

Faculty Senate Minutes

02/23/2022 Regular Business Meeting 3:00-5:00 pm

UC Multipurpose Room

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

CHEROKEE LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Western Carolina University is situated within the ancestral homelands of the Cherokee people, twenty miles from present-day Eastern Band of Cherokee Indian communities of the Qualla Boundary. The campus occupies Two Sparrows Place (Tali Tsigwayahi), an ancient principal town with a mound and council house where Killian Building now stands. Cullowhee, the university's home, is Tsul'kalawi (or Judaculla's Place). This giant being was the Great Teacher and steward of the natural world, and ancient stories about Judaculla tell of the Creator and creation, the origin of humans, and the proper way to be Cherokee. We at Western Carolina University inherit these stories so that we may better understand the deep significance of this beloved place and our role here.

We are dedicated to supporting the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and all indigenous tribes throughout the world in achieving futures of their own making. We will continue to collaborate with tribal nations to address the challenges at hand, and we want each of you to accept the charge of learning and supporting our relationship with indigenous people during your time at WCU. This work acknowledges our sense of place and reinforces our mission at Western Carolina University.

ROLL CALL

- Present: Michael Boatright, Indi Bose, David de Jong, Mariana Fisher, Gael Graham, Yancey Gulley, Shelby Hicks, John Hildreth, Jeremy Jones, Scottie Kapel, Will Lehman, Erin McNelis, April Messer, Sean Mulholland, Kadence Otto, Heather Rimes, Carrie Rogers, Katerina Spasovska, Provost Richard Starnes, Vicki Szabo, Drew Virtue, Elizabeth Wark, Cheryl Waters-Tormey, Laura Wright, Colin Wasmund
- Members with Proxies: Kia Asberg, Heidi Grappendorf, Marco Lam, Diana Messer, Leigh Odom, Martin Tanaka
- Members Absent: Chancellor Kelli Brown

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of Regular Business Meeting Minutes from January 19, 2022

- *Verbal vote proceeded and passed unanimously. Minutes approved by voice vote.*

REPORTS

Chancellor's Report: Kelli Brown

The Chancellor's [written report](#) was shared prior to the senate meeting, and the full text can be found at the end of these minutes.

Christy Agner, our newly hired Deputy Chief of Staff and legislature liaison was introduced.

The leadership search for the Associate Vice Chancellor of Student Success, and the Dean of the College of Engineering & Technology searches are nearing campus visits.

Question from Vicki Szabo: UNC system office initiatives are moving rapidly, how will you communicate this with us?

Response from Provost Starnes: Project kittyhawk will do a campus barnstorming campaign possibly in late March – we will be bringing in people to program director level to talk about the concept. For the ROI study, the provosts have not been brought in yet. We should be on CAO call over spring break. There may be more data pulls than report writing – we will see. We will communicate through Laura Wright and planning team. A firm has been selected.

Question from Vicki Szabo: The 360 review of the fifth floor went away two years ago. Is it coming back?

Response from Provost Starnes: This will occur for deans – not sure about higher than that.

Cory Causby shared that it is occurring this year

Question from John Hildreth: Will the financial modeling be shared from WCU?

Response from Provost Starnes: Yes, we have modeling on first go round – they have gone back and said there will be a differentiated SCH rate for doctoral level, STEM, nursing, and PT. Right now, we are waiting on modeling and will share once we get it and reverse engineer it in a way that allows us to understand and answer questions. BOG is not voting this month – will be next month.

Question from Erin McNelis: In public schools they are removing the mask mandate; do we have any update on this for faculty?

Response from Provost Starnes: We are looking at what other campuses are doing – have not reached a decision yet.

Question from Laura Wright: The system has not made decisions yet. Do you assume campuses will be allowed to make their own policies?

Response from Provost Starnes: Yes, we anticipate it.

Comment from Laura Wright: We shared feedback with Richard from the senate, and the majority people would like to see masks required in instructional spaces. The consensus was airing on side of caution.

Comment from Laura Wright: With regards to UNC Online, for graduate programs at least and maybe others, this is a helpful thing for students in programs that do not offer certain classes over summer.

Response from Provost Starnes: The provosts were notified in first of this month; the system thought the pushback would be at the program level – what they heard from us is that the way we use it is in the course clearing house – using it to assist students. We may have to remain a bit flexible. They heard loud and clear that this is an issue. We use it quite a bit and it is important for student success.

Question from Vicki Szabo: I've received emails from two colleagues about MFA happening every 5 minutes. Has something changed?

Response from Provost Starnes: We will talk to Craig Fowler and follow up with IT.

Thanks to Brandon Schwab for looking at the calendar – we look forward to the survey coming out and getting your feedback.

Question from Indi Bose: What is the advantage of kittyhawk over UNC Online?

Response from Provost Starnes: The advantage for distance programs' campuses wish to scale. It is about leveraging the programs within the UNC system to achieve the degree metrics. UNC online is not effective in marketing and recruiting; the value on kittyhawk will have to be determined by each campus.

Question from Vicki Szabo: We were told at Faculty Assembly that this is a way for faculty to have a financial incentive. Is this true?

Response from Provost Starnes: That seems to be true, but we are not sure of the details yet. It is important to note the SCH generated by kittyhawk doesn't fall unto the funding model. It is a self-supporting auxiliary that has to pay for itself.

Question from Yancey Gulley: We implemented HR DEI contacts on search committees. Do we have an update on this?

Response from Provost Starnes: This is not over yet and searches still ongoing. Will have discussions and will report to the senate in fall.

Provost's Report: Richard Starnes

The Provost's [written report](#) was shared prior to the senate meeting, and the full text can be found at the end of these minutes.

Staff Senate Chair: Deidre Hopkins

The Staff Senate's [written report](#) was shared prior to the senate meeting, and the full text can be found at the end of these minutes.

Read the [Climate Resolution](#) from Staff Senate.

Question from Laura Wright: Is the cookbook just for staff senators?

Response from Deidre Hopkins: It is for staff members currently.

Student Government Association: Rebecca Hart

The Student Government Association's [written report](#) was shared prior to the senate meeting, and the full text can be found at the end of these minutes. Supporting documents referenced throughout the written report can be located [here](#).

Faculty Assembly Report: Vicki Szabo

The Faculty Assembly [written report](#) was shared prior to the senate meeting, and the full text can be found at the end of these minutes.

