

**NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Minutes of the Faculty Senate**  
January 11, 2022  
3:00 p.m.

**Regular Meeting No. 8 of the 68th Session: Zoom Webinar January 11, 2022**

**Present:** RaJade M. Berry-James, Chair of the Faculty; Hans Kellner, Immediate Past Chair; Carolyn Bird, Parliamentarian; Senators: Ange-van Heugten, Auerbach, Autry, Bass-Freeman, Bernhard, Blessing, Carrier, DePerno, Duggins, Edmisten, Erdim, Gerard, Ghosh, Hakovirta, Hergeth, Jacob, Kirby, Koch, Kuznetsov, Lunardi, McGowan, Morant, Narayan, Nicholas-Walker, Riehn, Robinson, Taylor, Vincent, Williams, Yoon, Zagacki

**Absent:** Senators: Collins, Kuzma, Reiskind, Stallmann

**Guests:** Warwick Arden, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost; Dr. Julie Casani, Student Health Services Director and Medical Director; Kristen Meeks, University Compliance and Enterprise Risk Management Officer; Amy Orders, Director of Emergency Management and Mission; and Megan Jacob, Director of Diagnostic Laboratories

**1. Call to Order and Announcements - RaJade M. Berry-James, Chair of the Faculty**

Chair Berry-James called the eighth meeting of the sixty-eighth session of the NC State Faculty Senate to order at 3:06 p.m.

Chair Berry-James asked Senator Barbara Kirby to affirm the quorum. Senator Kirby affirmed that a quorum was present.

Chair Berry-James called for a motion to accept the agenda. The motion was properly moved and seconded and the agenda was unanimously approved.

**Announcements:**

Chair Berry-James reminded those present that the Faculty Senate meeting dates, agenda and minutes are posted on the Faculty Senate website at [FacultySenate.ncsu.edu](http://FacultySenate.ncsu.edu). During the pandemic, out of an abundance of caution, and to align with federal, state and local guidance, the full Faculty Senate meets virtually via Zoom. The Executive Committee meetings use a hybrid model, and the co-chairs of each Faculty Senate Committee decide on whether to meet in person, virtually or hybridly.

Chair Berry-James also encouraged those in attendance to visit the Protect The Pack website for important COVID-19 updates and reminders.

The Spring General Faculty Meeting will be held in a hybrid format to combine the benefits of live and virtual interaction between faculty and administrators who choose an

in-person or virtual meeting. The Spring General Faculty meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 22, 2022, in Talley Student Center, Ballroom 3210. The capacity will be limited to 60 people, auditorium style.

Please share suggested general meeting topics with the Office of the Faculty Senate at [Faculty\\_Senate@ncsu.edu](mailto:Faculty_Senate@ncsu.edu).

## **2. Approval of the Minutes - *Barbara Kirby, Senator***

Senator Kirby called for a motion to approve the minutes for Regular Meeting No. 7 of the 68th Session. A motion was made and properly seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

## **3. Chair's Remarks - *RaJade M. Berry-James, Chair of the Faculty***

Chair Berry-James noted that the CDC designated the Omicron as a variant of concern for the United States on November 30, 2021. Since the Omicron variant was designated, the Faculty Senate and Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate met to discuss campus issues of concern, as well as other pressing matters by faculty. Today's agenda was adopted at the last Executive Committee meeting in December and guests were invited to advise faculty on academic policy, COVID-19 protocol, and campus practices.

Chair Berry-James also reported that she spent time with panelists on different stages of the Faculty Tenure Career path. In addition to sharing insight on research, teaching, and engagement, the panelists also talked about collaboration and networking in breakout sessions. Chair Berry-James thanked the Research and Leadership Academy moderators for inviting her and the other panelists to talk about grant writing, collaboration, life balance, publishing, and building your reputation.

Chair Berry-James continued by introducing Kristen Meeks, University Compliance and Enterprise Risk Management Officer. Kristen joined NC State University in June 2020 and is responsible for coordinating the university's compliance and integrity and strategic risk management programs.

