UNC GREENSBORO
Board *of* Trustees

Special Called Meeting
February 10, 2021
9:00 – 11:30 am
Live Stream

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT (via Zoom): Betsy Oakley, Chair; Margaret Benjamin, Mae Douglas, Mona Edwards, George Hoyle, Austin Moore, Elizabeth Phillips (joined at 10:30 am); Dean Priddy, Ward Russell, Linda Sloan, David Sprinkle

MEMBERS ABSENT WITH NOTICE: Vanessa Carroll, Brad Hayes

OTHERS PRESENT: Chancellor Frank Gilliam; Waiyi Tse, Chief of Staff; Kelly Harris, Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees; James Lyons, Technology Support Analyst, Preston Yarborough and Todd Deal, Senior Faculty with Center for Creative Leadership Higher Education Practice Group; Madeline Lombardo-Space, Project Manager/Coordinator with Center for Creative Leadership

Chair Betsy Oakley called the meeting to order at 9:02 am and read the Conflict of Interest statement. None were identified. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was confirmed.

Oakley introduced faculty and staff members from the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) to facilitate a conversation focused on strategy for the next several years as Chancellor Gilliam begins his second term, and the Board's role in implementing the strategic framework Chancellor Gilliam and his leadership team have established. Discussion was led by Preston Yarborough, Senior Faculty in the Higher Education Practice Societal Advancement group, with assistance from Todd Deal, Senior Faculty and Director of the Higher Education practice of the Societal Advancement group; and Madeline Lombardo, Space, Project Manager/Coordinator with CCL.

BOT-1 Board Retreat with Center for Creative Leadership

Yarborough led the board members through an exercise wherein the members selected a personal memento that symbolizes how they add value to the manner in which Board members interact with one another and collaborate to solve problems. Thereafter, Chancellor Gilliam introduced and ran through a draft strategic framework one page graphic developed in concert with his leadership team that is meant to be an operational document for leadership of the organization. The framework consists of five areas of focus:

- Vision
  - To be a national model for how to blend access and excellence to transform students, the institution, and the community.

- Institutional Values
    - Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
    - Transparency
    - Collaboration
    - Nimbleness
    - Shared Fate
- Strategic Priorities
    - Investments in Distinction
    - Integrated Student Success
    - Drive and Manage Enrollment
    - Community Engagement
- Principles for Decision Making
    - Build to Strength
    - Tipping Point
    - First to Market
- Resources
    - Talent
    - Technology
    - Financial
    - Physical Plant

The framework is a rearticulation of the university's existing strategic plan, which is grounded in our vision: to be a national model for how to blend access and excellence to transform students, the institution, and the community. knowledge transformation, and regional transformation. This vision is to be understood through a perceptual lens of our institutional values: equity, diversity, and inclusion; collaboration (cross-functionality), transparency, nimbleness, and shared fate. We will determine what direction to take by considering our strategic priorities, beginning with investments in distinction, whether academic, athletic, research-related, etc. – focus on what's going to make us distinct as a university. The second is integrated student success. The core of our mission is to educate students – to admit them, retain them, graduate them in a timely way, make them work force ready, and help them get a job. This model is grounded in academic success, the business of being a student, and student well-being. Third, we have to drive and manage enrollment. We have room to grow as a university, and we need to drive enrollment given that our budget model is based on enrollment.. Fourth is community engagement –we have a long history of being engaged in the community and want continued investments there. Best case is to meet all four of those criteria.

That said, we have to consider the principles for decision making. First, do we have strength in the area under consideration? If we're not really strong, are we close (tipping point)? Or third, will we be first to market if we make the investment? Finally, do we have the talent, the technology, the financial ability, and the physical plant needed?

Gilliam then ran through several scenarios illustrating application of the framework to current plans as well as how it will guide decisions as the university moves forward during the next several years.

An example that doesn't work is a hypothetical proposition of an astrophysics program. It would make us distinctive, but wouldn't necessarily lead to an enrollment increase. We don't have strength in this academic area, we don't have faculty or courses in that area, and we don't have the technology that would be needed. Thus, we shouldn't be investing in it.

