

Principles of Shared Governance

The University of North Carolina System Faculty Assembly

Preamble

These *Principles of Shared Governance* are put forth by the Faculty Assembly, which represents all seventeen constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina System. It is intended that these Principles guide the development and affirmation of sound practices across the System, to the benefit of the administration, faculty, staff, and students of each of our campuses.

Shared Governance refers to the structures, processes and collaborative relationships that ensure that the major constituencies of the university, especially its faculty, administration, and governing board, have meaningful opportunities to participate effectively in managing the affairs of the institution. As a unique characteristic of the academic profession, Shared Governance ensures that the faculty, who are entrusted with the University's core academic mission, are essential partners in key decisions relating to institutional policy, management and directions.

The value and importance of Shared Governance is affirmed in the Code of the University of North Carolina, which holds that the Chancellor of each constituent institution:

Shall ensure the establishment of appropriate procedures within the institution to provide members of the faculty the means to give advice with respect to questions of academic policy and institutional governance, with particular emphasis upon matters of curriculum, degree requirements, instructional standards, and grading criteria. Procedures for giving advice may be through the council or senate, standing or special committees or other consultative means. (The Code and UNC Policy Manual, Chapter V, Section 502 D).

To the end that Chancellors may more effectively carry out this responsibility, the Faculty Assembly commends the following Principles of Shared Governance to serve as guidance and support to the administration and Faculty Senate or Council of each constituent institution.

Adherence to the principles and practices set forth below can build and reaffirm the culture of collaboration and transparency that is essential to supporting the mission of the University and the success of its students.

Definitions

1. **Faculty** includes all persons holding positions at the institution designated by the institution's constitution as being accorded voting privileges in faculty elections, such as tenured and tenure-track faculty; non-tenure track faculty; librarians and others as identified in the institution's constitution.
2. **Faculty Senate or Faculty Council** refers to the elected body empowered by the faculty to exercise its legislative powers. The UNC Code holds that "the chancellor shall be

responsible for ensuring that there exists in the institution and such other faculty council or senate, a majority of whose members are elected by and from the members of the faculty. The council or senate may advise the chancellor on any matters pertaining to the institution that are of interest and concern to the faculty.”

3. **Chair of the Faculty or Faculty Chair** refers to the faculty member elected by the faculty at large, by the Faculty Senate, or the Faculty Council as the chief faculty officer, who serves as spokesperson for the faculty of the institution.
4. **Faculty Handbook or Guidelines** refers to the formal document that represents the guidelines aligned with the UNC System Code and institutional Board of Trustees policies that serves as a contract between faculty and the institution.
5. **Administration** refers to anyone holding a post in which there are invested powers for supervision or governance as identified by the individual institution. This generally, but not exclusively, refers to Chancellors, Vice Chancellors, Provosts, Vice Provosts, Deans, etc.

Principles of Shared Governance

The Role of Faculty

1. While it is the Chancellor’s prerogative to preside over the Senate, this privilege should be delegated to the Faculty Chair (Chapter V, Section 502 D, UNC Code).
2. Shared Governance is most effective when the relationship between Faculty leadership and the Administration is collegial, candid, and cooperative. Transparency in actions, coupled with candid dialogue rooted in trust, can establish the solid foundations of mutual respect necessary for Shared Governance.
3. The Faculty Senate should be supported with the necessary resources to ensure effective governance, including, but not limited to, adequate operating budget, office space, and administrative support staff. The role of the Faculty Chair should be supported by release time, stipend, professional development opportunities, or other resources negotiated between the Chair and Administration.
4. Faculty leadership should be informed of all open meetings held on campus to ensure opportunities for faculty attendance and participation.
5. The Faculty Chair should serve as a non-voting *ex officio* constituent representative on the Board of Trustees to provide an opportunity for Trustees to have access to the institution’s faculty voice and to allow more transparency between the Trustees and the faculty.
6. The Faculty Chair or designee should serve as *ex officio* voting or non-voting member of all major administrative councils or committees that regularly address issues in which faculty have a stake.

7. The Faculty Chair should hold regularly scheduled one-on-one meetings with the Chancellor and Provost to maintain transparency and communication between administration and faculty. It is recommended that regular meetings also take place between the Chancellor's cabinet or leadership team and faculty leaders, such as the elected officers or other advisory group.
8. The legislative and consultative powers of the faculty should be codified in a published governance document, such as a faculty handbook or manual, approved by and amendable by the faculty or their elected representatives in the Faculty Senate or Council. This handbook should be approved by the Board of Trustees as a formal agreement between the university governing bodies and the faculty.
9. The university's curriculum is primarily the responsibility of the faculty. The faculty, acting as a committee of the whole or through representatives elected by the faculty or designated pursuant to procedures established by faculty legislation, should give approval to academic policies prior to their implementation, including but not limited to the following:
 - A. Graduation Requirements
 - B. Instructional Curriculum
 - C. Establishment, Merger, or Discontinuation of Departments, Schools, and Colleges
 - D. Establishment of New Degree Programs (Including Online Programs)
 - E. Establishment of or Substantive Changes to Majors
 - F. Elimination or Consolidation of Degree Programs
 - G. Establishment of Individual New Courses
 - H. Admissions Policies
 - I. Attendance and Grading Policies
 - J. Grade Appeal Procedures
 - K. Academic Dismissal
 - L. Online Education Policies/Procedures
 - M. Drop/Add Policies
 - N. Course Repeat Policies
 - O. Policies for Honors Programs
 - P. Academic Integrity Policies
10. The faculties of the schools or colleges that admit and certify candidates for degrees should establish the curriculum leading to and policies with respect to the award of graduate and professional degrees.
11. The granting of honorary degrees is a prerogative of the faculty. The faculty or its designated representatives such as duly elected committee members should approve all nominees for honorary degrees prior to final approval by the Board of Trustees.
12. The faculty or its designated representatives, such as duly elected committee members, should provide input on any proposal to adopt or amend campus policies regarding reappointment, tenure and promotion, and post-tenure review. It is expected that any such proposals will be initiated by the faculty and that full opportunity for faculty analysis and discussion will be allowed before any modifications in such proposals are adopted.

