



**Statement on Collegiality and Professional Conduct
University of North Carolina System Faculty Assembly**

The mission of the University of North Carolina System is to discover, create, transmit, and apply knowledge to address the needs of individuals and society. Success in achieving this mission requires a commitment to standards of professional conduct and regular and productive interactions among and between students, staff, faculty, and administrators. As such, collegiality should be recognized as an important value and organizational standard across the UNC System. This Statement is intended to affirm the importance of collegial relations and interactions in the pursuance of UNC's mission, and to serve as a way to frame discussions around this issue in cases where constructive cooperation is hindered by a lack of collegiality.

Collegiality entails a shared responsibility to promote the collaborative interactions and reciprocal relationships that are necessary for shared decision-making and the pursuit of common goals. Collegial interactions are built around mutual trust and facilitated by a value system that appreciates and shows respect for differences in background, expertise, and points of view. Collegiality is enhanced by an environment characterized by civility and a spirit of mutual support and engagement.

Breakdowns in collegiality are not only antithetical to the productive coexistence necessary to advance the mission of the UNC System, they can also be painful and damaging to individuals, relationships and work environments. Extreme examples include hostile and intimidating behavior toward others, such as bullying or similar acts intended to belittle, humiliate, intimidate or demean others. When such behaviors are exhibited, all parties have a responsibility to challenge them. Acts of discrimination, bigotry and hatred cannot be tolerated, and should be dealt with as specified in the existing UNC Policy Manual. Toxic environments should be ameliorated through active intervention, which can be supported through the establishment of campus ombuds services and effective leadership training.

It should be noted that collegiality is not synonymous with sociability or congeniality; a person need not be congenial to be collegial. Nor does collegiality imply rote conformity or deference to the judgments of colleagues, supervisors or administrators. The open and unfettered exchange of ideas lies at the heart of the learning enterprise, even when this leads to disagreement or dissent. For this reason, collegiality should not be elevated to a separate standard for faculty evaluation.

The University of North Carolina System thrives because of its people, and its continued success depends upon the mobilization of collective talents and resources in support of its mission. Doing so demands a commitment to establishing and sustaining an environment in which standards of professional conduct and collegial working relations are the expected norm.

Adopted by the UNC System Faculty Assembly, April 3, 2020