COUNCIL and COMMITTEE REPORTS

Academic Policy and Review Council (APRC) Report: Will Lehman

The council met last Thursday and voted in favor of the Social Justice Minor.

Regarding the routing of proposals in Curriculog; a closer reading made it clear that according to the Faculty Handbook and Faculty Senate Bylaws, the Faculty Senate is only required to discuss and vote on “new programs, new degrees, new majors, new minors, liberal studies changes, program deletions, and changes to university level curriculum policies and requirements.” Since the Curriculog introduction, all curricular items that require UCC approval have been routed to the APRC for discussion and vote. In order to bring us into compliance with the Faculty Handbook, going forward, the APRC and Faculty Senate will be given advance notice of all curriculum changes that reach Faculty Senate level and do not require FS vote, to allow discussion and vote if requested by a Senator. If no Senator raises objections, those items not requiring FS vote will be moved on to the Provosts Office for final approval

Collegial Review Council (CRC) Report: Drew Virtue

Terry Pollard has been working with the CFC to develop a resource tool to see how we use student evaluations, AFE, and teaching evals. We are hoping to get a product to us in the next few months. Email Terry Pollard or Drew Virtue with feedback.

Question from Vicki Szabo: Can you send us the list of questions?

Response from Drew Virtue: Yes, we will send them to Laura Wright to share out with the senate.

Faculty Affairs Council (FAC) Report: Cheryl Waters-Tormey

Student Satisfaction Survey and Feedback:

We want to encourage colleagues to talk with department heads and deans to better understand the status and context of statistics used. We are working on an FAQ on this, and we will make it available and report on it next time.

We are collecting input on the proposed student questionnaire, and the email that was sent out. We had an open forum and many discussions and are meetings on this. We will vote on this next month here in senate. We are collecting feedback through March 4th and will be sharing results with taskforce and FAC as appropriate. We will have some discussions later as well. The taskforce will write up the final version and present it to senate next month. Look for the resolution in March.

Comment from Laura Wright: I want to acknowledge the huge amount of work of those involved with this.

The Salary Study with Updated Data discussion has been postponed to a later date.

Faculty Senate Chair's Report: Laura Wright

Faculty Conversation:

Most of the questions and comments from the faculty conversation had to do with COVID. A lot of folks had questions about the protocols for salary increases. During the January meeting, we passed a climate action plan, and we were glad we had a collaborative effort with SGA and staff senate.

WHEE should talk series:

There is a need to have a conversation that brings everyone together surrounding civil discourse. So many of our students have been online and this is a developmental time for them. There is a lot of stuff with collective trauma around COVID, and we are looking forward to this and are glad we are having discussion.

Associate to full professor discussions:

We will send out data from Cory Causby on this.

Convening standing committee on student support fund:

We need to establish a plan moving forward. We need 4 faculty members – they don't have to be on senate. The committee may meet about twice a semester.

Additionally, the rules committee will meet to suggest changes to our council structure. We have been asked to consider a DEI council on faculty senate, and maybe a faculty benefits/Quality of life council as well.

Child Care:

We also need some information about childcare. We had a resolution that took place in 2011 and recommendations were made in 2012. We are researching if anything has been done on this. We want to encourage the administration to follow through. We want to re-energize it.

Of note, the Board of Trustees is here next week. Thanks to those attending lunch and council meetings. Please wear name tags.

Comment from Katerina Spasovska: We need to look at who makes decisions for the student support fund and on who/how the decision is being made. It is not clear.

Response from Laura Wright: There are some complicated rules around this fund and exhausting other areas first. There is a lot to go through. Katerina wants to be on the committee.

Comment from Cheryl Waters-Tormey: Regarding childcare, it might be good to ask someone to look into assessing the childcare situation. It will be a lot different now than it was back in 2011.

Comment from Vicki Szabo: In listening to the SGA report and Staff Senate, there are a lot of old faces around this table. We can and should revision how we do senate to energize and excite our colleagues. We need to think creatively about this.

Comment from Laura Wright: Let's encourage colleagues to get involved in senate – elections are coming up soon.

Question from Shelby Hicks: Is anyone looking at the housing situation?

Response from Provost Starnes: Mike Byers is looking into this with the hospital, Jackson County schools, etc. We are all in the same boat on this. It is complex and from a competitive standpoint, it is hard to make the case to a competitor to build for single professionals or start-type situations when there is money to be made in other markets – but we are trying and involved in the conversations.

Comment from Indi Bose: We don't keep in mind that housing is a big thing when we are trying to solve DEI – coming to a place like this as a person of color...if she didn't have her friends, she would not have remained at this university. Housing for people who are not of the majority ethnic race requires them to have to be close to colleagues and have friends here – it is important for the community.

OLD BUSINESS

Resolution: [Revising “Absences Related to Individual Courses” Attendance Policy -- APRC \(vote required\)](#)

DRAFT Resolution reads as follows:

Resolution Revising “Absences Related to Individual Courses” Class Attendance Policy

Be it resolved, the APRC proposes making the following changes (**indicated in red**) to the “Absences Related to Individual Courses” portion of the Class Attendance Policy

Class Attendance Policy

III. Absences Related to Individual Courses, Programs, or Organizations

~~Individual class requirements such as field~~Field trips, field research, ~~or service learning, conferences, performances, or other~~ activities related to individual classes, programs, or organizations are not considered institutional events, but may be integral components of the curriculum or important for student learning or professional growth. -Faculty who sponsor outside activities may request that other faculty ~~to~~-excuse students from their classes so they may attend the outside event. -Faculty of the other courses are encouraged to support the requests when it is reasonable to do so; however, individual faculty of the other courses will determine whether to excuse the absence. In all cases, it is the student's responsibility to fulfill required course work in a timely fashion. Should students be unable to attend the outside class event because of required attendance in other classes, they will not be penalized by the professor offering the outside activity.

Cheryl Waters-Tormey shared that she gets the distinguishment between groups, but the tone of this is like there is only so much we can do in the classroom. If we are trying to get students engaged, this is dismissive. Not sure if there is another policy to counterbalance this? I know we need to have a clarifying situation – this seems to not jive with other things we say are important to do for our students. If there is not a process for negotiating, the students ask to have more flexibility and mental health days, but the things they really love are going off campus, i.e., service learning, professional developments, and making it harder for them is not what I want to do.

