

NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY
Minutes of the Faculty Senate
February 7, 2023
3:00 p.m.

Regular Meeting No. 10 of the 69th Session **Virtual Meeting** **February 7, 2023**

Present: Chair McGowan; Associate Chair Collins; Parliamentarian Bird; Senators Ange-van Heugten, Auerbach, Bernhard, Blessing, Carrier, Friend, Hakovirta, Hergeth, Koch, Kuznetsov, Lee, Morant, Narayan, Phukan, Reiskind, T. Robinson, W. Robinson, Roland, Stallmann, Taveirne, Tourino, and Zagacki

Guests: Warwick Arden, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost; Ed Gehringer, College of Engineering; Robert Hayes, College of Engineering; Stacy Nelson, College of Natural Resources; Walter Robinson, College of Sciences; Marc Grimmatt, College of Education.

1. Call to Order and Announcements - Herle McGowan, Chair of the Faculty

Chair McGowan gave the following announcements.

February is Black History Month. The theme on campus this year is “Black Euphoria: Just B.E.”, focused on wellness, peace, healing, and love. For more information, including a list of events sponsored by the African American Cultural Center, please see the URL in the announcements section on page 2 of today’s agenda.

The announcements section lists dates and times for the Spring 2023 general information sessions on the Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure process. Junior faculty are encouraged to attend one of these sessions.

2. Approval of the Minutes, Regular Meeting No. 9 of the 69th Session, January 24, 2023 - Maria Collins, Associate Chair of the Faculty

Associate Chair Collins called for a motion to approve the minutes of the ninth meeting of the 69th session of NC State Faculty Senate. A motion and second were made and the minutes were approved.

3. Chair’s Remarks - Herle McGowan, Chair of the Faculty

Chair McGowan remarked, “The main portion of our meeting today is an opportunity for faculty to discuss the proposed revisions to UNC System Policy Manual Section 300.5.1–“Political Activities of Employees.” The revisions were attached to an email sent to all NC State faculty on January 30.”

She continued, stating “The revisions were proposed during the January 18th meeting of the Board of Governors Subcommittee on University Governance. They are currently on the consent agenda for vote by the Full Board during the February 23 meeting. It is my understanding that little input was sought from faculty prior to the presentation of these revisions at the January meeting.”

Chair McGowan also remarked that, “As a believer in the importance of shared governance, I feel strongly that faculty should have input on policies that directly affect them, and my goal today is to provide a forum for such input. I cannot make promises that our feedback will have any impact on the Board’s decision, for better or for worse, but I can promise you that I am doing everything in my power to ensure our voices are at least heard.”

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

Provost Arden gave the following announcement and leadership updates.

Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure resources can be found at <https://provost.ncsu.edu/faculty-excellence/reappointment-promotion-and-tenure/>. New tenure track and professional track faculty and anyone involved in the RPT process are strongly encouraged to attend a general information session held on March 8th in 306 Cox Hall or via webinar at go.ncsu.edu/rptmeeting.

The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences dean’s search committee has completed the first round of off-campus interviews this week. Finalists interviews will be held in March and April. The College of Engineering dean’s search committee held the first round of interviews over the weeks of January 23rd and February 6th. On-campus interviews will be held during the weeks of February 20th and February 27th. The College of Sciences dean’s search committee will be holding the first round of interviews during the weeks of February 15th and February 20th. Finalists candidates will be on campus in March and April.

Two final QEP proposals were shared with the NC State community. The 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 and aligning with the university strategic plan. The first proposal is “Pathways for All-Learning By Doing”, and the second is “The Development of a Transfer Student Success Center”. Feedback can be sent at go.ncsu.edu/qepselection.

Provost Arden also remarked that the semester is still going very well. There are low levels of cold and flu on campus. “We’re still waiting for the results from the Mental Health Task Force that we will be getting shortly; we will be evaluating and prioritizing those.”

5. Old and New Business

- a. Resolution: Call for an Official NC State University Land Acknowledgement Statement

Chair McGowan stated, “In our last Faculty Senate meeting, we heard from several members of our campus community about the process of developing a common land acknowledgement statement. We also heard students talk about the impact that seeing such a statement, whether on a course syllabus or plaque on campus, would have on their sense of belonging at the university.”

She went on to explain that, “At the end of the discussion, there were concerns about the wording of the resolution. The Office of General Counsel felt it was not appropriate to comment on a resolution proposed by the Faculty Senate. However, they assured me that they would work in full cooperation with the Chancellor and Provost if the university explores the adoption of a common statement.”

Chair McGowan also noted that, “Approval of this resolution does not guarantee the adoption of the specific statement provided, or even of an official land acknowledgement statement in general. Approval of this resolution does signal our support for the administration to consider such a statement, as is consistent with Faculty Senate’s advisory role.”

Following Robert’s Rules of Order, the reading will be followed by a motion, discussion, and vote.

Chair McGowan read the second reading of the resolution to Call for an Official NC State University Land Acknowledgement Statement.

The reading was followed by a motion to approve to adopt the resolution. There was discussion about a grammatical error.

The vote carried: 20 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 abstention.

6. Discussion Proposed Revisions to UNC System Policy Manual Section 300.5.1

A panel consisting of five faculty members discussed the proposed revisions to UNC System Policy Manual Section 300.5.1–“Political Activities of Employees.” Their comments and presentations are attached.

Question and Discussion

Question: What is the mechanism for providing this input into the Faculty Assembly? How do we capture this and move these voices forward to hopefully impact the decision making?

Chair McGowan: Comments that were shared today will be shared with Dr. Wade Maki, chair of the UNC Faculty Assembly, who is collecting feedback from campuses from across the system.

Question: Are you aware whether the Faculty Assembly intends to have this as an agenda item on a meeting and to engage with system office leadership?

Chair McGowan: The Faculty Assembly will share it with System President Hans. There will then be discussions among the Senate chairs on if there are additional people that we should be sharing it with as well.

Question: Will this limit the possibilities for hiring? For example, will we be able to hire a scholar who does civil rights history since they will be in the process of teaching, and be required to opine about beliefs, affiliations, ideals, or principals. It seems that there's an unstated consequence here that may flow over into classroom teaching, if not articulated in a way that prohibits that.

Chair McGowan: Clause D in the policy of the revisions, says this should not interfere with academic freedoms. So it stands to reason that if what you are doing is a part of your job, your scholarship, your discipline, that this policy should not preclude that.

Question: Will this impact our GEP categories?

Question: In response to the question asking if this will limit possibilities for hiring, I think it's actually the opposite. As I read this, I see it as a sort of slow drip or slippery slope. I think the idea behind this is perhaps not so much to silence the sort of people what you're describing, but rather to authorize people who are say holocaust deniers or who believe in lost cause mythology. The effort behind these changes is to move toward a situation where those sorts of people get to teach K-12 and also in universities. This is what's happening in Florida, Texas, and parts of Ohio. So that's why I find these changes particularly alarming over the long term.

Question: I wonder where this leaves us in terms of expressing our expectations of people who affiliate themselves with the university.

7. Issues of Concern (IOCs)

Chair McGowan remanded those in attendance that Faculty Issues of Concern can be submitted at any time to a senator or to the Office of the Faculty Senate via email at Faculty_Senate@ncsu.edu

8. Adjourn

Chair McGowan adjourned the meeting at 4:27 p.m.