



**Academic Affairs Committee
November 29, 2022**

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim Rice (Acting Chair); Mona Edwards; Betsy S. Oakley; Elizabeth Phillips (via Zoom)

MEMBERS ABSENT WITH NOTICE: Dean Priddy, Hazael Mengesha; Linda Sloan

OTHERS PRESENT: Chancellor Franklin Gilliam; Provost Debbie Storrs; Bob Shea, Vice Chancellor for Finance & Administration; Terri Shelton, Vice Chancellor for Research & Engagement; Andrew Hamilton, Associate Vice Provost for Student Success and Dean of Undergraduate Studies; Waiyi Tse, Chief of Staff; Kelly Harris, Assistant Secretary to the Board; and other members of the administration, faculty, staff, student body, and general public.

PROCEEDINGS:

Acting Chair Tim Rice called the meeting to order at 1:47pm and reminded members of the Conflict of Interest (“COI”) statement from the State Government Ethics Act and their duty to avoid COI and appearances of COI, if any should be identified. None were identified.

Roll call was read, and a quorum was confirmed.

The minutes of the September 27, 2022 Academic Affairs Committee meeting were approved without additions or corrections.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

AAC – 1 Provost’s Update

AAC 1.1 Academic Affairs Budget Update Presentation

Provost Storrs presented enrollment data, comparing Fall 2021 to Fall 2022. The data reveals a 5.6% decline in total enrollment and a 6.1% decline in total student credit hour production. Storrs also provided information on student credit hour production by student class levels from Fall 2018 to Fall 2022.

UNCG's enrollment decline is not an anomaly. It reflects a national pattern that is expected to continue. In fact, research around demographics and demand suggests there will be 190,000 fewer college going students from 2025-2035.

Additional factors include:

- A robust labor market drawing high school graduates into the workforce in lieu of college.
- High school seniors reporting that they decided not to go to college because they do not feel prepared and/or for financial reasons.
- Test optional practices and increasing acceptance rates from competitor schools.
- Significant decline in community college enrollment over the last two years.

A brief update on the new funding formula that goes into effect in 2023 was also provided and will be supplemented by a presentation to the full board at the Thursday, December 1, 2022 meeting.

The provost discussed a range of student retention activities faculty and staff are engaged in including using Armfield philanthropic funds to support local student success initiatives (16 proposals were received), the Association of Colleges and Universities Educators Certification (ACUE) Program that prepares and supports faculty in engaging with changing student behaviors and demographics, and peer coaching models, among others.

AAC – 2 Student Midterm Grades

AAC – 2.1 Midterm Grades Presentation

Associate Vice Provost Andrew Hamilton provided an update on a recent faculty reboot that engaged faculty in redesigning courses that have large first year enrollments. The Faculty Senate voted last spring to require midterm grading for all full-term undergraduate courses, as a way to give students a strong academic performance signal in week six of the term. These grades were also used to identify and support students who are in danger of not having a successful term (and are therefore attrition risks).

Midterm grade data indicate a higher proportion of A grades and lower proportions of Ds and Fs than last fall for students in their first term of college, both overall and for Reboot courses. Particularly encouraging is a return to the previous mean of F grades for first-term students (down to ~7% from more than 13%).

This kind of course redesign is an example of meeting students where they are and illustrates how faculty are showing leadership to support degree completion for students from all backgrounds without relaxing rigor.

Transition to Closed Session

Acting Chair Rice moved to convene in closed session pursuant to the North Carolina Open Meetings Law, Section § 143-318.11(2), in order to prevent the premature disclosure of an honorary degree, scholarship, prize, or similar award. The motion was seconded by Trustee Betsy Oakley and carried unanimously.

Members of the public were invited to remain in the open session.

General Account of Closed Session Discussion

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim Rice (Acting Chair); Mona Edwards; Betsy S. Oakley; Elizabeth Phillips (via Zoom)

ACTION ITEM:

CLOSED SESSION

AAC – 3 Candidates for Honorary Degrees (Storrs)

3.1 Nomination Packet

3.2 Nomination Packet

3.3 Nomination Packet

The Committee reviewed three nominations for honorary degrees as recommended by the University Committee on Honorary Degrees.

Following discussion, the Committee returned to open session.

Open Session

Acting Chair Rice invited a motion to approve two of the three nominations for honorary degrees. Trustee Betsy Oakley made the motion, which was seconded by Trustee Elizabeth Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

AAC – 4 Update on Research and Engagement (Shelton)

Vice Chancellor Terri Shelton reported that external awards are up \$2.66 million, or 9.1%, relative to last year. She also added that UNCG Faculty and Research Scholars continue to garner competitive grants, publish outstanding books, produce award winning documentaries, and create new startup companies. Selected highlights include:

Dr. Sheeba Dawood, UNCG alum '20 PhD and Dr. Hemali Rathnayake, associate professor of Nanoscience, are co-founders of Minerva Lithium, a university spinout company. The first

innovative product is a clean energy technology that utilizes a proprietary Nano Mosaic membrane filter system for critical materials extraction from non-traditional water resources. The evaporative brine processing currently used to extract lithium has to evaporate 500,000 gallons of water to gather one metric ton of lithium. Nano Mosaic can extract the same amount with just 30,000 gallons. It also drastically reduces the time and the carbon output; the current method releases roughly 5,000 grams of carbon, whereas Minerva Lithium has zero carbon emissions. Drs. Dawood and Rathnayake recently defeated thousands of applicants in taking first place at [Startup Battlefield at TechCrunch Disrupt 2022](#), a national competitive showcase “for game-changing startups determined to make a difference with cutting edge technology,” for their innovative process for extracting lithium and other critical minerals from brine.

Dr. Edna Tan, Hooks Distinguished Professor of Science Education in the Department of Teacher Education/Higher Education, a Fellow in the prestigious American Association for the Advancement of Science, received a grant from the W.T. Grant Foundation for a research project investigating how teachers engage families in the co-design of curricular practices to promote parental engagement and improve STEM outcomes for middle school students of color. This was one of only four grants awarded in this category nationally.

Dr. Omar Ali, Dean of Lloyd International Honors College, recently published *The Independent Voter*. Launched with a signing event in Washington, DC that included former presidential candidate Andrew Yang and CNN senior political analyst and anchor John Avlon, the Routledge Press paperback is a comprehensive look at voters who reject identifying with either of America’s major political parties.

Dr. Michael Frierson, Professor in Media Studies, recently completed an hour long documentary about the life and times of one of NC’s most influential writers. *Fred Chappell: I am One of You Forever* aired on PBS NC in November 2022. Fred Chappell is the author of more than thirty works of fiction, criticism, and poetry. He was the winner of numerous awards; was Poet Laureate of NC from 1997-2002; and is Professor Emeritus in UNCG’s English Department.

AAC – 5 Candidates Awarded Degrees and Certificates in Spring and Summer 2022 (Storrs)

AAC 5.1 Report of Candidates Awarded Degrees and Certificates in Spring 2022

AAC 5.2 Report of Candidates Awarded Degrees and Certificates in Summer 2022

Rosters of candidates awarded degrees and certificates in Spring and Summer of 2022 were provided to the Committee members as informational reports.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Harris
Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees