

NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY
Minutes of the Faculty Senate
November 10, 2020
3:00 p.m.

Regular Meeting No. 6 of the 67th Session

Via Zoom

November 10, 2020

Present: Chair Kellner; Chair-Elect Berry-James; Associate Chair Sannes; Parliamentarian Funkhouser; Senators Ashwell, Bass-Freeman, Bernhard, Boyer, Carrier, Collins, Darhower, Duggins, Erdim, Flinchum, Gerard, Ghosh, Gunter, Isik, Jacob, Jordan, Kirby, Kittle-Autry, Koch, Kuzma, Kuznetsov, Little, Lunardi, McGowan, Nelson, Nicholas-Parker, Pinkins, Reiskind, Riehn, Taylor, Thuente, Vincent, Williams, Yoon, Zagacki

Guests: Warwick Arden, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost; Roy Baroff, Faculty and Staff Ombuds; Katharine Stewart, Vice Provost, Faculty Affairs; Courtney Thornton, Associate Vice Provost, Academic Personnel & Policy; Marc Hoit, Vice Chancellor, OIT; Peter Harries, Dean of the Graduate School; Elizabeth James, Director, Office of International Services in the Office of Global Engagement; Nancy Whelchel, Director, Survey Research, Office of Institutional Strategy and Analysis; Carolyn Bird, Professor, Agriculture & Human Sciences, CALS, Former Chair of the Faculty; Marie Williams, Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources

1. Call to Order

Hans Kellner, Chair of the Faculty

Chair Kellner called the sixth meeting of the sixty-seventh session of the NC State Faculty Senate to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. Announcements

Hans Kellner, Chair of the Faculty

3. Approval of the Minutes, Regular Meeting No. 5 of the 66th Session, October 27, 2020

Phil Sannes, Associate Chair of the Faculty

Associate Chair Sannes called for a motion to approve the minutes for the fifth meeting of the 67th Session of the NC State Faculty Senate. A motion and second were made and the minutes were unanimously approved.

4. Chairs Remarks

Hans Kellner, Chair of the Faculty

5. **Provost's Remarks and Q/A**

Warwick Arden, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost

Provost Arden brought the following updates to the Senate:

"I wanted to talk a little bit about today that I know is on everybody's minds is spring and spring planning. We've been putting a lot of work into thinking through this and thinking through the spring. And the big question everybody asks is what's going to be different this time. In all honesty, and I think those of you know me for a while now, I'm a pretty straight shooter. I can't sit here and say we've got the perfect solution. This is our first pandemic and there's a chance we're building the airplane while we're flying it. And so we're trying to make the very best decisions we can and we're trying to make the right decisions. Let me start by saying why are we intent on coming back in the spring versus just staying online. The Chancellor is convinced, and I don't believe that he is wrong, that for us to not have an in-person presence with some degree of face to face instruction in the spring will be very, very damaging both to our reputation and potentially to the university financially, in the long run.

And so he believes that this is an imperative. He's barraged by folks; everybody from parents to legislators to Board of Governors to Board of Trustees and others, giving endless recounts of other universities that stayed open and have managed to do this with a modicum of success. And so he genuinely believes that it would be not in our best interest to simply stay online and not have a strong person to person presence. There are several things that we are doing differently. The first thing is that we're bringing way less students back on campus than before. We have the capacity for about 10,000 students in our residence halls. In the fall, we started with about 8000 students and another 500 in the Greek community. This time we're bringing back only about 4000 students. So about a half of what we did in the fall, and there'll be about another 500 in the Greek community. There will be single occupancy in all of our residence halls and by looking at our data from the fall, we have a pretty good idea of where were the safer places and where were the highest risks.

There is some good news from what happened in the fall. We believe our classrooms are very, very safe and we have seen no evidence of building paste transmission meaning few cases in one building lead to spread within the building. Nearly all of it was contained to a given apartment or a given suite, and even the apartment or suite next door is not involved. So we will be having a more limited number of students back. In terms of the amount of face to face instruction, I've said that I believe the classroom is a safe environment. We've put a lot of work into that.

The numbers that I'm seeing at the moment would indicate that the average student will probably be getting around one out of five classes face to face, and the balance still online. And so students will still be spending a lot of time in their apartment or on their residence hall online. Those who want to stay online fully, can. We will work hard for students who really wish to have 100% online experience whether they're living in a residence or apartment or home. The average will probably be getting around one of those classes face to face and it will be a mixture of face-to-face, hybrid and online.