## **4. Provost's Remarks and Q&A - *Warwick Arden, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost***

Provost Arden announced that the University Standing Committee Survey is open through January 31, 2022. The committees play a critical role in partnering with university administration to develop programs and policies to enhance NC State. Information will be included in the Provost's newsletter.

Provost Arden continued by reporting that the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) deadline has been extended to Friday, January 28, 2022. QEP is an integral component of the SACSCOC reaffirmation of accreditation process. It reflects and affirms a commitment to enhance overall institutional quality and effectiveness by focusing on an issue that NC State considers important to improving student learning outcomes and/or student success. Visit [go.ncsu.edu/QEP](http://go.ncsu.edu/QEP) for campus updates.

Provost Arden also remarked that Dr. Stewart sent out a memo, Guidance for Spring 2022 Instructors, which contains important information on face-to-face instruction , instructor isolation, quarantine, etc. Please read *Instructors FAQs Regarding COVID-19 in Spring 2022* at [go.ncsu.edu/instructor-faq](https://go.ncsu.edu/instructor-faq).

Return to campus testing is mandatory for those individuals who have not provided proof of vaccination and must be completed 72 hours prior to arriving on campus or 72 hours after arriving on campus. Ongoing testing will also continue for all individuals who have not provided proof of vaccination. The isolation period for those who've tested positive for COVID has been reduced from 10 days down to five days. Provost Arden continued by asking everyone to upload their booster information for tracking purposes. The site to upload vaccination records is [healthypack.dasa.ncsu.edu/healthweb/](https://healthypack.dasa.ncsu.edu/healthweb/). Face coverings are still required in all university buildings at all times. Additional information on COVID-19 data tracking may be found at <https://www.ncsu.edu/coronavirus/testing-and-tracking/>.

Provost Arden also reported on recent leadership and organizational announcements. The first being the announcement of Donna Petherbridge's permanent appointment as the Vice Provost for DELTA. He then announced Dr. John Dole's appointment as the interim dean of CALS.

A five-year leadership review of Bailian Li, Senior Vice Provost for Global Engagement will be held in the next few weeks. The overview presentation of goals and accomplishments is scheduled for Wednesday, February 15, 2022, in Talley Student Union, room 4280 followed by in-person sessions with university representatives.

The search for Senior Vice Provost for University Interdisciplinary Programs and Senior Vice Provost for Instructional Programs is well underway. The search for the next dean of the College of Education is also underway with Dr. Chris McGhan chairing the search. David Hinks is chairing the search for the next dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine. The search for the next dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences will begin in the next couple of weeks. Dr. Martin-Vega will chair the search committee.

## **Questions and Discussion**

Senator Kuznetsov: Senator Kuznetsov expressed concern about dining with faculty and students at faculty lunch meetings and welcome breakfasts. University funds were used for those joint meetings. "Why the need to spend funds for joint meetings where we share meals together? Wouldn't it be wise to wait two to three weeks until the wave goes away?"

Provost Arden commented that an inch or two was not enough space and suggested that they spread out more. He also informed Senator Kuznetsov that neither appropriated funds nor tuition dollars are used for meals. Departments have discretionary funds that may be used for meals. These decisions are left up to the department heads and deans. There is not a university-wide policy on staff gatherings.

Senator Koch: If in-person classes are canceled due to inclement weather, can I tell my classes that we will meet on Zoom if I include this in my syllabus?

Provost Arden: Absolutely. If there's inclement weather, plan for academic continuity through Zoom or other appropriate platforms.

## 5. COVID 19 Protocol, Campus Safety & Security (Introductions & Presentations)

### a. Kristen Meeks, *University Compliance and Enterprise Risk Management Officer*

Kristen Meeks introduced herself and explained her role at the university as the University Compliance and Enterprise Risk Management Officer. Her function is housed within the Office of the General Counsel, under the leadership of Vice Chancellor and General Counsel, Allison Newhart. Kriste went on to state that though she is an attorney, she does not practice law, give legal advice, or represent the university with regard to legal matters.