Comment from Will Lehman: Another way to approach it is to broaden the definition of a university-sponsored absence. It is currently narrow. If a student has a performance or attendance at conference, etc. it should be a universality-wide absence. Maybe we could open this up a bit more. There needs to be some sort of decision made as to whether the event reaches the level of a university-related absence. What is the wording that is bothersome?

Response from Cheryl Waters-Tormey: We do a lot of field work and do not want to push it to the weekends. Students have families, jobs, etc. We want to be more inclusive. This policy may make it harder. I like the solution to make the definition broader.

Question from Vicki Szabo: Where does this policy live?

Response from Provost Starnes: The origin of the narrative is from Andrew Adams. The policy in the handbook relates to university absences. This is in the catalog under academic regulations & policies>class attendance, article III. APRC has jurisdiction to change this.

Comment from Shelby Hicks: We take students out a lot and have never had a problem with other faculty. Does this actually, and is this in conflict to some of our mission and strategic plan? Could it be related to their major? Our accreditation requires them to do these outside things.

Comment from Will Lehman: Andrew Adams intention is to broaden the number and types of activities. The particular beef was with the fact that a lot of the things his students are doing are not explicitly listed in the policy.

Question from John Hildreth: Who mitigates this situation now? If no one, is it even an issue?

Response from Will Lehman: I wonder the same thing.

Comment from Provost Starnes: When conflicts came up as dean, it was only with dual degree students – and who's activity reigns supreme. In every instance we could work out a satisfactory compromise of sorts. Not sure if it is a problem that needs' solving – but it did come from faculty.

Comment from Mariana Fisher: I think an examination would be the biggest concern. Getting students to be proactive so we can make arrangements is important and where a problem could arise. Putting some verbiage about the student's responsibility would be nice.

Comment from Laura Wright: This may be a solution looking for a problem.

Comment from Will Lehman: I think if we add the "conferences and performances" it will get at what he wanted.

A unanimous approval via voice vote was made as a friendly amendment to add "conferences, performances, or other" to the draft language, and to get rid of the remaining wordsmithing that was

presented in the draft resolution. Other language also added “In all cases, it is the student’s responsibility “to communicate with faculty members and” to fulfill required course work in a timely fashion.

Vicki Szabo called to question.

After motion discrepancies, Vicki Szabo withdrew the call to question.

Discussion proceeded.

An additional edit was suggested to change the title of the catalog policy to “Absences Related to Academic Work”

Jeremy Jones suggested that this be tabled since we are gutting it.

Will Lehman withdrew the motion for a vote on the resolution.

NEW BUSINESS

Curriculum Changes (see [spreadsheet for summary of all curriculum changes at this level](#))

- **B.S. in Economic Analysis** (vote required) Sean Mulholland shared that the interdisciplinary courses required wanted this to be a major that informs economics and conveys this as a way to enhance a person’s career path – we want to encourage students to take other disciplines and other courses. It is an applied idea. The intention is for the majority of the students to major in say philosophy and we wanted it to be successful so they would add an economic major. They are all required to have a second major or minor.

Erin McNelis moved to approve. Voice vote was unanimous. Approved.

- **Minor in Social Justice** (vote required) Callie Schultz was available to answer any question.

Erin McNelis moved to approve. Voice vote was unanimous. Approved.

Resolution: Resolution regarding using SharePoint for TPR process moving forward (from CRC)

Resolution reads as follows:

Resolution regarding using SharePoint for the TPR process moving forward

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic forced Western Carolina University (WCU) to transition to the use of SharePoint for the Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment (TPR) process starting in Academic Year 2020-21; and

WHEREAS the Faculty Senate (FS) Collegial Review Council (CRC) took on the task of exploring alternative options and recommending a long-term solution for the electronic TPR process; and

WHEREAS the FS CRC sought feedback from faculty, staff, and administration regarding their experiences with using SharePoint for the electronic TPR process and their perceptions of SharePoint's strengths and weaknesses for this process; and

WHEREAS the FS CRC consulted with the Division of Information Technology (IT) to select and evaluate potential vendors for the electronic TPR process and determined two, SharePoint and Watermark (an add on to the existing Watermark Faculty Success product), were identified as the most feasible based on cost and WCU's current technology infrastructure; and

WHEREAS the FS CRC, along with members of the Provost's office, participated in two product demonstrations delivered by Watermark employees; and

WHEREAS representatives met with FS and department heads to discuss the pros/cons of Watermark and SharePoint as well as to collect feedback from these bodies; and

WHEREAS the FS CRC heard concerns from faculty and department heads about faculty's current use of Watermark Faculty Success (formerly Digital Measures/FAD), which would have implications for the reports that automatically populate the Watermark add-on for the electronic TRP process; and

WHEREAS the FS CRC heard additional concerns from faculty, department heads, and administration regarding the current cost, potential increased future costs, and required multi-year commitment to Watermark software; and

WHEREAS the FS CRC fully acknowledges the need to identify an appropriate level of staffing, along with any costs associated with this staffing, to make SharePoint a sustainable option for the electronic TPR process; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, the FS CRC recommends that WCU continue to use SharePoint for the electronic TPR process moving forward unless a more suitable alternative is identified.

Cheryl Waters-Tormey made a motion to approve. Katerina Spasovska seconded.

Drew Virtue shared that the vast majority of individuals they talked to wanted to keep this in SharePoint. Question from John Hildreth: There was an issue raised about electronic signatures – there is a new path process with signatures – would that alleviate the concern?

Cory Causby shared that we are using signatures through an IT service as well.

Comment from Provost Starnes: There are forms using the new e-signature policy, but they are not the fillable pdf versions.

Question from Indi Bose: Who is going to identify an alternative?

Response from Drew Virtue: We didn't want to put a definitive option on this – we could put another timetable on this, but we decided against it. We did due diligence on the research.

Voice Vote proceeded and passed.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

*Cheryl Waters-Tormey made a motion to adjourn.
Jeremy Jones seconded.*

Meeting adjourned.