I've asked Dr. Casani to join me this afternoon because I want to talk about testing. We're going to have dramatically expanded testing, particularly on return to campus, than we have before. And Dr. Casani and her team and a team of others that will meet on a regular basis, have been working through our testing strategy and scenario. It has not been locked down yet; we're still getting a little input. We will be releasing the testing strategy and testing scenario. It's going to be aggressive. It's not going to make everybody happy. But I've learned through this that it's hard to make everybody happy one way or the other. So with that, I'm going to ask Dr. Julie Casani, Director of Student Health

and our chief medical officer to talk to you a little bit about what's evolving in terms of our return to campus and semester testing strategy.”

Provost Arden recognized Dr. Julie Ann Casani, to provide an update on the Campus response and planning for Covid-19. She reported the following:

“We have quite a bit of testing that we're going to be doing, and I thought it would be easier to show you rather than just talk through it. So hopefully you can see bits and pieces of this. So let me just start first with what we've done in the past and how we're expanding that. We see patients in student health, people who have symptoms, who have been in close contact who are nervous and worried. These are students who live on campus as well as students who live off campus, we've been testing them all fall. We're still testing them. The line has about six deep right now. We also had our Wolfpack surveillance program, which I think some of you participated in that; that was faculty, students and staff that we recruited early on in the semester and we followed them longitudinally throughout the semester, testing every two weeks. We had a 0.8% positivity rate in that group, which was pretty low. We were very excited about that.

When we identified clusters of people who were potentially infectious, we went back and did contact tracing, identified a group of people and tested them. We also included all of our Greek Village in this program. This was our cluster surveillance program. Many of those were positive, not everybody, and this is why the Provost is able to say that when we identified people who were positive who were on campus, in the classroom or in the workplace, we felt pretty confident that we had tested most of the people that they had been in contact with. We were not able to identify people who got sick related to that. So that was very successful. Of course, we continue to test athletes. Football gets tested three times a week, basketball, probably will get tested seven times a week. So we're very, very aggressive with our athletic testing.

And then there's this C-19 program. We have a large group of people that we're testing with that. It's all of the students who live in residence halls and in Greek Village. We are also going to be expanding that to include students who we think will be using our services and our resources a lot; students who are taking face to face classes, student employees, and we're expanding that to students who live near campus. So we have about a one mile radius around campus. There currently are about 11,000 students who live there and we will be asking and talking to them about getting them enrolled and getting them here to get tested frequently. And these are some of the plans that we're working through right now. We're also seriously considering, and we want to expand this to other employees. So not just staff but also faculty, of course, who are on campus a lot and want to continue to reassure themselves and others that they're well and get testing.

These numbers expand and contract, depending on where the plan fits that day. As part of this C-19 surveillance program, and these are people who are asymptomatic, we are considering a proposal that's being put forth by the faculty to establish a lab on campus to help us with testing. So this is very early in the stages. We are looking at some of these plans and I'm very hopeful to see if they can help us with some of the testing on campus. I think that that's a great partnership and will really not only help us provide some very cost effective surveillance testing, but be able to expand those services, make it easy for the students and also engage the faculty to be part of this whole project in this whole response and it's sustainable. Louis Hunt gave me a real “oh, wow” moment about a week ago when he said, well, Julie, we're going to have this next fall too, right? We were so embodied in thinking about the spring that suddenly I had to think we may have this next fall, depending on what happens with vaccines and how much vaccine we get. So we need to think sustainable because we

can't afford to continue to be as much online as we are.

And then finally, the last group that we are looking at is the Winter Wolfpack Welcome Back Week surveillance program. So we will be looking at testing students, or having students report a negative test within three to five days of coming to campus. If they move in, we'll test them on site when they move in, and again, look at that near campus group and getting them tested. So once again, this is all being finalized. But this is our current idea and this is our current concept about testing. We want to make sure that we get off on the right foot, and that we can continue to have a safe campus throughout the semester. So that's where we're going. This also includes some faculty and staff in all of that return to campus program. So that's what we have. And that's kind of where we're working through this.”