Kristen's primary responsibilities include leading and managing the university's strategic enterprise risk management process and providing strategic oversight and coordination of the university's compliance and integrity program. She then went on to explain that Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) is commonly understood as a business strategy that is led by senior leaders for identifying and preparing risks that may impact the university's strategy, objectives, or key operations. Kristen coordinates the Chancellor's Cabinet by gathering information from leaders and colleagues across campus about existing and emerging risks that may impact the university's mission or strategic objectives. One significant enterprise risk among higher education is compliance.

NC State was an early adopter of an organizational compliance program in 2011. At the direction of Chancellor Woodson, the university's Compliance and Integrity Program was launched. It is a decentralized program with compliance partners distributed across divisions and units across the university. NC State's Compliance Program is designed to help faculty and other community members be informed about their responsibilities that may stem from laws and regulations, UNC System policies, or NC State policies, and help provide guidance when needed. The program is also designed to help promote the university's values, striving to help integrate the values of the university into decisions and actions that are related to the university's educational research and business practices.

Another important element of the compliance program is managing the university's EthicsPoint Hotline, [compliance.ncsu.edu/reporting/hotlines/](https://compliance.ncsu.edu/reporting/hotlines/). Ethicspoint is a tool anyone may use to report concerns about potential unethical behavior or non-compliance. The reports are routed to Kristen and she helps ensure that they get to the correct department or unit who is able to respond to the reported concerns and address them. EthicsPoint is a supplement to existing reporting mechanisms, such as those provided by the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity, Human Resources, and Internal Audit, but is one of the only tools that accepts anonymous reports. For more information about the compliance program, visit [compliance.ncsu.edu](https://compliance.ncsu.edu). Kristen Meeks may be contacted at [kameeks@ncsu.edu](mailto:kameeks@ncsu.edu) or (919) 515-3607.

- b. Daniel House, Public Safety Director and Chief

Chief House was unable to attend the meeting due to other pressing issues.

- c. Dr. Julie Casani, *Student Health Services Director and Medical Director*

Dr. Casani reported on campus testing; 2,900 tests were given on campus yesterday and more than 3,000 today and lab capacity is quickly being maxed out. She reported that not only are those who are returning to campus getting tested, but so are people who have had an exposure and some who have had minimal symptoms. Dr. Casani also reported that there are many positives but that most of them are still off campus.

Dr. Casani also reported Student Health is still processing boosters but booster validation has not been a priority due to the return to campus testing. Well over 50%-60% of people who test positive have been fully vaccinated, meaning that they've received two vaccines of a CDC or WHO vaccine or one dose of J&J. A fair number of those who test positive and are fully vaccinated also have their boosters. Dr. Casani went on to say that while boosters and vaccinations protect you from severe disease and protect against primary infection, fully vaccinated people are still getting infected.

The isolation period is no less than five days regardless of vaccination status. Dr. Casani also recommends that people who come out of isolation continue to follow strict masking mandates for the next five days. The quarantine recommendation is that people who are under-vaccinated go into some type of quarantine and follow strict mask mandates. For people who have a booster or less than six months since their second dose, or less than two months since their first dose, do not need quarantine at all. The recommendation is for them to get tested.

Dr. Casani stated that campus resources for isolation have been exhausted, which was a primary goal. As of the weekend, campus has shifted and will not quarantine anyone in residence halls. It is highly recommended that both isolated individuals and people who need to be quarantined go home. Dr. Casani strongly recommends that people are tested on day three in their quarantine period due to the number of people who become positive after having been exposed to the virus.

Dr. Casani continued by stating that classroom contact tracing will no longer be done on campus. It is up to the student to notify the instructors

## **Questions and Discussion**

*Senator Kirby:* Is there an estimate moving forward in terms of what the rates might look like in a month?

Dr. Casani responded that if we follow what's happening in South Africa, they are declining around three weeks. There are some concerns about the United States

because of the way the peak is acting, that it may be three to four weeks before Omicron has “burned through everyone.”

Senator Kirby: Is 3,000 tests the capacity for daily testing?

Dr. Casani responded that 3,000 is the limit. Given that NCSU has a positive rate in testing of approximately 11% and manages close to 500 positives per day, the system is being maxed out due to the notification process, moving people into isolation, and following up.