ROLL/VOTING RECORDS and REPORTS

Senator/Ex-Officio Member		Proxy (if any) by	Attendance	Approval of Minutes	BS Economic Analysis	Minor in Social Justice	Attendance Policy	SharePoint for TPR
Asberg	Kia Asberg	Erin McNelis	Proxy	Voice Vote, Unanimous	Voice Vote, Unanimous	Voice Vote, Unanimous	Withdrawn by Will Lehman	Voice Vote, Majority In Favor
Boatright	Michael Boatright		Y					
Bose	Indi Bose		Y					
Brown	Chancellor Kelli Brown		A (at BoG Mtgs)					
De Jong	David De Jong		Y					
Fisher	Mariana Fisher		Y					
Graham	Gael Graham		Y					
Grappendorf	Heidi Grappendorf	Will Lehman	Proxy					
Gulley	Yancey Gulley		Y					
Hicks	Shelby Hicks		Y					
Hildreth	John Hildreth		Y					
Jones	Jeremy Jones		Y					
Kapel	Scottie Kapel		Y					
Lam	Marco Lam	Sean Mulholland	Proxy					
Lehman	Will Lehman		Y					
McNelis	Erin McNelis		Y					
Messer	Diana Messer	Scottie Kapel	Proxy					
Messer	April Messer		Y					
Mulholland	Sean Mulholland		Y					
Odom	Leigh Odom	Elizabeth Wark	Proxy					
Otto	Kadence Otto		Y					
Rimes	Heather Rimes		Y					
Rogers	Carrie Rogers		Y					
Spasovska	Katerina Spasovska		Y					
Starnes	Provost Richard Starnes		Y					
Szabo	Vicki Szabo		Y					
Tanaka	Martin Tanaka	John Hildreth	Proxy					
Virtue	Drew Virtue		Y					
Wark	Elizabeth Wark		Y					
Wasmund	Colin Wasmund		Y					
Waters-Torme	Cheryl Waters-Tormey		Y					
Wright	Laura Wright		Y					



Faculty Senate Meeting Chancellor's Report

Wednesday, February 23rd, 2022

Kelli R Brown

Unfortunately, I'm unable to join you all at this month's Faculty Senate meeting. I am currently attending the Board of Governors meeting in Chapel Hill. However, while I'm not there in person I wanted to start off this report with a quick message for all of you. I know this semester has not been easy so far, but I wanted to commend you for your hard work and resilience, and to say **Thank You** for all you do for WCU and our students. Together we are WCU strong!

SALARY ADJUSTMENTS

In order to make as much progress as possible on closing the most critical salary and compensation gaps, I have authorized \$1.7M in additional, discretionary salary actions as part of an annual raise process that will occur next month. These actions will come in addition to the 2.5% increase that was awarded in January and the next 2.5% increase that will be awarded in July. The additional raises will address some acute compression, inversion, and market gap issues. The specific actions are based on recommendations from the Faculty Salary Committee and the SHRA/EHRA Non-Faculty Salary Committee. While this is only a start and will not affect every faculty and staff member, I am grateful for the work of the salary committees and am glad that we were able to provide substantive additional funding to support progress in improving salaries and compensation. Provost Starnes' report will provide more details on the discretionary salary actions for faculty.

LEGISLATIVE & FOUNDATION BOARD UPDATE

WCU's next legislative agenda will be presented for approval at the Board of Trustees meeting in March. We've identified four legislative priorities for the upcoming short session and beyond. They are as follows:

- Salary increases for faculty/staff
- Merit scholarship program
- Expansion of engineering programs to meet regional industry needs

- Targeted renovation or new construction for an engineering building

Additionally, the Board of Governors is working on the UNC System legislative agenda. They will have a finalized version in April 2022. WCU's agenda items are being considered for inclusion in the overall System agenda.

I'm thrilled to share that WCU has a new government relations liaison. Following a national search, Ms. Christy Agner has been appointed to the position of Deputy Chief of Staff/Director of External Relations— and started February 1. In a short amount of time, Christy has already been to Raleigh to advocate for WCU. I encourage Faculty Senate leadership to invite Christy to provide updates on governmental activities and WCU's advocacy efforts.

We also have a new Assistant Vice Chancellor for Engagement— Mr. James D. Hogan. James is an alumnus of WCU and will be a key part of the Advancement team with a focus on alumni engagement. James started January 1.

The WCU Foundation Board met on February 4th. The Board discussed Western Carolina University in a post pandemic world and what we want to showcase moving forward. One of the attendees left us with a thought-provoking statement; “we need to start defining Western and stop defending it.” Moving forward we will all need to think about how we can change our perspective and how others view WCU.

UNC System Office Initiatives

Meeting and Tour at WCU: As a reminder, the UNC Board of Governors will be holding their April 2022 meeting here on WCU's campus April 6-7, 2022. That meeting will also include a tour of our campus for BOG members and other visitors. Committee meetings on April 6th and the full board meeting on April 7th will be held in the University Center. These meetings, like WCU's Board of Trustees' meetings, are public and, when possible, I encourage you to attend or view the livestream. A lunch for the Board on the 6th will be held at the Ramsey Center. We anticipate a large number of external visitors to attend this Board meeting and there will be impact on campus services and parking during those two days. WCU Parking Services and University Communications will begin reminding faculty, staff, and students where parking and activities will be impacted in the weeks leading up to the meeting.

Strategic Plan Update: The UNC System is updating their strategic plan, *Higher Expectations*. To solicit campus feedback, the System Office will be administering a campus survey and hosting virtual townhalls at each university in the UNC System to allow faculty and staff to ask questions and voice their opinions. Dr. Tim Metz is WCU's point of contact. You can expect to see information on this soon.

Mission Statement Review: The Board of Governors will consider revisions to institutional mission statements during their July 2022 meeting. All institutions are asked to carefully review their current mission statements. Campuses can opt to keep their current statements or offer revisions. Drafts of any proposed revisions to current missions are due to the UNC System Office by June 1, 2022.

I have asked Provost Starnes and Chief of Staff Melissa Wargo to lead a campus task force to complete this task in an expedited fashion. The task force will include representatives from WCU's campus governance groups including Faculty and Staff Senates, Student Government Association, and the Graduate Student Association. Ideally, the updated mission statement should clarify WCU's role and programming in the greater Asheville-Hendersonville area. It should also restate our role in economic development in Asheville and its surrounding communities.

Funding Model: In my last report, I mentioned that the UNC System Board of Governors is considering significant changes to the current funding model. WCU has provided feedback to the UNC System Office. In all, the proposed changes would have a mixed impact on WCU. The proposed new model would incentivize in-state, undergraduate students. In some years when in-state enrollment is high, this would be to WCU's benefit and, in others, it could have a negative impact. Additionally, the new model would not fund higher expense programs like nursing and engineering at the same rate as the past model. Summer funding would also be included in the new model, which is lacking under the current model. There would be a transition year that would allow institutions to mitigate any negative effect of the new model.