Provost Arden continued:

“Julie and her team have put an enormous amount of work into this. And we've had an executive group that's been kind of going over this again and again. There's a lot of details in the weeds here to figure out – that we are getting the right populations and they'll begin to find the populations and you know what happens if they don't get tested and so forth. So there's a lot in the weeds. But I think a more vigorous and aggressive testing paradigm is going to be really important to us going into the semester. So having said that, there will be some changes, in terms of the number of students on campus. And remember that about 35,000 students, the majority of them are already here in apartments surrounding the university, and have been for the whole semester. They are utilizing campus resources, they have utilizing the library and even the gym and Talley and elsewhere. So we do have a lot of students who are here. We track cases in students, whether in residence halls, we normally have 1600 students in residence halls, or whether they are in Greek Village or whether they're off campus. And at the moment the numbers have been very, very low. For on-campus and in Greek, we're getting usually zeros and ones every day. And I think we've had zeros for the last week or so. Off campus, I was worried last week with a little bit of a bump and we were getting up to five and seven a day for off campus. I notice we're back down again now, four yesterday and one today.

We are also tracking numbers in staff, which are also very low. We get a few staff cases now and again. We believe the majority of them are community-acquired versus campus acquired. It's very difficult to get faculty numbers because we rely on self-reporting there, and many faculty are simply not self-reporting. So I won't tell you that we have accurate faculty numbers. So that's where we are going into the spring. We're hoping to get all of these communications together and we'll get your input, staff input, student input and get these communications together. The Chancellor would very much like us to have these out by Thanksgiving or the end of the month. We've got a long Thanksgiving and Christmas break, almost two months. Classes don't start until January 19th. The reason that we bumped it back a week is this gives us time to allow students to get a negative test at home in a reasonable time period before coming back. So they're not trying to get a negative test over the New Year holiday, for example.

It would be very difficult if we tried to test all of our students back ourselves. So we're hoping to get a significant proportion to go to where it is - CVS, Walgreens, Department of Health - and get that test to certify a negative test before coming back to campus.

So those are some of the things that we've been working on. We continue to try to refine teaching environments and we've put a lot of money into classroom capture, we put a lot of money into building design, spacing students out in class. We will continue to have a mask mandate across campus. Then the last thing I will say is one of the things I've learned through this is, you always look

for the weakest link of the chain when it comes to pandemics or epidemiology. What are your most vulnerable places and for us last time, quite frankly, the most vulnerable place was student behavior. It's not what occurs in the classroom or in the library or people not wearing masks. It's what's happening in the apartments and Greek Village after hours; parties and so forth. We will be a lot more deliberate and overt about taking actions against students and groups of students who deliberately violate campus standards. One of the most disappointing things to me last time was the flagrant violation of campus standards by groups of students, and so we want to be able to act quickly and send messages that this is something we take really importantly. In general, one of the things that's in our favor is that student behavior at the beginning of spring is usually very different from student behavior at the beginning of fall. We all know that at the beginning of the fall, the first three weeks is like Party Central, like every campus in the country. I think there's a much more sober, literally and metaphorically, approach to this in the spring. And so I'm really trying to make sure that we work proactively with our students, have good communications and work with student leaders to emphasize that we're all in this together; students, faculty and staff, and frankly, the Raleigh community. We have obligations there. So with that, I'll open it up if there are any questions. There'll be a lot more information coming out about this before the end of the month."

Questions and Discussion

Hans Kellner: Selecting the mode of instruction will be up to the individual faculty member, is that correct?

Warwick Arden: Very early on, I put out there that I would like, that if we're somewhere around 40% face to face, which means an average of two out of five. But in no cases have I pressured individual faculty who teach face to face, rather than by distance. So this is a faculty choice. Certain department heads obviously have a responsibility to ensure we're delivering appropriate instruction in the appropriate ways, but we have not pressured individual faculty to deliver instruction in a specific manner.

Hans Kellner: The second point has to do with the date on which grades are due. I have heard it brought up as an issue. This is the Monday after the end of the Thanksgiving break and for some of us, it makes it very difficult to complete the reading and grading and so forth. Would it be possible to bump that a little bit forward?

Warwick Arden: I will talk to Louis Hunt. I have been over the calendar. I have looked at the calendar. I have not heard this concern expressed. I thought that from memory, grades were due before the Thanksgiving break. Is that not the case? I see Chris, shaking his head. Well, I'd have to go back and look at the calendar.

Hans Kellner: If you would do that. I would appreciate it. Thank you very much.

Andrey Kuznetsov: My question is the University doing anything to get us priority for the vaccine?