*Senator Kirby:* Senator Auerbach wants to know if it would have been smarter, as some schools realize, to go online until the Omicron wave subsides.

Provost Arden responded that the responses of universities have been different. NCSU is part of a system and is trying to stay consistent throughout the system. NCSU is favoring different strategies outlined in the memo from Dr. Stewart’s office. Hybrid modalities, Panopto, classroom capture, and Zoom are all encouraged. Faculty have a lot of discretion in terms of minimizing classroom density and utilizing hybrid modalities.

Senator Kirby: Is there any consideration of distributing KN95 masks to students in classrooms like the Vet school does?

Provost Arden responded that central distribution of KN95 masks is not being considered at the moment, but he strongly encourages people in general to wear a good, high filtering face mask as a proven adjunct to vaccination.

d. Amy Orders, *Director of Emergency Management and Mission*

Amy reported that Facilities Operations is working diligently to review and maintain the indoor air quality. NCSU continues to have an increase in infiltration and ventilation in the buildings. Amy cautions people not to prop open doors or windows as that creates an excess capacity problem in buildings.

Campus Operations continues to provide surgical masks or the heightened filtration masks that were created by the Nonwoven Institute. She went on to say that she has investigated the KN 95 stock and availability and will have information available in the coming weeks. Amy also cautions people to use what they feel is appropriate for their face covering or an extra layer of support. At this point in time, there is a limited supply available.

Amy continued by stating that the capacity for special events will not be limited. “We are reviewing those with campus partners to make sure people are aware of the community standards as well as safety and security procedures.”

e. Dr. Megan Jacob, *Director of Diagnostic Laboratories*

Dr. Jacob reported that the WolfTracks Laboratory does the vast majority of testing on campus. NC State invested in the equipment approximately a year ago and it allows the campus to conduct onsite testing. There were well over 100,000 tests done in that time and easily made up the cost saving difference on the cost of the equipment over what was being done with contractors.

Dr. Jacob went on to say that the lab is able to run two shifts of employees; five people are responsible for about 3,000 tests. The lab is outfitted with high throughput robotic machines that do PCR tests and allows for extreme efficiency. Diagnostic Laboratories offer the PCR test; they detect three genes. Most PCR tests can be turned around within 24 hours. Negative results automatically formulate an email, otherwise the providers at Student Health manage the communication. Turnaround times may be a little longer due to the overwhelming capacity of the return to campus testing. Part of the reason for limiting tests to 3,000 per day is so there is not a lot of time between when a person tests and when they receive the results.

## Questions and Discussion

*Senator Kirby:* Senator Blessing would like an explanation on the justification for not allowing students/staff to get tests at the sites on campus after testing positive for COVID, even just one positive home test (e.g. one positive followed by one negative home test within a few days regardless of symptoms).

Dr. Casani answered that we are required by the State Health Department to respect any positive test, with or without symptoms. People who test positive can have a residual positive test for up to 45 days with a PCR test. It might go away with an antigen, but it will still be there with a PCR test, potentially. You're not infectious after your isolation time and can walk around and have small fragments that can get picked up by PCR, but you're not transmitting the disease to anyone.

*Senator Blessing:* By the same token, people who are required to test on campus they're told that they have to have a positive home test in order not to.

Dr. Casani answered that if you take an antigen test, you have to submit two negative antigen tests because that increases the validity of a negative antigen test, but a single antigen test is acceptable.

*Senator Kirby:* How much risk is there to our unvaccinated children not yet eligible for vaccination if we were to bring this home to them from the classroom?

Dr. Casani stated that the risk is there. She also stated that the public health sector talks about when they will be infected, not if, because the virus is so pervasive in the community. Wake County rates are higher than our rates on campus. Sooner or later we are going to be exposed.

*Senator Riehn:* We are currently recruiting graduate students. Are we able to invite them to campus in February or March?

Provost Arden responded that campus does not have a university-wide policy that states you cannot invite graduate students to visit. The Provost strongly recommends maintaining flexibility by trying to offer virtual visitation as well so you're not discriminating against or potentially losing great individuals who feel uncomfortable traveling at the moment.