13. The faculty, through its designated representatives such as duly elected committee members, should review and approve revisions to faculty handbooks, academic policy manuals, and any other institutional policy statements that affect the faculty teaching, research, or conditions of employment.
14. The faculty by virtue of their disciplinary expertise should be involved in the development of standards and policies related to ethics, research, scholarship and creative activity.
15. For joint committees on which faculty is represented:
 - a. Faculty representation reflects the degree of the faculty's stake in the issue or area the committee is charged with addressing.
 - b. The faculty members of joint committees are selected in consultation with the elected faculty leadership or by processes approved by the Faculty Senate or Council.

The Role of Administration

1. A collegial, candid, and cooperative relationship must exist between the administration and the faculty. When invited, administrators should appear before the Senate or Council to address concerns, provide information or enter into discussion. The Faculty Senate or Council should likewise honor requests from Administrators to attend and/or present at Faculty Meetings.
2. The Chancellor and other campus senior administrators should honor resolutions, recommendations and decisions made by the Faculty Senate or Council and provide an appropriate rationale in the event that they are unable to do so.
3. The Chancellor and other campus senior administrators should seek meaningful faculty input on issues in which the faculty have an appropriate vested interest, but not necessarily primary responsibility, including but not limited to the following:
 - A. University Mission, Goals and Strategic Plan
 - B. Budget Principles and Priorities
 - C. Campus Master Plan
 - D. Building Construction
 - E. Enrollment Growth
 - F. Tuition Policy
 - G. Student Discipline
 - H. Intercollegiate Athletics
 - I. Faculty and Staff Benefits
 - J. Libraries and other Research Facilities
4. The Chancellor should actively advocate the principles of shared governance to the Board of Trustees to ensure that the voice and interests of the faculty are heard and considered when setting into place institutional policies and procedures that directly impact faculty and the academic experience of students.

5. The Chancellor, Provost, or Dean should typically sustain the recommendations of faculty committees concerning promotion/tenure decisions and those of search committees. When the Chancellor, Provost or Dean acts against such recommendations, the administrator should meet with the committee or otherwise adequately communicate the reasons for not sustaining its recommendations.
6. The Chancellor should typically sustain the recommendations of faculty committees concerning grievance hearings. When the Chancellor acts against the recommendations of such committees, the Chancellor should meet with the committee or otherwise adequately communicate the reasons for not sustaining its recommendations.
7. The Board of Trustees should exercise due respect for the governance prerogatives of the faculty. The faculty should engage the Board of Trustees by inviting representatives of the Trustees to appropriately participate in relevant dialogue and discussions of matters that may come before the Trustees as policy recommendations.
8. The faculty should participate meaningfully in the selection of academic administrators through membership on search/hiring committees, with the opportunity to meet and comment on final candidates of all administrative levels before hiring decisions are made.
9. The faculty of each college, school, or department should be consulted in the appointment or reappointment of the dean or department chair either through majority membership on the search or evaluation committee or by direct consultation with the appointing administrator either in person or by other means approved by the Faculty Senate or Council.
10. Academic deans and department chairs should be formally evaluated with faculty input on a regular basis through an agreed upon procedure.
11. Procedures should be in place to provide a sound performance review of all senior administrators, including the Chancellor and Provost, in consultation with the Faculty Senate or Council. Members of the faculty having voting privileges participate in these performance evaluations of all senior administrators in addition to and independent of the mandated periodic evaluation of administrators by the Chancellor or the Board of Trustees.

The Role of the Faculty Assembly

The Faculty Assembly serves as an advisory body to the President, System Office Administrators, and Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina. The Assembly is comprised of elected representatives from each of the seventeen constituent institutions, and supports System-wide shared governance through advocacy, communication, and collaborative effort in support of the University's mission.

The following shared governance practices ensure a healthy and sound relationship among the administrators of the System Office, the Board of Governors, and the faculty of each institution in the System through their elected or appointed delegates.

1. Each of the seventeen institutions will appoint or elect a set number of delegates proportionate to the size of the institution's faculty. Only those delegates or their approved alternates may attend regularly scheduled meetings of the Assembly.
2. The Chair of the Faculty Senate or Council of each institution serves as either a delegate or an *ex officio* member of the institution's delegation to the Assembly and serves as a member of the Faculty Chairs Committee of the Assembly.
3. The Executive Committee of the Assembly, duly elected according to the By-Laws of the Assembly, represent the UNC System faculty at Board of Governors' Open Meetings and may serve in an *ex officio* capacity on Board of Governors Committees.
4. The Faculty Assembly adheres to all the guidelines and procedures outlined by the By-Laws of the Faculty Assembly, which are regularly reviewed and revised as needed by the Governance Committee of the Assembly.

Adopted, 2005
(Amended, August 2020)