Mr. Mike Byers has provided WCU's feedback on the proposed model to the Board and changes have already been proposed to mitigate some of the impact described above. We expect the Board of Governors to take up a vote on the new funding model at the April meeting, which will be hosted here in Cullowhee. If passed by the Board of Governors and approved by the General Assembly in the short session this spring, the new funding model would go into effect the next year.

Project Kitty Hawk: Following its approval, the Project Kitty Hawk Board of Directors had its first meeting on Wednesday, February 9th. At this meeting they named Randy Ramsey as the Chair of the Board of Directors. Also on the board are three chancellors from other North Carolina universities; Dr. Nancy Cable, from UNC Asheville, Dr. Franklin Gillam, from UNC Greensboro, and Dr. Phillip Rogers, from East Carolina University. The Board also appointed Wil Zemp as president of the Kitty Hawk project at this first meeting.

Employee Engagement Survey: The 2022 UNC System Employee Engagement Survey will launch March 28th and is scheduled to be open for three weeks. The 2022 version will be implemented as a “pulse” survey and will be roughly half the length of the 2018 and 2020 versions. Specifically, the 2022 survey will focus on three areas:

- A set of baseline trend data from past surveys
- Diversity and inclusion statements
- Statements specific to institutional actions taken due to the COVID-19 pandemic

ROI Study: Information on this study will be provided in the Provost’s report.

HONORING OUR PROMISE TOUR

The *Honoring Our Promise* tour kicked off in Winston-Salem on February 7th. The first stop went well, and it was so refreshing to connect with people face-to-face again and to spread the good news about Western Carolina University. I look forward to continuing to do this along the tour while simultaneously developing a new network and amplifying the WCU message to new people. By the end of this tour, I want as many people as possible to know all about the incredible work we’re doing here at Western.

UNIVERSITY ACCOLADES/IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

February is Black History Month and I encourage all of you to check out *The Black Fantastic* series on WCU’s website. *The Black Fantastic* is a multimedia artistic look at some of the people helping to shape and mentor our students and others in the campus community. It’s a wonderful display of our Black faculty and staff and their contributions to Western.

February is also I Love WCU month. This is our 6th annual I Love WCU month, and I urge you to get involved. There are several ways to do that.

- You can make a gift at give.wcu.edu
- You can share your feelings about what makes WCU great on social media
- You can engage in a service project to help our community
- Or you can check out the new #checkITout partnership in Technology Commons that promotes the program that allows patrons to borrow tech equipment free of charge for personal or professional use. A contest using that equipment to create something— a video, photo, audio file, graphic, etc.— that expresses why you love WCU will run through February and three random winners of the program could win big prizes like a Nintendo Switch, Air Pod Pros, or an Echo Show.
- No matter what you choose, just get involved!

The School of Nursing has received a \$2.2 million grant from the federal Health Resources and Services Administrations to provide support for nursing students from low-income, first-generation and minority background. The funding will create a four-year Pathways to Equity in Nursing program, which will provide scholarship and stipend support for up to 25 students per year.

Western Carolina University's Forensic Anthropology program is currently expanding through outreach and technical assistance with cold cases and welcoming an ever-increasing number of students. Recently a research team from the program assisted in helping locate Sgt. Francis W. Wiemerslage, a missing airman from World War II. The program is also now providing annual training on the analysis of burned human remains and the investigation of fire-related deaths for local and state agencies.

In Catamount Athletics, WCU's sophomore infielder, Pascanel Ferreras was selected as the preseason SoCon Player of the Year by D1 Baseball and third-team Preseason All-America by the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association. WCU's softball team also saw praise as they were picked to finish second in the 2022 Southern Conference preseason coaches' poll. Also, softball pitcher, Jayme Eilers, was named SoCon Pitcher of the Week on February 14th. And on February 2nd, we were thrilled to welcome 29 new football players during Signing Day.

And, finally, while she only attended WCU for a very short time in Spring 2010, we wish many congratulations and best wishes to Broadway and film star, Ariana DeBose on her recent best supporting actress Academy Award nomination for her role as Anita in Steven Spielberg's West Side Story. Way to go, Ariana!

REMINDERS

A few reminders to keep in mind as we move forward:

- The Board of Trustees' next meeting is March 3rd-4th. At this meeting they will conduct discussions regarding diversity and inclusion, academic affairs, finance and audit, and administration, governance, and trusteeship.
- Spring Break will be March 7th-11th and I encourage you all to use the time to rest and recharge for the remainder of the semester.
- The Board of Governors meeting is happening now, February 23rd-24th at the UNC System Office. Their next meeting will be held here at WCU April 6th-7th.

Thank you for all you do for Western Carolina University!

Provost's Report to Faculty Senate

February 2022

WCU Academic Calendar Revisions

Based on campus feedback, including an informal survey of academic department heads, and a comparison with some of our sister institutions, we are performing a reevaluation of the academic calendar. This is in part driven by a desire to ensure an adequate break between the fall and spring semesters and also includes a reconsideration of non-class days such as advising day and mid-semester breaks. We will be launching a survey to campus constituents in the coming days to gather feedback on proposed changes to the Spring 2023 calendar, as well as potential options for the 2023-2024 academic year calendar. We appreciate your time in completing the survey. Your feedback will be an important source of information as we determine the best way to proceed with a potential "reset" of the structure of the academic calendar.

ROI Study of UNC System Universities

The UNC Board of Governors will contract with an independent research organization to conduct an evaluation of its current programs at each constituent institution of The University of North Carolina related to its operational costs, student outcomes, and return on investment (ROI) of each program. The evaluation will include an analysis of at least the following information by constituent institution and undergraduate and graduate degree programs:

- The number of students in each program
- The number of faculty and other staff employed for each program
- The related costs to operate each program, inclusive of total staff compensation and benefits, facility costs, and any other related expenses, including overhead
- A detailed correlation between degree of study and directly related career roles and associated expected starting compensation, as well as expected career earnings for students upon completion of those programs
- A detailed ROI for each program including for State and student funding expenditures

The System Office has issued an RFP for an independent research organization and it is now posted. The target date for completion of the project is September 1, 2023. The System Office will be reaching out to all universities soon for input.