Julie Ann Casani: I actually participated in the state committee on prioritizing vaccine in developing the plan for North Carolina. And although they recognize the vulnerability of our students and the impact of positive rates, which are significant across the United States in college age students, and then the impact on the community for that, we are actually in the third tier. It is a medical model, meaning that those that are medically at risk are the highest priority. And so we are actually in tier three of the plan. You can believe that I was very vocal because I know the statistics, but we're still in

tier three out of four tiers.

Hans Kellner: There are some further questions about testing. So I'll go back to Dr. Casani. One of them is, do we have any way of knowing whether returning students will be able to find affordable testing where they live. The other question was will on-campus testing be considered diagnostic or purely for surveillance purposes?

Julie Ann Casani: So yes, the messages that we're putting out about testing will include a "find a test site" site, that both North Carolina and the CDC have. In terms of testing on campus, the surveillance program, if we stand up our lab at NC State, that is not a diagnostic lab. That is for surveillance. Right now, the plan for that, if that goes forward, is to do pooled saliva samples and then if anything comes back positive or needs to be followed on, that sampling will then go on to a commercial lab and that will be diagnostic. Anything that's done through student health, of course, for diagnostics, or even cluster surveillance is done in a CLIA lab and so therefore it is a diagnostic lab.

K Vincent: I'm pleased to hear that there's going to be some vigorous testing going ahead. A lot of us wanted this to happen in the fall, of course, and it was pushed aside. I'm encouraged that there's going to be more testing. My question really right now is the point that the Provost made about the Chancellor's sense that not opening the university would be damaging to the university reputation and to the financial situation we face. So I'm wondering if you could say more about that second issue. What is the difference not opening in terms of having this 20% of classes face to face, and having the 4000 students or whatever on campus? What's the financial drawback of staying online.

Warwick Arden: So you can you can imagine, there's a lot of speculation here. Don't forget that we're probably headed into a pretty difficult financial year, meaning the next fiscal year. I think once the legislature recognizes what state tax revenues are like, we are probably up for a cut. We don't know how much. But any cut that comes to the University is always decided by the legislature and then within the university, is decided by the Board of Governors, how that is distributed. For us to be one of the few, if not the only university that remains closed and not having face to face instruction, I believe we would suffer financially in our state appropriated budget. That's my belief and I think the Chancellor also believes that. There are known impacts on auxiliary revenues. We already know that. We've already done the calculations. There are hundreds of people on furloughs right now in dining, housing, parking, etc., because of the challenges to the auxiliary revenues. Those challenges to the auxiliary revenues would continue and those furloughs would need to be extended or expanded through the spring. There are currently between 400 and 500 people affected by those furloughs. Even if we put that aside and it's speculation, I think our state appropriated budget could also be affected. I don't know that for a fact; nobody's said that to my face. But it's conjecture based on rhetoric that we are hearing.

Hans Kellner: Could I ask for a clarification? The mode of instruction and the opening or closing of the campus are in, as I understand it, and I can be wrong, are completely different issues. You can have 100% online teaching with students on campus. Right. You can have 100% face to face teaching, but tell everybody to go home and commute. Theoretically, I mean, neither extreme is possible. They have different financial impacts; the first one doesn't, I don't think, have much financial impact at all but the second one has a lot of financial impact. That is to say, whether the campus is "open" with students on it or not. So it's the interrelationship between these two different issues that creates the challenges that you're dealing with. Am I right about that?

Warwick Arden: You're mostly right. They are different issues. You'll remember that at the beginning of the fall, we went 100% online first and then about a week later, closed the residence halls. The

bottom line is, it's very difficult to close the residence halls and send everybody home unless you are completely online. Because there are a lot of students that don't have anywhere to go in the local area. They can't come to campus face to face classes, when you close the residence halls that means they're going home to Eastern or Western North Carolina, and unless you're fully online, they can't take a full course load. So they are separate issues but they are interrelated. You really can't close down your residence halls unless you've made the decision to go fully online.

Hans Kellner: I heard Marc Hoit this morning at the ALM meeting, talk about the surprisingly high percentage of students who do not have adequate bandwidth at home.

Warwick Arden: And it's not just in the rural parts of North Carolina. You can be in Cary, and the reality is if your Mom and Dad are online because of their jobs, two other K through 12 kids are at home doing their homework and being online, the bandwidth just can't always support that. And so we think of it as a rural North Carolina issue, and it is predominantly and we're very concerned about it. But it's not exclusively a rural North Carolina issue. One of the things that I know is the library is working with having Wi-Fi units that link up through cell that they will give out a minimal or no charge to students who live in areas that do not have reliable internet. And so we're on that program right now for those cellular Wi-Fi units or devices. This is a significant issue.

