



MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
Committee on Strategic Initiatives

September 16, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.  
Via Videoconference and UNC-TV Live Stream  
University of North Carolina System Office  
Center for School Leadership Development, Room 128  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

**AGENDA**

- A-1. Approval of the Minutes of July 22, 2020 ..... Carolyn Coward
- A-2. Student Mental Health During COVID-19..... Jane Cooley-Fruehwirth  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- A-3. Clinical Load Index (CLI) Across the UNC System ..... Dr. Ben Locke  
Penn State University
- A-4. Review Draft Resolution on Student Mental Health.....Carolyn Coward
- A-5. Other Business ..... Andrew Kelly
  - a. Update on Teacher Preparation for Early Literacy
  - b. Committee on Strategic Initiatives Work-plan (2020-21)
- A-6. Adjourn



## DRAFT MINUTES

July 22, 2020  
University of North Carolina System Office  
Via Videoconference and UNC-TV Live Stream

This meeting of the Committee on Strategic Initiatives was presided over by Chair Carolyn Coward. The following committee members, constituting a quorum, were also present in person or by phone: J. Alexander Mitchell, W. Marty Kotis, III, Anna Spangler Nelson, and David Powers. The following committee member was absent: Michael Williford.

Chancellors participating were Chancellor Kelli Brown and Chancellor Brian Cole.

Staff members present included Dr. Andrew Kelly and others from the UNC System Office.

Other guests included Dr. Ben Locke from Penn State University, and J.J. Brown and Paul Forte of Appalachian State University.

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### 1. Call to Order and Approval of OPEN Session Minutes (Item A-1)

The chair called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. and called for a motion to approve the open session minutes of May 19, 2020.

**MOTION:** Resolved, that the Committee on Strategic Initiatives approve the open session minutes of May 19<sup>th</sup>, as distributed.

**Motion:** J. Alexander Mitchell

**Motion carried**

Roll Call Vote	
Coward	Yes
Mitchell	Yes
Kotis	Yes
Nelson	Yes
Powers	Yes
Williford	Did not attend

## **2. Student Mental Health Services: Utilization, Costs, and Sustainability (Item A-2)**

The committee was joined by Dr. Benjamin Locke, senior director of Counseling & Psychological Services at Penn State University and executive director of the Center for Collegiate Mental Health (CCMH) , and J.J. Brown, vice chancellor for Student Affairs at Appalachian State, and Paul Forte, vice chancellor for Business Affairs, also at Appalachian State.

Dr. Locke shared data about the staffing of mental health services across the higher ed landscape, which currently ranges from one staff member for every 100 students, to one staff member for every 20,000 students. The historical staff-to-student ratio often used fails to incorporate the actual utilization of a particular center by students and the clinical capacity of the system. Dr. Locke recommended moving to a Clinical Local Index (CLI), which captures “clients per standardized counselor”. A lower CLI corresponds with more treatment and better outcomes for students. Dr. Locke encouraged institutions to think about what types of services they want to provide to their students, and then assign resources to match.

Following Dr. Locke’s presentation, Mr. Brown and Mr. Forte discussed Appalachian’s recent move to billing insurance for mental health services, and the benefits to the funding model they have seen as a result.

After the presentation, the committee had a brief but robust discussion about the opportunities for the Board to help improve outcomes for students.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:44 a.m.

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W. Marty Kotis, III, Secretary



## AGENDA ITEM

A-2. Student Mental Health During COVID-19.....Jane Cooley-Fruehwirth  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

**Situation:** The committee will hear a presentation from Jane Fruehwirth, associate professor of economics at UNC-Chapel Hill, on the impact of the pandemic on student mental health.

**Background:** Colleges are facing an increasing prevalence of students experiencing mental health challenges and a growing demand for mental health services on their campuses. These trends have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has brought stress to every aspect of life, including significant economic stress and daily chronic stress. Symptoms of anxiety and depression have increased significantly among students, with even more notable increases for non-Hispanic Black students and Hispanic students.