UNC Online Sunsets at the end of Spring Semester

After an evaluation for alignment and effectiveness, the System Office has decided to sunset UNC Online and its companion proctoring service at the end of the current spring semester. At its inception in 2010, UNC Online was a pioneering platform in a nascent online space. Digital learning is now highly developed on UNC campuses and the focus in the System Office is shifting as well. The Language Exchange program that is part of UNC Online will continue to be hosted and will continue to support digital learning initiatives across the system. Additionally, the System Office will be exploring agreements to allow students to enroll in courses at other institutions in an efficient and ordered manner. There are a few students already enrolled in UNC Online for summer and those enrollments will be respected.

Faculty Salaries Update

For the February pay period, we implemented recommendations of the Standing Committee on Faculty Salaries in the following categories to begin to address market issues and compression/inversion:

- Faculty whose January 1, 2022, salary (to include the 2.5% LI if eligible) is 2.5% or more below the 30th percentile of the salary range for their respective teaching discipline.
- Faculty whose salary (after implementing 30th percentile gap adjustments) would be considered “compressed” or “inverted” based upon the definitions established by the Standing Committee on Faculty Salaries.

In total, 107 faculty were eligible to receive a market adjustment to increase their salary to the 30th percentile (after the 7/1/22 2.5% LI). Nine (9) faculty were eligible to receive an equity adjustment to address compression/inversion concerns. As a result, all faculty will attain at least the 30th percentile of their respective salary range as of July 1, 2022, and compression/inversion (as defined by the Committee) has been eliminated. Faculty received direct communications from Human Resources concerning these adjustments if they fell into these groups.

The salary ranges utilized for the academic faculty are current as of 2021-22 (updated in December 2021). Note that the new ranges for Library faculty will not be released until later this spring so the analysis on that group was based on 2019 salary ranges.

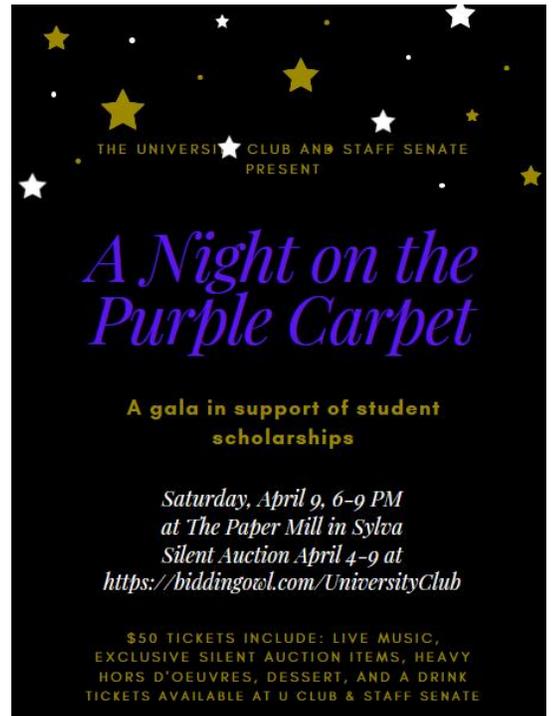
Staff Senate Scholarship News

Staff Senate Scholarship Selection Committee

The scholarship application has closed. The selection committee has assembled and will begin reviewing applications in the coming weeks.

U Club Silent Auction

The annual U Club Silent Auction which benefits the Staff Senate Scholarship Fund is scheduled for **April 4-9**. The silent auction will culminate in a ticketed gala “A Night on the Purple Carpet” at **The Paper Mill in Sylva on Saturday, April 9th from 6:00p – 9:00p**. Limited tickets will be sold (100 tickets for \$50/each). The Paper Mill will provide the venue, heavy hors d’ouvres, and live music. The U Club and Staff Senate will be providing “small bites” in the form of a dessert competition. They have set a fundraising goal of \$10,000. We are soliciting donations for the Silent Auction. If you have something you would like to donate, please let us know.



Percentage Night Fundraiser at Jack the Dipper

We have an upcoming Percentage Night Fundraiser at Jack the Dipper Ice Cream (Sylva, NC) on **Thursday, March 24, 2022 from 1:00p – 8:00pm**. 10% of the proceeds from the night will be donated to the Staff Senate Scholarship. This is a great time to enjoy a delicious treat and give back to a great cause at the same time!

Staff Senate Annual Holiday Ornament

Planning for the 2022-23 holiday ornament is underway. We are in preliminary discussions with the Rapid Center and the School of Art & Design regarding design and manufacturing. Proceeds from this holiday ornament help support scholarships for currently

enrolled or accepted students who are children of SHRA and EHRA non-faculty employees and Staff Senate initiatives.

Staff Senate Cookbook

A new fundraising projects in the works is the creation of a Staff Senate Cookbook. The committee plans to solicit recipes in March and April with the hopes to have the completed ready to sell at Mountain Heritage Day.

Positive Impact Discussion Panel



Staff Senate Human Resources Committee is hosting leadership discussions to staff across campus. The discussions are limited to 15 people and will run approximately one hour with time for Q&A. Dr. Carol Burton kicked off the first PI discussion in November. Upcoming sessions include:

Craig Fowler
Chief Information Officer

March 17, 2022

Tiffany Henry
Jackson Co Economic Director

April 21, 2022

Leadership Growth and Development Retreat

Unfortunately, due to the increased positivity rates of Covid cases we postponed our January Leadership Growth and Development Retreat with Trustee Casey Cooper. This has been rescheduled for March 9, 2022. We look forward to a robust discussion.

Staff Emeritus

We have identified six senators who are currently working on this initiative in hopes of bringing a Staff Emeritus recognition to Western Carolina University. The committee has reached out to our sister institutions who currently have a Staff Emeritus recognition to help guide as we move forward.

Climate Change Resolution

Staff Senate passed a Climate Change Resolution at the February 2022 general body meeting. This resolution calls upon the Chancellor and university leadership to pursue the development and implementation of a Comprehensive Climate Action and Sustainability Plan.

Staff Senate Elections

We are amid Senator Elections. Nominations were open for two weeks during which approximately 75 names were submitted for consideration. Staff Senate information sessions are planned for late February where nominees can learn more about Staff Senate and determine if they would like to be considered for a vacant seat. Election is slated to begin in March and we are hopeful to announce new senators in April. New Senators should be announced in April. In early April, we will open the officer nominations and have an election later in the month. New Officers should be announced in May.

Spring Week of Kindness

The first Week of Kindness back in the fall semester was such a huge success that planning is already underway for the **Spring Week of Kindness**. This is scheduled for April 4-8, 2022. Senator Anne Aldrich is leading the committee. Together they are brainstorming new ideas, initiatives, and ways to involve staff, students, faculty and the community for the week-long event. If any faculty would like to be involved with this committee, please contact Anne Aldrich.