6. Remarks

Peter Harries, Dean of the Graduate School

Elizabeth James, Director, Office of International Services

Peter Harries: "I want to thank all of the faculty, especially the grad faculty among you who have continued to move graduate education forward during this incredibly complicated and unpredictable time and really it's been amazing to see how much has kept working even given all of the issues associated with Covid. So my hats off to you for making that possible. The first thing that I do want to talk about is enrollment. I know that's not always a sexy topic, but in terms of the finances of the institution. Much of that quite frankly relies on the enrollment and the enrollment funding that we receive and I think, obviously, this fall has been interesting. Overall, graduate enrollment has fallen somewhat and it largely has reflected a reduction of international students, which I don't think is very surprising, given all of the issues with Visas and travel bans that have impacted the ability of students to even get to the US.

So what we've seen is an overall reduction, although it was compensated for in part by increased new enrollment among domestic students, especially North Carolinians, as well as an increase in continuing students. I'm not quite sure whether there were less job opportunities and I don't know exactly what the motivation and the reasons behind that were. But that helped to form a pretty significant buffer against what we would have seen if we had just lost all of those international students."

Elizabeth James: "My name is Elizabeth, James. I'm the Director of the Office of International Services and we are the office on campus that deals with all F1 and J1 student Visa issues. What we saw over the summer was, you know, we were hoping that embassies would start to be open, but that has been spotty at best and also very late in the game. So the embassies that did start to reopen reopened in August to a huge amount of pent-up demand. There's two things that a student needs to do in order to enter the United States, a new student. They need to have a Visa and then they need to be able to physically enter the US. The embassy started shutting down in March, and in some

cases, in February and January. So we've got a lot of pent up demand in the Visa process and embassies are still not open fully and still operating on an emergency basis only. Then you layer on top of that the travel ban issues

The Covid travel bans kind of followed the pandemic. So it started with a Covid-related travel ban for anyone residing in China. These are not nationality bans; these are where you're physically located and so anyone physically located in China would be subject to this travel ban. You would have to try and spend 14 days in another country before being allowed to enter, but that's tricky and we don't really recommend that path. Although some students have successfully done it. Then it was Iran, then we saw Europe and the UK and Ireland, and then in May when Brazil's numbers went up, Brazil was added to that travel ban list. And so all of those travel bans are still in place.

I should mention that Canada and Mexico also **have** a travel ban that is related to Covid, but what happened over the summer was Europe and the UK and Ireland, in August when arrivals were trying to happen in terms of the fall semester, there was an exemption made or passed for any student that was coming to study in the United States from Europe and the UK and Ireland. Then Mexico and Canada have enjoyed that exemption since their travel ban was implemented. Still, China, Iran and Brazil, you cannot enter from those countries because of the travel ban. So what we've seen in our international student numbers for the fall semester, we normally will welcome about 1200-1300 new students. But, from out of the country we were able to welcome 45. So we've got 1000 missing graduate students. Most of those were graduate students that were not able to enter. Now, we did have about 240 or 250 transfer students or students who were able to change levels; maybe they finished their bachelor's and they decided to go ahead and get a masters or a PhD. So we did have a total of around 280 new students, but again only 45 of those were able to arrive from outside of the US.

So looking to spring, things haven't changed a whole lot. So no changes to travel bans. I'm keeping a very close eye on India since they have been added to a level three alerts for the CDC and a level four Travel Warning for the Department of State. There is no travel ban mentioned and I have no information that there's going to be a travel ban implemented for India, but that is a country I'm watching. What we're seeing in terms of Embassy appointments is just very limited with pent up demand. Then in some countries what we're seeing now is internal restrictions and movement that may be preventing them from getting a Visa. So for example, in Spain, there is right now an internal travel restriction where you cannot leave your autonomous region. And so there's only one embassy in Spain, in Madrid. So if you live in Barcelona, you can't get to Madrid for that Visa interview.

So those kinds of restrictions, which is also happening in France and a number of other places in Europe, and then the UK as well, that's going to prevent people from being able to get to their embassy appointments. So we're still looking at a very challenging time for spring in terms of international enrollment from abroad."

Hans Kellner: Can I ask a question right now? What is the future of study abroad?