Dr. Fruehwirth has surveyed UNC-Chapel Hill’s entire fall 2019 freshmen class multiple times over the past year. One of those waves of interviews occurred after COVID-19 hit, providing a window into the mental health challenges that students at one of our constituent institutions are experiencing. Her study provides an early estimate of the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on anxiety and depression symptoms in the United States, and among college students in particular.

**Assessment:** In this session, the committee will hear a presentation on the effect of the pandemic on anxiety and depression symptoms of first-year students at a large public research university.

**Action:** This item is for discussion only.



## AGENDA ITEM

A-3. Clinical Load Index (CLI) Across the UNC System .....Dr. Ben Locke  
Penn State University

**Situation:** The committee will discuss the range of Clinical Load Indices (CLIs) across the UNC System.

**Background:** Colleges are facing an increasing prevalence of students experiencing mental health challenges and growing demand for mental health services on their campuses. These trends have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Even prior to the pandemic, institutions ranged in their ability to provide a level of counseling and psychological services that was sufficient to meet student demand. As the committee discussed in its last meeting, the Clinical Load Index is a tool developed by the Center for Collegiate Mental Health (CCMH), the International Association of Counseling Services, Inc. (IACS), and the Association of University and College Counseling Center Directors (AUCCCD) that describes the relationship between the demand for and supply of mental health services in college and university counseling centers. It provides a way to measure and compare staffing levels across different types of institutions with different patterns of student demand.

**Assessment:** In this session, the committee will review the range of CLIs across the UNC System from 2018-2019 and from 2019-2020. Dr. Ben Locke of Pennsylvania State University, one of the creators of the Clinical Load Index, will help us interpret the data.

**Action:** This item is for discussion only.



## AGENDA ITEM

A-2. Review Draft Resolution on Student Mental Health .....Carolyn Coward

**Situation:** The committee will discuss a resolution that calls on System Office staff to convene a working group to explore ongoing challenges in student mental health provision and develop policy recommendations in response to those challenges for the Board to consider.

**Background:** Colleges are facing an increasing prevalence of students experiencing mental health challenges and a growing demand for mental health services on campuses. These trends have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee on Strategic Initiatives has been exploring the issue of student mental health for the last several months. Based on their discussions, the chair has asked System Office staff to take a deeper look at these issues with the help of experts from across the UNC System. This resolution calls on the president and System Office staff to consult with experts within and outside of the UNC System to examine key questions related to best practices in service provision, financing, and efficacy and to develop a set of recommendations for the System.

**Assessment:** In this session, the committee will consider and vote on a resolution that would create a working group to explore student mental health and develop policy recommendations.

**Action:** This item requires a vote by the committee and a vote by the full Board of Governors.



**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF  
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
September 17, 2020**

**WHEREAS**, student mental health affects academic performance, retention and graduation, and the quality of student life on campus;

**WHEREAS**, national studies indicate that demand for mental health services on college campuses has increased over the past decade;

**WHEREAS**, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has documented that the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) has led to increased incidence of anxiety and depression, especially among Americans between the ages of 18-24;

**WHEREAS**, the increase in demand for services has strained student health budgets and the capacity of student health centers to respond, a trend that is likely exacerbated by the pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, responding to these trends will require creative thinking about how mental health services and programming are financed, structured, and delivered at UNC System institutions.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Governors requests that the President and his staff or their designees, in consultation with experts from across the UNC System, examine the following questions and make recommendations to the Board of Governors through the Committee on Strategic Initiatives:

- What is the appropriate level of mental health service that UNC System institutions should strive to provide, and how should the System measure whether that level of service delivery has been achieved?
- Are existing funding sources sufficient to meet that standard across the System? What alternative revenue models should the UNC System consider?
- What best practices and innovations should the UNC System and its constituent institutions consider to improve the delivery of student mental health services?

A progress report shall be presented to the committee for review no later than January 2021, and the final report of findings and recommendations shall be presented to the committee and the Board of Governors no later than the March 2021 regular meeting.

**This the 17<sup>th</sup> day of September 2020.**

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Randall C. Ramsey, Chair

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Meredith R. McCullen, Secretary