Question of the Month

The Staff Engagement Committee runs a monthly Question of the Month and provides the feedback to the Chancellor and various leaders/departments on campus who may benefit from the feedback provided. The February question requests input regarding how individuals across campus receive their information about events, happenings and news at Western Carolina University. [Check out our blog to provide your input.](#)

Adopt-A-Highway

Staff Senate Adopted a Highway on the backside of campus on Old Cullowhee Road. Our two-mile stretch of road is from the Bayside Drive to Highway 107. Our third clean-up is scheduled for Wednesday, February 23rd in conjunction with I Love WCU month.



Professional Development Fund

As of mid-February, the Staff Senate Professional Development Fund has received 25 eligible requests for funding totaling \$10,892. The committee anticipates exhausting their \$12,000 in available funding after the February applications have been awarded!

Leadership Book

We finished reading [You Don't Need a Title to Be a Leader: How Anyone, Anywhere, Can Make a Positive Difference](#) by Mark Sanborn. Planning is underway for group discussions.

Internal Operations and Organizational Structure

Senate committees are working on internal Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). We will use this information to create a thorough database of the innerworkings of the Senate's committees, events, and month-to-month happenings. This will improve the transparency of Staff Senate and its organizational structure for future Senators.

**SGA FACULTY SENATE REPORT
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23RD, 2022**

SGA Update

Judicial Branch

- Judicial meet on Thursdays at 5:45 pm. These meetings are closed to the public.

Legislative Branch

- Senate meet on Mondays in the UC Multipurpose room from 6 - 8pm. Meetings are open to the public. Contact Vice President Lester to get on the agenda.
- Senate meetings are also livestreamed on <https://www.facebook.com/WCUSGA>
- Passed pieces of legislation –
 - [S22-01 Mental Wellness Days](#)
 - [S22-02 Chief Diversity Officer on Executive Council](#)
 - [S22-03 Climate Action Plan](#)

Executive Branch

- Exec meet on Mondays from 7:30 – 8:30 am. Meetings are closed to the public. Reach out to President Hart if you would like to attend.
- Onboarded a new Director of Finance, Chief of Staff, and Director of Operations at the start of the semester.
- President Hart and Vice President Lester released a [statement](#) following media attention about RA Training.
- Director of PR and Marketing is building our affiliate [website](#).
- We are to soon begin a campaign to last the remainder of the semester focused on empowering students in the identities they represent.
- SGA hosting a tabling event to get what students love about WCU for I Love WCU month. We have displayed their comments on the SGA office windows.
- Goals/next steps
 - Safety walk with administration on March 15th
 - Reviewing Title IX victim's packet and resources
 - Menstrual products in gender neutral bathrooms
 - SGA week following spring break

External Updates

- SGA Elections will take place at the end of February. Estefany Gordillio-Rivas, our current Director of Community Engagement, is running for Student Body President. CJ Mitchell and Tristin Goode, both current Senators, are running for Student Body Vice President. Forty-one individuals are running for Senate.
- SGA will be starting a Whee Should Talk civil discourse event series. The first event will take place on March 1st at 6:30 in the UC Multipurpose Room. The first event is led by Dr. Scott Eldredge and about Difficult Conversations: Improving Relationships through Conflict. This series is in partnership with the Provost Office and Faculty Senate.

UNC Association of Student Governments

- Next meeting is February 25th – 26th. It has been moved online due to COVID-19.
- At the January meeting, we looked at legislation to include the cost of a laptop in the cost of attendance.



STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION of WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

98th SESSION HART-LESTER ADMINISTRATION, Fall 2021-Spring 2022

- The Council of SBPs met with the UNC System Office to discuss the new funding model.
- WCU delegation is working on legislation concerning:
 - The addition of an antihazing, antidiscrimination clause to the ASG governing documents
 - Updates to the ASG President requirements
 - A vote on the Board of Governors for the ASG President
 - Mental health days

Please visit my website if you would like read about my specific platform
<https://rebeccaemilyhart.wixsite.com/president>



Minutes of the Meeting of the UNC Faculty Assembly

January 14, 2022, via Zoom

Meeting Attendees:

ASU Mike Hambourger, Emaily Dakin, Louis Gallien
ECU Ralph Scott; Purificación Martínez; Jeni Parker; Pamela Reis
ECSU Kacey DiGiaco; Hirendranath Banerjee; Walter R. Swan; Malcolm Dcosta
FSU Chet Dilday; Robert Taber; Kimberly Tran
NCA&T Nicole Dobbins; Phoebe Ajibade
NCCU Ralph Barrett; Kuldip Kuwahara; Russell Robinson; Tracie Locklear
NCSSM Keethan Kleiner; Floyd Bullard
NCSU Richard Spontak; Juliana Mukuchi Nfah-Abbenyi; RaJade M. Berry-James; David M. Berube
UNCA Marietta Cameron; Melodie Galloway; Lisa Sellers
UNC-CH Chaitra Powell; Jan Hannig; Eileen Dewitya; Mimi Chapman; Anthony Hackney
UNCC Karen Ford-Eickhoff; Susan B. Harden; Debra Smith; Benny Andres
UNCG Wade Maki; Spoma Jovanovic; Joyce Clapp; Laurie Kennedy-Malone; Sarah Daynes
UNCP Heather Sellers; Renee Lamphere
UNCSA Elizabeth Klaimon; Ellen Rosenberg
UNCW Jason Fleming; Jill Waity
WCU Vicki Szabo; Bill Yang; Laura Wright
WSSU Nancy Smith; Carol Cain; Jack S. Monell
UNC System Office David English; James Ptaszynski; Darryl Bass; Rondall Rice; Jennifer Gerz-Escandon; Kelley Gregory, Bethany Meighan, Kimberly van Noort, Samantha Carney

9:00-9:05 AM Welcome, and Approval of the Minutes of the December 3, 2021 meeting - Dr. Timothy J. Ives

Dr. Ives gave a brief overview of the recent Board of Governors meeting, citing specifically the discussion of proposed funding model changes from the Budget & Finance Committee. He also reminded the Assembly of elections coming up this April. The Ombuds Program is in discussion on local campuses and at the Provost level. There is an upcoming refresh of the UNC System strategic plan. There should be an update on this at the Assembly meeting in February. Dr. Ives then asked Kelley Ann Gregory to send out a poll to the Assembly asking if anyone had received any leadership training as a part of the academic career. Dr. Ives is looking for best practices and wants to assess the level of interest in developing a leadership development program.