Elizabeth James: I am not the Study Abroad Director, so I will not be as articulate on this topic. There have been a number of programs approved, but it's very limited. And so, for example, the Prague program has been approved, some of our joint degree programs in Europe, either through Skema, and a lot of them in Poole have been approved, because they cannot actually complete their program if they don't do this part of the exchange. And then there's been a spotty couple of exceptions also approved but study abroad for spring is also not happening on any large scale. We are hopeful for fall.

Warwick Arden: There have been some approvals of individual students to study abroad, particularly universities if they go into safe areas and so forth. Most faculty-led study abroad programs are not being approved or have been cancelled. We do have a number of students going to Prague but the number is down. Dr. Lee told me the other day, I think we only have 19 students going to Prague in the spring. So it's going to be very limited is the bottom line.

Elizabeth James: "That might be something that we could look at in terms of encouraging students to consider you know, who can't arrive in the United States. Maybe they could arrive in the Czech Republic. But the Czech Republic has their own requirements for entry. And so international travel is very complicated. And we actually have a Webinar planned for students tomorrow because with the with the extended break, students are very tempted to travel overseas during the winter break and, you know, travel during a pandemic is just challenging and we cannot promise that people will be able to return from their home countries either because of local restrictions or flight cancellations or potentially more stringent requirements on our side. It's a risk, but students didn't go home during the summer and they are looking at that almost two-month break and drooling at the possibility of spending the holidays at home. So we will see what happens with that."

Peter Harries: "We also had a significant number of students who obviously deferred. I think NC State is still very much an institution where these international students want to come. We don't really see a waning of that. That may well create some challenges. I mean if fall is normal, in terms of how we deal with this reservoir of students who should have shown up in the fall, along with new admits, who we expect to have. We are seeing right now and an overall increase in the number of applications that we're getting for graduate work. So I think graduate school will be viewed as somewhat of a refuge, I think, during this time. One thing that I do want to point out, together with OIS, Beth and I will be very much engaged with that. We are starting a series of town halls for those students who have deferred, to let them know what's going on here, how things look and that they're certainly on our mind. We want to get them here, if and when we can. So there's a variety of different things being done on that end to potentially make up for some of the lost enrollment that didn't appear for this fall and spring."

Elizabeth James: "The only other thing I wanted to just mention is that we are still operating without guidance for the spring semester from SEVP in terms of enrollment requirements. So many of you may have heard over the summer when the government decided to have a very restrictive policy on limits to online enrollment, that if you are enrolling completely online, you would have to depart the United States. There was a huge groundswell against that from universities and students and communities. And so they backtracked.

But we are still operating without guidance for spring. I would expect that new students that are arriving would still need to be enrolled in some kind of in person class, but it is not outside of the possibility that we will also get some kind of guidance that says no, the old rules apply. The pre-Covid rules limit online enrollment to once class – meaning full-time enrollment per semester. So without some kind of exception, again, our international students would have a very difficult time getting a full time schedule that meets the pre-Covid regulatory requirements. So fingers crossed that we will get some continuation of this guidance. I think that anything, the spring semester proved that it's very difficult and challenging to reopen a university. We were not the only university obviously that had problems so fingers crossed. But any change in administration will not take place in time to affect the spring semester, at least for when we're starting. So we are waiting."

Questions and Discussion

Hans Kellner: I recall some brainstorming a few months ago about having foreign students who are entering can take their first year classes online from where they were. I don't know if that was practical. I don't know if we're going to do it. It would require many courses to have two different forums; an online forum and a face to face forum. Am I correct here Dean Harries?

Peter Harries: Yeah, you are certainly correct. We allowed programs that wanted to do that to start students in that mode. But I will say we had precious few that took us up on that offer. I mean, obviously, if the doctoral level, we could not supply a stipend, the normal and the tuition waiver to students who had never been able to make it into the country, that that just is impossible by various elements that just make that difficult. And for Masters students, we unfortunately didn't see much appetite for them to start. They really want to be here and they want to be able to take advantage of everything the campus has to offer. And obviously, things like curricular practical training and optional practical training are a big deal for them as well.

Elizabeth James: I will say that the experience of Chinese undergraduate students particularly, has not been great enrolled online. Because of the firewall there, they have difficulty downloading some of the things they need in order to take exams, they have difficulty accessing all of the different websites that they are being sent to do things. Then the time difference, the isolation. It's not been a positive experience for them. I am actually working on an email about that right now, to talk about maybe seeking another exception to our study abroad to allow our Chinese students to be able to enroll in our study abroad programs in China so that they're enrolled in a program while they're in China.