*Senator Vincent:* I really don't expect, nor do I wish to receive a response from the administration, this is intended as a statement. It's a statement by me, a member of the faculty for 40 years, member of the Faculty Senate for a number of years and a member of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for the past two years. I'm shocked that there has not been more sensitivity on the part of the administration to the COVID crisis, given the incredible increase of the COVID cases, given the current state of hospitals and health services in North Carolina, generally Wake County specifically. I'm appalled, though not surprised, that the faculty has been entirely cut out of being consulted on how to move ahead. In my opinion, this is in part a failure of leadership of the Faculty Senate, but it is also a stark reminder of the administrative culture of North Carolina State University. I'm afraid I've come to the conclusion that the administration values the health of its faculty and the wider community less than the approval of conservative members of the North Carolina Legislature and other groups. My own case is illustrative. I am 74 years old and in a high risk group. Because of this, I requested that my 70C class, which was assigned to a room with 84 seats, go online for the first few weeks of the semester. My request was turned down by the dean of my college, who had invoked the instructions received from the administration. I, therefore, divided the class into groups. The assigned classroom obviously made social distancing impossible. This format, with different students coming on different days, is in my opinion, less pedagogical than an online class. I was given no option. I'm afraid I've come to the conclusion that the administration values the teaching faculty's health and judgment concerning pedagogical issues less than its commitments to other groups. To say I'm only disappointed would be to misrepresent my dismay and my frustration.

*Senator Ghosh:* It seems we have given up on contact tracing. Is it because of lack of resources or does it not make sense to do it anymore?

Dr. Casani responded that it's difficult to do contact tracing because of the infectivity and also because of the timeline. We don't have the capacity to do it.

*Senator Ghosh:* Would it make more sense to give us two to three weeks of latitude to get to a point where it's more manageable?

Provost Arden remarked that there was a thorough discussion between the chancellors and the president of the UNC System on how to handle the start of the semester. It was the decision by the vast majority of chancellors to do it in this way. He reiterated that the variant is significantly pathogenic and with vaccination and booster, the likelihood of visibly adverse outcomes with Omicron infection is extremely low. He went on to state there is a growing national realization, including medical advisors to the White House, that we're in a different situation right now. This is becoming an endemic; it's not a matter of if, but when you get infected.

*Senator Kirby:* A clarification was requested in the Q&A. Are you saying that faculty can move courses online for a few weeks without approval?

Provost Arden clarified that if there is a specific, physical reason, then yes. These are usually departmental level decisions and do not come to the Provost's office at all. In those circumstances, you could go online for a couple weeks, but the principal strategy is the hybrid strategy where modalities are offered to allow students to come to class or not.



*Senator Kirby:* Jessica Jamison has a clarification on contact tracing. She asks, if there is no contact tracing, are faculty still not allowed to tell students they might have an exposure?

Dr. Casani responded that they have distributed a generic message that does not identify a student but states that there was a COVID positive reported in the class and recommended that students get tested. If you choose to send this message to your class, do not identify the student. The generic message is available for faculty.

*Senator Kirby:* A comment from the Q&A reads, "Seems there are different standards for student safety and instructor safety. Instructors are expected to be in the classroom while students are offered the option to attend in person, or virtually and faculty are then expected to offer both modalities simultaneously."

Provost Arden responded that to offer dual modality and give people a choice of classroom or virtual, by definition the instructor has to be in the classroom.

*Senator Kirby:* John Bach is curious about classroom density guidelines. For example, if a class has 100 students enrolled and is scheduled in a room that accommodates 100 theater style seats, is having students sit shoulder to shoulder okay?

Provost Arden confirmed that it was okay and reminded everyone that before last semester campus started dropping the six foot distance requirements; we trust vaccination and masking to be principal defensive measures.

*Senator Kirby:* A lot of these conversations seem to be happening with people who do not regularly interface with students as frequently as instructors and support staff. What opportunities are there for those who are directly impacted by these decisions to make those decisions?

