



Academic Affairs Committee

November 11, 2025

DRAFT Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mae Douglas (Chair); David Brown; Fox Brown, SGA; George Hoyle; Matthew Rankin; Tim Rice

MEMBERS ABSENT WITH NOTICE: Linda Sloan

OTHERS PRESENT: Chancellor Franklin Gilliam; Alan Boyette, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor, Vice Chancellor Sherine Obare, Graduate School Dean Greg Bell, Waiyi Tse, Chief of Staff; Kelly Harris, Assistant Secretary to the Board; and other members of the administration, faculty, staff, student body, and public.

PROCEEDINGS:

Chair Douglas called the meeting to order at 1:45pm and read the Conflict-of-Interest Statement reminding board members of their duty to avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts of interest. None were identified. Roll call was read, and a quorum was confirmed.

Minutes of the September 9, 2025, Academic Affairs Committee were approved with no additions or corrections.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

AAC – 1 Academic Affairs Update

Provost Alan Boyette opened the meeting with an announcement about leadership transitions in Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. University Libraries Dean Mike Crumpton will retire this summer after 18 years with UNCG, and Dean of Students Brett Carter will retire next August, after 30 years with the university. Both have provided truly outstanding service and leadership. Search planning is underway.

Vice Chancellor Sherine Obare gave an update on the impacts of the federal government shutdown and to highlight select developments from her research and engagement update included in our meeting materials.

Vice Chancellor Obare noted that the shutdown has temporarily halted new awards, renewals, and supplemental funding, and paused peer review panels. These disruptions are expected to affect the number and value of research awards in FY26. However, UNCG researchers have continued to submit proposals through portals that are open and through non-federal agencies. In addition, the Division of Research and Engagement has prepared contingency plans to minimize the impact on ongoing projects.

Despite these headwinds, several positive developments were noted. UNCG recently hosted two members of Congress, showcasing advances in research related to energy, defense, community engagement, and workforce development. Faculty continue to secure significant funding, including a \$3.66m grant awarded to Dr. Gideon Wasserberg in Biology. The SERVE Center, one of UNCG's leading research units, also received reinstatement of its \$11.3m U.S. Department of Education grant following a court ruling, allowing it to continue critical work supporting educators across the Southeast. In addition, global research analytics publisher *Elsevier* recently named forty UNCG faculty among the top 2% of scholars in the world, demonstrating the exceptional caliber of research and innovation taking place at the University.

Obare concluded by reaffirming that while national funding landscape remains uncertain, UNCG's research enterprise continues to demonstrate strength, adaptability, and growing national recognition.

Provost Boyette gave an update on the Academic Program Review of three School of Nursing programs. This is not to be confused with the comprehensive, university-wide Academic Portfolio Review that was finalized in 2024. Rather, this is the first implementation of UNCG's new process, which requires review of each academic program every seven years. The initial reviews covered the School of Nursing's Bachelor of Science, Master of Science, and Doctor of Nursing Practice programs. All three received a "no action" outcome, indicating the programs are operating effectively, meeting performance expectations, and utilizing resources appropriately.

AAC – 2 Three Minute Thesis Competition

Graduate School Dean Greg Bell addressed the committee on the Graduate School's Three Minute Thesis Competition, which highlights the depth and impact of graduate scholarship across disciplines.

Addressing a lay audience, student competitors must explain their research and its impact in only three minutes, using a single, static slide. Of the thirty students who accepted the challenge, preliminary judges selected ten finalists. Competition runner-up Victoria Fonville, a third-year Ph.D. student in Nutrition, and winner Praveen Pasupathi, a Ph.D. candidate in Kinesiology, presented their respective theses to the Committee.

Transition to Closed Session

Chair Douglas advised that the Committee would convene in closed session to discuss agenda item AAC – 3, candidates for honorary degrees. She reminded members that the only topic of conversation in closed session would be agenda item AAC – 3, and that voting would not occur until open session resumed.

Chair Douglas then moved to convene in closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(2) to prevent the premature disclosure of an honorary degree. Trustee Matthew Rankin seconded. The closed session began at 2:24 pm.

CLOSED SESSION

AAC – 3 Candidates for Honorary Degrees

Provost Boyette presented three honorary degree nominations recommended by the university committee on honorary degrees for discussion.

The closed session concluded at 2:42 pm.

OPEN SESSION

Following the return to open session, Chair Douglas confirmed that the only topics of conversation during the closed session were the honorary degree nominations presented by Provost Boyette.

On motion by Trustee Hoyle, seconded by Trustee Rice, the Committee voted to move the three recommendations forward for consideration of the full board at the November 13 meeting.

INFORMATION ITEM

AAC – 4 Candidates Awarded Degrees and Certificates in August 2025

The Committee's pre-meeting materials included an informational roster of candidates awarded degrees and certificates in August 2025. There were no questions or comments about the report.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Harris
Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees