The first public comment session of the University of North Carolina Board of Governors was held in May 2016, in conjunction with the regularly scheduled Board meeting. Nine commenters participated in this session. Below are responses to topics raised during the May session.

**Public Comment Session Notice and Board Meeting Format**

For future sessions, we pledge to do more to publicize these public comment sessions directly to campuses for distribution by email and social media in addition to relying on UNC system website postings and distribution to local journalists. For the July 2016 session, we promoted online sign-ups via social media. The September meeting will offer increased ability to promote registration when classes are in session.

We are evaluating several options to improve future comment sessions. Beginning with the July session, commenters will be encouraged to also share written comments, which will be distributed to members of the Board of Governors.

The Board has taken strides in recent months to make our meetings more accessible as it is important that the public, especially students, remain engaged. Transparency is and will continue to be a priority for our Board.

**Pace of Change in Higher Education**

Commenters expressed concern with the pace of change in higher education. As the Board undertakes its strategic planning process, it will be essential that we hear from and engage with stakeholders of the University, including faculty, staff, students, and alumni.

**Senate Bill 873**

Since May’s meeting, there have been several changes to Senate Bill 873. The final version was in the budget and included four important components: 1) a revised fixed tuition provision, which enables parents and students to know the cost of their education for eight continuous semesters at any of our institutions. 2) a tuition buy-down program at Western Carolina, UNC Pembroke, and Elizabeth City State University, 3) a cap on annual fee increases, and, finally, 4) a provision creating a scholarship at North Carolina Central University and North Carolina A&T State University. To ensure that this piece of legislation is implemented seamlessly and in such a way as to best serve our students, UNC General Administration will soon be convening a working group to develop a comprehensive plan for implementation and marketing.

**House Bill 2**

Commenters expressed concern about the University’s involvement in two lawsuits challenging the passage by the General Assembly and the Governor of the Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act, also
known as “House Bill 2.” The Attorney General has determined that he will not represent the University or any other defendant in the lawsuits, which meant the University had to retain litigation counsel. Although the University must have counsel to respond to the lawsuits on its behalf, the University has consistently pointed out that its mission is to educate students and to serve the needs of the state through teaching, research, and service. Neither the University nor the Board of Governors played any role in enacting House Bill 2, and the University has not enforced or threatened to enforce its provisions.

Faculty Retention and Compensation
Two themes of the strategic planning process are student success and excellent and diverse institutions. Without attracting and retaining high-quality faculty, these goals are unattainable. Additionally, the significant economic impact of the University to our state is due in large part to our faculty’s ability to generate research funding. These topics will certainly be part of the Board’s upcoming strategic planning process.

Leadership Change
One commenter asked that the Board explain why President Tom Ross was “fired.” President Ross was not, however, fired from his position as the President of the University of North Carolina, as the question assumes. Rather, President Ross entered into a one-year employment agreement with the University in January 2015 and stepped down from the post when that contract ended.