

UNCW Faculty - Free responses to FA Resolution Regarding Transition in Leadership and Direction of the UNC System

January 29, 2015

"But it is rather weak in its ultimate resolution.

Would seem we are close to a vote of no confidence in our BOG leadership."

Current efforts to gut and privatize UNC system are the greatest threat to liberty this state has known since the civil rights era. Equal opportunity in a knowledge-driven society depends fundamentally on the opportunity for state-supported higher education. Harm to the UNC system is harm to the idea of an educated, democratic society in which there is a strong middle, and not just upper and lower classes. This ideal was recognized in the Federalist Papers, and is valid throughout the world today.

From what I can tell as a faculty member, President Ross did a great job in leading the UNC-system; letting him go seems to have primarily political reasons. At minimum the BOG needs to provide an explanation about its reasoning to push him out; ideally, there is a discussion that involves all stakeholders, including the faculty.

I agree with the part commending Ross but I think we should limit ourselves to saying what we think is right about the sort of successor we would like to see. For me it is a choosing battles kind of thing... The BOG has a right to bring in new leadership (consulting stakeholders along the way), who we should feel free to criticize. I am of course very concerned about who this might be, and I liked Ross...

I am glad we are saying something. Politics have now invaded the university system for its own purposes. And the purpose is to destroy an independent public education. These are scary times. I am thrilled we are standing up to it even if this will most likely be ignored.

I am signing because I believe education has been the top priority in NC and should continue to be. It disheartens me greatly to see the current events that are damaging our higher education. Tom Ross is an exemplary leader and is known for his dedication. We need a very good explanation for the current events including forcing Ross to retire and discontinue his service to NC higher education.

I believe that the administration, faculty, staff, and students of the UNC system, as well as the public of North Carolina, have grave concerns about the direction of higher education in the state. This is an opportunity to address those concerns.

I have the deepest admiration for President Ross and thank him for his leadership of our UNC System.

I met Tom Ross personally a few years ago when he visited our campus. I was very impressed with him. He truly cares about faculty in the UNC system. I thanked him for being at the helm and for looking out for the best interest of our faculty. In a time when state legislators think little of faculty, it's comforting to know that Dr. Ross understands what we do and is willing to fight for us. I can't think of an individual better qualified to be president of the system than Dr. Ross is.

I support the resolution whole-heartedly. I would even like to see the resolution go further and resolve that the Board of Governors should reverse their decision.

"I think it is misguided at best to declare a 'transition in leadership' without broad input from the university system itself. Where are the voices of the faculty and administrators who actually work on our 16 campuses and make the UNC system the success it has been under President Ross?"

President Ross SHOULD REMAIN IN HIS POSITION until open and meaningful dialogue has taken place. Any decision to change leadership should incorporate the voices of the many thousands of people statewide who make the university system work and are impacted by the choice of leadership.

I totally agree with UNC Faculty Assembly on this issue!

I wish the resolution were even stronger regarding the political motivation behind the dismissal of President Ross.

If anything, I think the resolution should have stronger language (e.g., "Be it resolved that the UNC Faculty Assembly finds the action of the BOG inappropriate and unwarranted.")

It is imperative to the economic as well as educational future of North Carolina that the integrity of the leadership of higher education in North Carolina is preserved. North Carolina is quickly losing the reputation it has held as the intellectual epicenter of the south. If we are to establish a competitive global workforce, we cannot continue to eviscerate higher education, with the continued underfunding and undermining of the UNC system. The General Assembly needs to respond to the needs of North Carolina rather than a hidden political agenda.

It should also be noted that the history of the UNC system imposing retirement on presidents age 65 and older is oppressive and ageist. It is also considered age discrimination.

NC is blessed to benefit from such an outstanding university system.

