

DRAFT UNC Faculty Assembly Annual Report 2008-09

1. *Membership and Meetings.* Delegates and alternates for the UNC Faculty Assembly during the 2008-09 academic year are listed in the attached roster. The Assembly met in Chapel Hill on September 19, 2008; October 24, 2008; and January 16, 2009. Due to budget constraints, the full Assembly meeting scheduled for November 21, 2008 was held as a video conference of FA Executive Committee members (open to others by video upon request). The final meeting of the year was held on March 27, 2009 as a combined video-conference (for those unable to travel due to budget constraints) and in-person meeting in Chapel Hill (for those closer by who covered their own expenses).
2. *Collaboration between Faculty Assembly and Faculty Senate Leaders.* The year began with a joint dinner meeting of Faculty Senate Chairs from nearly every campus, members of the Faculty Assembly Executive Committee, and General Administration leaders. The Assembly sought to find additional ways to strengthen ties and share information among campuses, and endeavored systematically to communicate with campus senate chairs even if they were not delegates to the Assembly itself. The Governance Committee, in particular, facilitated exchange of information about campus governance structures and practices. For example, a summary about the level of support accorded faculty senate chairs and governance offices was developed to provide better indications of the needed levels of support.
3. *Information Exchange.* The Assembly sought to gain and distribute information on several important topics during the year. For example, it heard reports on how faculty salaries are set, and learned about UNC system research on teacher education and retention. It also benefited from a video presentation by Provost Joan Lorden and other colleagues at UNCC regarding steps being taken to strengthen recruitment and retention of women and minority faculty members in sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics.
4. *UNC Tomorrow.* The Assembly had several opportunities to review planning materials and other information relating to the UNC Tomorrow initiative. It also discussed implications for UNC Tomorrow recommendations as to faculty roles and rewards, and recruitment and retention strategies. More will need to be done on this front in the coming year.
5. *On-Line Education.* The Assembly devoted much of its January 2009 meeting to a discussion of on-line education issues, and considered a resolution asking that General Administration work with the Assembly and campuses to address the following issues: mission of on-line education undertakings within the University System; program balance on the campuses between on-line and face-to-face instruction; quality assurance; assessment strategies; funding strategies; and continuing communication and planning.
6. *Branch Campuses and Academic Planning and Programs.* The Assembly raised questions concerning the establishment of branch campuses and followed the development of related Board of Governors' policies limiting the circumstances and establishing the procedures to be followed in the event such campuses would be developed in the future. The Assembly offered comments on drafts of the Board of Governors' policy and related regulations on academic planning and programs. It also reviewed proposed guidelines on this topic discussed with the Board of Governors in March

2009, and recommended several changes particularly with regard to provisions that bundled together off-site face-to-face offerings and on-line offerings under the rubric of "distance education."

7. *Non-Tenure Track Faculty.* The Assembly discussed the results of a survey done by General Administration in summer 2008 regarding campuses' actions in implementing recommendations from a 2002 report on non-tenure-track faculty. The survey showed that many campuses had not taken steps to address related issues but had agreed to do more on related topics this year. The Assembly discussed its continuing concerns with Senior Vice President Harold Martin and stressed the importance of moving forward with a system-wide task force. Martin noted that the task force would have a focused agenda and would most likely address such issues as need for guidelines on non-tenure-track appointments (covering such matters as workloads, full-time status, length of contracts, etc.), procedural rights, benefits, and thresholds (proportions of non-tenure-track faculty employed and in what context). Martin said that the task force would have broad representation of seasoned faculty (including non-tenure-track faculty), academic leaders and administrators.
8. *Charter Revision.* The Assembly considered the need to revise its Charter in order to deal with the size of delegations, now calculated based on proportion of faculty members as between the various campuses. It proposed a system that uses rolling averages (rather than year-by-year snapshots) and also adjusted the percentage break-points between campuses with four and five delegates. The proposed charter revision will be distributed to the campuses after the Assembly's March meeting.
9. *Shared Governance.* The Assembly continues to discuss problems relating to shared governance on some of the System's campuses. It has pressed for active involvement of faculty leaders in key policy discussions such as those relating to budget cuts. In addition, the Governance Committee has sought to assist campuses by gathering information on such topics as access by faculty senate chairs to information presented at Board of Trustees meetings and approaches taken to post-tenure review. The Assembly has also asked Senior Vice President Martin to raise related concerns with chief academic officers. The Assembly and its committees hope to continue outreach efforts with campuses in the coming year and to pursue other strategies as needed.
10. *Budget Developments and Implications.* Budget cuts and planning for the economic downturn dominated discussions within the Assembly and on the campuses for much of the academic year. The Assembly has heard budget updates at each of its meetings, and in January 2009 discussed at length options that might have to be confronted in the current economic climate (including use of carefully structured furloughs as an alternative to layoffs if authority to do so was made available under state law). The Assembly's Executive Committee appreciated the opportunity to meet with Kelly Eaves-Boykin, Chair of the UNC Staff Assembly, to learn about staff concerns and ideas. The Assembly's officers have also sought to gather information about breaking developments in Raleigh and on the campuses and have endeavored to share that information with delegates as much as possible. Such efforts will need to be continued or increased in the coming year. In addition, the Assembly's own budget was reduced by half and a complete freeze was imposed on travel reimbursements shortly after the January 2009 meeting. The Assembly's Executive Committee will work diligently over the summer to forge effective strategies for communicating and doing business in this era of serious financial constraint.

Respectfully Submitted, Judith Welch Wegner, Faculty Assembly Chair (3/26/09)