Kimberly van Noort, Ph.D., UNC System Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dr. van Noort reported that there has been a lot going on, especially with the BOG meeting. Project Kitty Hawk in coming together and that a board of directors has been outlined, with expected approval at next week's Board of Governors meeting. The end of a pilot in minimum eligibility is approaching, changing from 'and' to 'or' for students who will be evaluated on a 2.5 GPA or on their SAT/ACT scores. UNC System Office staff are considering the results of the pilot. A waiver is coming to an end and all North Carolina public school students will be sitting for the SAT this spring. The System is talking with other campuses and stakeholders about how or if these tests are currently being used.

In lieu of a program productivity study, the UNC System is preparing a program evaluation project

directed by the General Assembly that is reflected in their last budget. They are currently in the process of selecting a consulting firm. Faculty will be very involved in this as they look at how many students are in UNC programs, how many graduate, the cost of the program, the return on students' investment in terms of time and money, and how many students are remaining in North Carolina and what sectors are they working in after graduation. Questions that will need to be answered are where the System needs to be growing, are the right programs in the right places, where will we need additional enrollments, etc. Public health care is a good example to look at. This will be a two-year process and will be managed from the System Office. Chancellors and provosts already know about this, but faculty input will be needed to shape the future of the UNC System using real data this time.

Dr. van Noort said that the UNC System is in the process of onboarding new provosts and there are some provosts who are retiring. There is a strong group coming and leadership training will be offered from the System. She also reported the System Office has been heavily involved in student mental health training. Dr. van Noort asked, Bethany Meighen, Ed.D., Vice President for Student Affairs to offer an update on the Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) initiative and Samantha J. Carney, Ph.D., Senior Associate Vice President for Strategy and Policy, shared about mental health awareness and response training. This national non-profit provides training to faculty and staff across the state. The UNC System launched MHFA trainings and had 209 individuals trained to then train other staff, students, administrators, and faculty.

Funding allowed this group to extend services, such as, ProtoCall Services, which have been extended for another year. An after-hours call service helps students and relieves staff on local campuses. This covers evenings and weekends. Togetherall is a pilot going on at 3 campuses. Togetherall provides a global, online, digital peer to peer support network to support the mental wellbeing of people experiencing psychological distress. There are 12 projects funded - UNC Pembroke has a counsel residency program, to mention one example. A 2022 Behavioral Health Convening virtual conference will be held on March 30 & 31, 2022. More information will be available soon.

Another service to increase capacity and serve more students, they are providing funds to each campus to give microgrants to students who need off-campus mental health care and have financial need. The UNC System Office is exploring the potential to develop and pilot a shared pool of psychiatric care providers to fill in some gaps that exist on some campuses. Keeling & Associates will contract to provide an analysis of the various models for shared services in student mental health. They have funding for exploratory analysis and the pilot. The System Office is evaluating and will select a referral network system to link off-campus and private providers to institutional counseling centers. They are considering MiResource, The Shrink Space, and ThrivingCampus, among others, and are currently getting input from CAPS directors.

Jack Monell, PhD, Winston-Salem State University, was elected by acclamation of the Faculty Assembly body to serve the remaining 2021-2022 academic year on the Executive Committee, representing the one of two At-Large seats.

Mark Holton, Member, UNC System Board of Governors, and Chair, Committee on Audit, Risk Management, and Compliance (CARMC)

At the outset, Governor Holton recognized the five Faculty Assembly members who have volunteered to serve as *ex officio* members of CARMC: Professors Carol Cain, Louis Gallien, Jack Monell, Jason Fleming, and Joel Avrin. Governor Holton then gave an overview of the CARMC. He

explained his background as general counsel for a large corporation and then introduced S. Lynne Sanders, CPA, Vice President for Compliance and Audit Services. The discussion included outlines of Risk Management Assessment, CARMC oversight, and Audit Evolution. The CARMC charge includes internal audits, campus safety and security, information governance and information security and enterprise risk management. Ms. Sanders described the UNC System Internal Audit, stating this covers approvals of annual campus risk-based internal audit plans, annual reporting on the status of system-wide internal audit work and external audits. This past year 211 reports were completed. Internal audit space exists on each campus and some of the work of the CARMC is helpful in strengthening the posture in various areas across the system. Governor Holton added that the work of the CARMC supports campus law enforcement, tuition waiver benefits for law enforcement officers, better training, and reduced vacancy rates on campuses. Also, Fred Sellers who was recently hired as the UNC System Chief of Security has a background in the FBI. There is a renewed effort to provide college credits for security officers and improve recruitment.

Andrew P. Kelly, Ph.D., Senior Vice President for Strategy and Policy – Project Kitty Hawk

Dr. Kelly stated that there has been a demographic slowdown of college admissions in North Carolina and nationally. He said that UNC is heavily reliant on traditional-age students. There is a decline in birth rates and data that shows a demand for more distance learning among those above 25 years of age, “so therefore, what do we do?” The UNC System is planning to build a shared service that will enable universities to participate.

He stated that non-profit, internal, online program managers (OPMs), like 2U, Noodle, Pearson, and others have allowed universities to build an online presence but are usually very expensive. Also, the results have been mixed from a university perspective as these programs have generally targeted graduate programs with overall higher tuition plans.

The Kitty Hawk Project will offer accelerated innovation. It will offer an opportunity to help the UNC System adapt to the needs of adult learners and a changing labor market. To do this we need new models and services not currently available at scale in the system. Many universities have partnered with online program managers, but the terms are often expensive. A new entrepreneurial ed-tech startup can provide these services to accelerate existing universities’ ability to serve working adults. The start-up would operate as a nonprofit, affiliated entity, where ‘clients’ are system universities. Universities that choose to partner would work to leverage a proven business model for the public good. There is market demand and the project will contain program design; technology; marketing; large enrollment and success support.

Project Kitty Hawk will provide the core services and capabilities to UNC System campuses so that they can expand online learning and reach unserved working adults. The UNC campuses that choose to partner would work with the new organization to develop programs in collaboration with their faculty. Universities will still award the degrees.

Committee meetings convened in breakout rooms, then reconvened for committee reports.

Motion to adjourn was made and seconded. Meeting adjourned at 12:10 PM with no objections.