Hans Kellner: It means that whether they're in Cary or in China, the internet is not the seamless connecting thing that we would dream of or that we would hope it to be. Thank you very much.

Peter Harries: "I just wanted to talk briefly about GSSP and how we're dealing with students whose research efforts were delayed. Clearly, research was shut down for many students for several months and a number of them were unable to finish because of that. And so we have an exception process in place that is run through the DGPs of the various graduate programs. And we have been approving the vast majority of those just because of the issues that people face. So one thing that we're still trying to work out is, it's hard to know what the downstream ramifications are going to be over the longer term for graduate students who are also delayed but not necessarily as close to finishing. One of the things that just surfaced that I think we also need to consider as well is what happened to the students who just started and haven't really been able to get into the lab, haven't been able to learn techniques that might be needed where physical distancing makes that raining incredibly difficult. So this is going to take a while to work through the system as it has. Another thing that I want to briefly mention is about the S/U policy. We mirrored the undergraduate approach for this in spring and fall, but in looking at the grades that were converted to S, the vast majority were B pluses B's and B minuses.

There's also been a concern from certain programs that you can have an A, especially in ones that are only a year long; you can get an A in one course and then potentially have satisfactories for everything else, not necessarily have the competencies that would be needed for that degree but have a 4.0 GPA, because you have that one graded course. So I think we've seen quite a bit of what I would call sort of GPA padding being used. And so there is concern about this. I've had discussions

with the Graduate Student Association with the DGPs, with the associate Deans for academics, but I also wanted to put it on your radar as well. Eileen Taylor serves as the representative from the Faculty Senate to the administrative board that will be considering this. Certainly, I'm happy to answer questions about it. But I did want to also just put it on your radar because it has been brought to me by numerous faculty that they're worried about what that means."

Eileen Taylor: Yeah, I will say that we are seeing, just anecdotally, undergrads also are not putting forth effort in classes. If it looks like they're not going to get a B or above, or they're not going to get an A, they're just going to go ahead and minimize their workload, take the C minus get an S, and move on. And as much as we tell them that recruiters will see that as a C, they're looking at the GPA and recruiters may not look beyond that 4.0 or 3.9 on the application. I'm really concerned about the erosion of effort that we're seeing, not just in grad, but in undergrad classes. I see some shaking heads. I'm really concerned about this.

Peter Harries: And I am too, because we mirror the undergrad approach and, you know, a C minus isn't that far away from the 2.0 that's required to get an undergraduate degree, but it's a long way from the 3.0. Especially with the pivot in the spring that was completely unanticipated, we decided to just follow that mode. It also makes the transcript notation much easier if we're following one mode, rather than two, but I do think that I'm certainly in favor at this point of moving to normal grading. Students have now had a semester, as have the faculty, to adjust to this. I'm not saying that there aren't still challenges out there. I also looked at the overall grade distribution between spring 2019 and spring 2020 and it is almost spot on from both of those semesters. So it's not as if there was a dramatic switch in the grades that students were getting. At the graduate level that scale was pretty compressed already. But there was really not a major change in what was happening.

Eileen Taylor: I will say we're seeing a change in student effort at the undergrad level. I don't know if anyone else can comment on that, but I am very concerned with that drop off and I understand students have challenges and maybe they're not getting that level of education that we normally would provide face to face. I agree. But by allowing them to take an S or a C minus consistently across all their classes, we're going to be hiding our bad work. If we're not doing good work, it's going to cover that up and we're not going to address it. So, I'm concerned that that's going to be kind of normal, it's going to be very hard to switch back.

7. Remarks – Employee Engagement Committee / Survey Results

Nancy Whelchel, Director, Survey Research, Office of Institutional Strategy and Analysis

Marie Williams, Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources

Dr. Whelchel shared survey results with the Faculty Senate. Please view the website and view the 2020 Employee Engagement Survey results here: <https://hr.ncsu.edu/employee-engagement-survey/2020-results/>

This survey is a UNC system office initiative that we participated in in 2018 and now again in the spring of 2020. This came out pre-Covid, which is very important to keep in mind in terms of collecting opinions of our faculty and staff.

Following are highlighted survey results. For a complete analysis, please see the link referenced above.

