

August --, 2012

Thomas W. Ross, President  
The University of North Carolina  
P.O. Box 2688  
Chapel Hill, NC 27515-2688

Dear President Ross:

I write to request your approval to modify the approved plan for the Thomas S. Kenan III Distinguished Professorship in Jazz at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. A current vacancy in the professorship provides a strategic opportunity to reassign it to one of UNCW's flagship academic programs. Specifically, we propose recasting the professorship as the Thomas S. Kenan III Distinguished Professorship in Creative Writing, with modifications to the approved plan as follows:

- A) Number of professorships: The single professorship will henceforth be known as the ***Thomas S. Kenan III Distinguished Professorship in Creative Writing***.
- B) General Level of Salary and other Benefits and Prerequisites: The annual income from this endowment is about \$45,000. A portion of the income will be used to provide a salary supplement for the appointee in an amount sufficient to ensure a competitive level of compensation, and the remainder will be used to provide support for the appointee's creative work and the department's related public programs.
- C) Academic Department: The ***Thomas S. Kenan III Distinguished Professorship in Creative Writing*** will be assigned to the Department of Creative Writing. The position will be filled at the rank of Professor.
- D) External or Internal Appointment: This position will be filled either by an internal appointment, or by an external appointment through a national search. In either case, the appointee should be a distinguished writer whose stature will enhance the department's excellence and further advance its national standing.
- E) Benefits: The impact of the professorship on the reputation of the department will be felt immediately, and this in turn will prove helpful in recruiting the best students and faculty. It will also offer the long-term benefit of ensuring that the department will always have on its faculty a writer/teacher drawn from the literary world's highest ranks. Creative Writing is a department whose faculty members are all practicing

literary artists. Their authority to teach arises directly from the discoveries they make in their own writing, daily and over a lifetime. They believe that teaching their craft and mentoring new writers is an important way to become better writers themselves. The professorship will ensure a continuation of these values and a furtherance of the department's legacy of artistic excellence through the diligent practice of craft.

One of only a handful of independent creative writing departments in the country, the Department of Creative Writing at the University of North Carolina Wilmington has been recognized for excellence in a number of national venues, including the special *Atlantic Monthly Fiction Issue* (summer 2007), which cited it as one of the top five innovative programs nationally; *Poets & Writers*, which consistently ranks it among the top 25 MFA programs nationally; and *Publisher's Weekly*, which has printed several articles extolling the virtues of the department's Publishing Laboratory and its literary imprint, Lookout Books, both integral parts of the unique applied learning experience available to the approximately 270 students in our BFA and MFA programs.

The reasons for this distinction are multifold:

- The department functions effectively as a regional "literary headquarters." Faculty and students are significantly involved in local book clubs, workshops through the North Carolina Writer's Network, and programs in the public schools. The department hosts both a summer camp for young writers and Writers Week, which presents authors and editors to an audience of students and local residents each fall.
- The department's literary journal, *Ecotone: Re-imagining Place*, ties the academic program to the larger environmental mission of the university and uses "place" as a governing metaphor: writers cross boundaries in genres, ideas, and cultures.
- The department's Publishing Laboratory is a unique concept. It affords students a hands-on experience with design, editing, and production, from concept to finished book, all in-house.
- The close interaction between faculty and students, both in class and in manuscript conferences, affords students a very individual mentorship in their writing. Additionally, students and faculty participate in a full calendar of special events and collaborative professional activities.

The addition of the Thomas S. Kenan III Distinguished Professorship in Creative Writing will greatly enhance the Creative Writing faculty both in substance and in reputation. The professorship will serve as a capstone to the department's achievement and a catalyst

for its further advancement, thus raising the profile of the College of Arts and Sciences and the University of North Carolina Wilmington.

I have discussed this change with Mr. Thomas Kenan III and he has endorsed the change.

Your consideration is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Gary L. Miller  
Chancellor

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