Provost Arden responded that there are many opportunities for discussion and interaction. The faculty senate meetings are an opportunity. Dr. Casani and Dr. Orders interact with faculty across campus on a regular basis. Faculty are not of one opinion on this; faculty vary from those who want to switch completely to online instruction for a semester for a few weeks, to faculty who insist on being in the class and taking attendance. Our mission as an institution revolves around a face to face experiential institution.

*Senator Kirby:* Cynthia Levine says, I think that many of us are concerned because of the association between long COVID and even mild disease symptoms. I think if it weren't for long COVID or long term loss of smell or taste, this would be easier to accept. I'm afraid it's too soon to give a solid answer on that.

*Senator Riehn:* What fraction of the faculty is above 70 and have we seen an increase in retirement over the last two years?

Dr. Casani stated that it's not the same age distribution issues. Omicron is clearly serious for people who are unvaccinated of any age. There have been reports of issues in unvaccinated children, teenagers, and young adults. It is significant for the unvaccinated or under vaccinated individuals. There have been a small number of

cases of people who have increased morbidity and mortality, who are older, who have comorbid conditions with Omicron.

*Senator Robinson:* There is considerable overhead and time and effort required to teach a course two ways, even with the technologies that are available. My concern is for pre-tenure faculty who have in their SFR a 40% or 50% obligation for research. For instructional faculty, if the workload increases, they will just be working longer, uncompensated hours. The provost has indicated that we're going to be living with this pandemic for a while, so I'm wondering what the thinking is among administration about protecting the careers as well as the mental health and family health of early career faculty in the face of this additional workload of offering multiple set of modalities.

Dr. Stewart responded to Senator Riehn's earlier question about retirement. She answered that there has been an uptick in the number of retirements but is unable to say if it's a statistically significant trend.

In terms of Senator Robinson's comment and question regarding the demands on teaching, Dr. Stewart commented that she is seeing COVID impact statements in the RPT dossiers. Faculty are talking a great deal about how they're managing the effects it's having on their scholarship, the effects it's having on their engagement work and service work. She continued by saying that those standards in large part are owned by the department and college faculty. Dr. Stewart mentioned her discussions with department heads and DVF chairs about whether or not it's appropriate to consider adjusting departmental and college rules to think through and address the changes in faculty work that have occurred for the past two years and the trickle-down effects.

*Senator Kirby:* If all of these issues are happening, why are we still required to be teaching on campus? Seems very unsafe for students and faculty especially for those with immunocompromised conditions and family.

Provost Arden responded that if a faculty or a member of the family is immunocompromised or has other medical conditions, then those are things that would be taken into consideration in allowing for a class to move online temporarily or for a semester.

*Senator Kirby:* There was a question about why then does NCSU not mandate vaccinations for students, faculty, and staff to prevent hospitalizations and deaths?

Provost Arden answered that NCSU does not have the authority to mandate vaccinations. There are federal requirements that apply to individuals who support federal contracts.

*Senator Zagacki:* I can imagine cases where, temporarily, there are changes to the way in which the annual evaluations of faculty are conducted. For example, departments may wish to forgo the rigid quantitative measures of evaluating faculty in favor of a more qualitative evaluation.

Dr. Stewart responded that many departments are moving a more developmental or formative approach to annual evaluations in the context of what the pandemic is doing in terms of the balance of your work. The long term issue is trying to figure out what that

means for the big summative decisions that we make in faculty careers, specifically promotion and tenure.

Provost Arden circled back to Senator Koch's question about academic continuity during adverse weather. The provost clarified that if it's adverse weather where students have difficulty getting to class then the class may be held online. If it is a situation where the university has announced that classes are canceled, then no. It would be too confusing to students. Provost Arden went on to say that the way we handle adverse weather conditions may change from canceling classes to moving class online; this would be a system-wide approach.

**6. Old and New Business**

**7. Issues of Concern - Chair Berry-James**

Faculty Issues of Concern can be submitted at any time to a senator or to [faculty\\_senate@ncsu.edu](mailto:faculty_senate@ncsu.edu). Minutes from each Faculty Senate committee are posted on the Faculty Senate website so progress on issues/discussions can be monitored by all.

**8. Adjourn**

Chair Berry-James asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion to adjourn was made and properly seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 4:58 p.m.