- Overall participation rates were good and higher than they were in 2018.
- The results were very positive.
- We give consistently more favorable ratings than the UNC system overall
- We don't have anything that's super low where the system office would consider warranting attention.
- When we do have less favorable ratings, those are the same ratings that would be low, both in the UNC system overall and for all other institutions participating in the survey.
- Our overall favorable rating was unchanged from the 2018 survey. And that was actually good because the system overall rating went down two percentage points and
- One notable difference from the 2018 survey was in 2018 employees self-selected on the survey where they worked
- The survey is belief statements - strongly agree to strongly disagree with the neither agree nor disagree response option in the middle.
- Response rates. 57% in 2020 compared to 54% in 2018 so that was a pretty good jump for us and relative to the other campuses.
- Faculty across the system tend to have lower participation than other job classifications.
- 49% of the faculty participated.
- The Wilson College of Textiles had a very big jump from 39% in 2018 to 80% in 2020
- The Grad school is included in this and they had a 97% response rate.
- We consider librarians as faculty and so they are included in faculty in that group. The senior leadership with faculty rank are not included in that
- The most favorable ratings in the areas related to supervisors and department chairs - professional development, job satisfaction, support pride, and the least favorable ratings to things related to communication, the teaching environment and shared governance. There's no way to tease out the faculty themselves from the NC State overall results.
- One area where faculty give a notably higher rating than NC State overall is with respect to professional development.
- Freedom and responsibility to do my job. That was the highest rated item on the survey for faculty. Institution actively contributes to the community. I understand how my job contributes to the mission, etc.
- I am paid fairly for my work in my department, has adequate faculty staff to achieve our goals - 51% of the faculty responding to the survey disagree with that statement.
- 44% disagree that they're paid fairly for their work recognitions and reward programs are meaningful.
- Issues of a low performance are addressed in my department and teaching is appropriately recognized in the valuation of promotion process. These were the items that got the lowest ratings on the survey from faculty
- There was nowhere in the reports where we got the results for tenured faculty. It was always combined or was always split out pre-tenure and tenure for faculty on the tenure track.
- Teaching is properly recognized in the evaluation of promotion process only 42% of the teaching and I understand the necessary requirements to advance my career,
- Assistant professors tend to have the most favorable ratings, and associate professors. A lot of times similar to full professors, but a lot of times they're less satisfied than full professors

- Compensation work life balance. Assistant professors is highest with a couple of exceptions and full professors are highest with professional development.
- Teaching environment is an area where associate professors actually have lower ratings than both assistant professors and full professors
- Faculty admin/staff relations, an area where assistant professors are much more positive.
- Fairness is an issue where tenured faculty give higher ratings than associate professor. Full professors give high ratings, then associate professors
- A good balance of teaching service and research at institution - the largest difference in ratings between associate professors and full professors is the work life balance or teaching service and research balance
- Issues of low performance being addressed in my department. That's one of those items that gets low ratings across the board at the university, regardless of who you are or where you're sitting
- I understand the necessary requirements to advance my career. I'm given opportunities to develop my skills and teaching being appropriately recognized. So these are areas where associate professors are giving the lower ratings.
- The only areas where associate professors give higher ratings than full professors are facilities, meet my needs, senior leadership has the knowledge, skills, experience.
- I am proud to be part of this institution. Again, these differences are not that large, but these are the only three items out of the 61 on the survey where associate professors gave somewhat higher ratings and full professors more favorable ratings
- I'm provided the resources I need to be effective. Only 40% of the associate professors agreed with that statement and again as a reminder that doesn't mean 60% disagree because there's that neutral response option.
- 47% of the faculty overall agreed that I am paid fairly for my work
- Faculty on the tenure track who are pre-tenure, no one else will be in that mix of people. And these are the areas where it declined quite a bit. I am regularly recognized for my contribution declined by 17 percentage points from 2018 to 2020
- Facilities adequately meet my need – dropped by 13 percentage points, our review process accurately mentioned my job performance also showed a big drop
- Issues of low performance are addressed in my department. So among pre-tenured faculty only 32% now agree with that statement.
- I understand the necessary requirements to advance my career; that dropped. It's still high at 75% agree with that; pre-tenured faculty 75% agree, but last time that was 85%
- 49% are either very satisfied or are satisfied with their benefits and 20% are either very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with their benefits overall
- 25% or more faculty are dissatisfied with this list of 17 different benefits. They asked about medical insurance, dental insurance, educational assistant programs, and their physical workspace conditions.

8 Issues of concern

Faculty Issues of Concern can be submitted at any time to a Senator, the Chair of the Faculty, or to

Faculty_Senate@ncsu.edu

None

9. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.