An example that does work is eSports. ESports is growing exponentially and having an impact on academics and athletics. Esports (especially the way UNCG is conceiving it) would help make us distinctive and we'd be first to market in this part of the state. There is a clear market for it as eSports championships have had more viewers than the Super Bowl, World Series, and Wimbledon combined. It also has interesting academic components to it; whether computer science, animation, stage lighting, communications studies, analytics and informatics, music/scoring – all areas where we have strength. There is literature that says that students in this field tend to perform better. It certainly drives enrollment, and there is a community engagement piece – we're getting involved with the broader community from a technology standpoint and could build a K-12 pipeline. We also have room for it on campus and at present there is an underwriter for an eSports facility.

Integrated Student Success is another example that fits this framework. When student success is being discussed at the national level, we should be in that mix. We have the resources, networks, strength, the technology and talent;we're becoming known as a place that graduates diverse students at scale, on time and into the workforce. We're number one in the state for social mobility. So we're at a tipping point - we have a very distinct model of how to do it, we're one of the few schools that have really developed a model of student success focusing on three elements. Most focus on academics; very few pay attention to the business of being a student (financial aid, scholarships, housing, dining, etc.) or student well-being. This priority goes to our strengths, developing the networks, will make us distinct, and it goes directly to our vision.

Trustees offered input on the content of the framework. Trustee Mae Douglas asked whether lessons learned from COVID might overlay the framework, help accelerate parts of it, and impact how it is utilized moving forward. Mental health is an example; we've learned through COVID how important it is, both for students and for employees. From an organizational point of view, COVID required us to develop cross functional units. That has already been applied to student success; we now have an executive committee comprised of people from student affairs, enrollment management, and student well-being.

Comparisons were drawn between UNCG's integrated student success strategy and others such as High Point's Life Skills University. We need to be distinctive regarding the soft skills students need to make them workforce ready. Gilliam had a recent conversation with Trustee Elizabeth Phillips about this topic. High impact experiences and experiential learning are parts of that. Phillips noted that we have to express that in a uniquely UNCG way and market it externally without categorizing ourselves as a life skills university. We do a good job of why students choose UNCG but we need to develop a strategy that not only helps students find their way here but also takes them from "here to there" to be workforce ready.

Conversation was then had around how board members can play an active role in helping to shape the university's future using the framework; how they use it to think strategically about how they interface with the community and with UNCG itself. Gilliam mentioned that the Tate and Gate project was inspired by his visit with Trustee David Sprinkle to The Arts Place of Stokes County. Trustee networks and connections with Foundations such as Armfield and Cemala have helped catalyze transformative investments in student success, and trustees have

also endowed or otherwise dedicated resources to scholarship programs such as the Sloan Scholars Merit Scholarship or programs focused on particular units. Trustees have also assisted by utilizing their connections to strengthen EDI (a stated institutional value) by recommending diversity trainings and trainers for faculty searches.

Trustees requested additional focused talking points around the framework components. Trustee Elizabeth Phillips suggested incorporating it in ways that build on the university's success in carving out its niche and catering to its demographics while positioning UNCG as "The Opportunity University". Trustee Dean Priddy noted that the framework will also be helpful as the board makes formal decisions such as the approval of additions and deletions to curriculum, observing that the document will help guide richer, more strategy centric discussion around those conversations and decisions. Additional trustee input was given, such as Vice Chair Mona Edwards noting that by connecting brand to the framework, the document will become not only conceptual and operational, but also an energizing marketing and engagement tool. Phillips agreed, noting that the branding and marketing aspect will position UNCG not just as a historic women's college that has evolved over time but as an innovative and opportunistic university.

Following additional conversation and trustee input regarding the structure of the framework and future implementation thereof, Chair Oakley thanked the board members, noting that processes like the conversation with CCL bring the board together while providing an opportunity to exchange ideas and to thoroughly systematically review current priorities, needs, and plans for the future. She thanked the CCL team for facilitating the dialogue.

The meeting adjourned at 11:32 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Harris
Assistant Secretary to the Board