individual meetings with both. Other visitors to Faculty Council this year included: the University Ombudsperson, to deliver a general update about his office's work; the institution's Budget Director, to provide a requested overview of the university's budgetary process; and the interim Director of Teaching Effectiveness, to discuss strategies for strengthening the nominations process for the campus awards for Teaching Excellence. Another highlight was a December visit to campus by the Chair of UNC Faculty Assembly, David Green, who shared observations from the system-level and learned more about campus level concerns.

We implemented two new strategies for encouraging faculty involvement in shared governance bodies. In October, Faculty Council hosted a "Faculty Governance 101" session for all interested faculty, where current Standing Committee and Faculty Council leaders introduced attendees to the different opportunities to serve in governance roles at the campus and system levels. We also initiated a more robust campus-wide nominations process for campus-wide positions such as At-Large seats on Faculty Council and delegate seats at UNC Faculty Assembly, which resulted in an unusually large number of faculty expressing interest in serving.

Faculty Council placed representatives on multiple important decision-making committees, including the annual Tuition & Fees committee, and Faculty Council was asked to form faculty groups to meet with candidates visiting campus in both the Chancellor and Provost searches. Three task forces that Faculty Council and the Office of the Provost jointly created in Spring 2019—one on Course Evaluations, one on Faculty Workload, and one on Equity and Diversity in Hiring Practices—all brought their work to various points of completion this year, and will report out at the appropriate time.

Faculty Council leadership met multiple times with the leaders of Staff Council, to keep each other apprised of our constituencies' shared concerns and agenda items. Faculty and Staff Council co-sponsored two well-attended social hours off-campus. In the post-COVID-19 weeks, Faculty Council also hosted two "Zoom" Social Hours.

Faculty Council convened two successful All-Campus Faculty meetings this year, in October and April. Both provided opportunities for the full faculty to get to get updates and engage in open discussion with upper administration on issues including salaries, fundraising, enrollment, and student affairs.

As the year has drawn toward its end, Faculty Council approved a slate of edits to the Faculty Manual, including small changes related to the rank promotion process, the eligibility language around faculty elections, and a policy allowing for Council business to be carried out via teleconference or videoconference when necessary. We also passed a Memorial Resolution in honor of our colleague, Josh Foldy, a School of Drama faculty member who passed away in December.

In submitting this end-of-year report, we note that we are entering a season of great uncertainty and anxiety. COVID-19 presents our institution, and all of higher education, with an unprecedented set of challenges that we are only beginning to understand. Faculty Council has been assured that it will be consulted to the maximum extent possible as the institution confronts the changes ahead. I know I speak for the faculty at-large in affirming that the continued practice of transparent and collaborative shared governance is both our expectation and our commitment, now more than ever.

Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Wakeford". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "M" and a long, sweeping tail.

Mike Wakeford

Chair, UNCSA Faculty Council