One of the primary reasons that NC has a world-class university system is that it is driven by faculty-set curriculum, and that faculty (which is the leading edge in science, mathematics, humanities, technologies, and the arts) has input into the governance of the universities. We appreciate and need input from the private sector, and need a certain number of our administrators from people in business and management, sure, but surely the BOG realizes when it is superseding its expertise and what is best for its system. Reinstate the proven leadership before faculty start leaving NC for other states (which is what happened en masse at the K-12 levels).

Our state is destroying one of the best higher education systems in the United States! I hope our governor will be bold, and stop this, before his legacy is irrevocably ruined.

Please keep politics out of education!

President Ross has been an effective leader of the UNC System and I have heard no justifiable reason for his removal. The action to remove him thus appears to be a direct attack on the integrity and viability of the UNC System to the detriment of the people of North Carolina.

"support wholeheartedly

- tax-payers deserve an explanation from BOG"

Thanks for spearheading this.

The BOG should provide supporting documentation for what constitutes "Transition in Leadership and Direction of the UNC System"

The faculty, administrators, students and citizens of North Carolina need transparency and input into such major decisions as changing directions in the UNC System. I came to UNCW because of the reputation of UNCW and the UNC System. I have a son who is receiving an outstanding education at UNCW. I can't help but suspect politics being the motivation for the firing of President Ross. The current legislature has destroyed critical elements of our K-12 education, which also had national recognition, with no input from schools, parents, and the general public. We can't let this happen to our higher education system.

The Ross firing looks like politics.

There's that line in the Bible about the man who plows the field should have some say in how the products of his labors are distributed. Yet, we as working faculty have no voice. These Bible thumpers ignore what the great book says. BOG treats faculty and academics dismissively, and this sends a message. Once elected, Republican legislators have a responsibility to all NC citizens, not just those who are their constituents. There needs to be a more transparent debate about the motives of this legislature vis-a-vis higher education.

This is a continuation of the recent process to degrade the UNC university system from a recognized world-class university to a mediocre southern school.

Tom Ross is your typical "good old boy"--Democrat or Republican--that have plagued higher education in NC for decades. Hardly a visionary, definitely a tool. What has he done for UNCW? Gary Miller? Denise Battles? Dozens of faculty leaving? This poppycock about being forced out ignores that fact that ALL 4 previous UNC system presidents have all retired at the age of 65 (yes, there have only been four previous presidents). The only problem now with most faculty is that the Republicans are in charge, not the Democrats. We should own our biases, not make stuff up. Decisions carried out by Ross have hurt UNCW--countless to itemize. Dry your eyes and move on.

Tom Ross was providing exemplary leadership, and his termination does a disservice to all of the faculty and students in the UNC system. Additionally, it is a move that will inevitably make the UNC System weaker and in turn fail to attract out-of-state students. Everything about this decision reconfirms my belief that we should have absolutely no confidence in the BOG leadership.

Transparency in public matters of the state will allow the public to understand and discuss reasoning behind important decisions. From those discussions may come actions which can make life better for us all.

Transparency in this process is crucial to maintaining open lines of communication and trust in the BoG. We counsel our students to objectively examine facts and to identify and minimize their personal biases in a situation. We must ask the same for the governing board of this institution. If political bias was not a motivating factor, evidence that supports the decision to remove Tom Ross would be invaluable in understanding this transition.

We are currently searching for a new Chancellor at UNCW. To attract the very best candidates, we need a strong message about the value of higher education in North Carolina and assurances about the quality of leadership at the top levels in the UNC system.

We need a real change to improve UNCW and the system.

What is most disappointing about the direction of current top leadership is that in the name of "pro-business" they are being less responsive to business community needs. All sorts of research indicates that employers want critical thinking and great communication skills, ranging from careful writing to intriguing conversation, more than major-specific skills, yet our Governor mocks the liberal arts. Our leaders are taking us down the dystopian path laid in the books/movie "Divergent" and all in the name of pro-family and pro-business. Their decisions are not helpful to either business or family but rather serve to further consolidate power.

I believe that the administration, faculty, staff, and students of the UNC system, as well as the public of North Carolina, have grave concerns about the direction of higher education in the state. This is an opportunity to address those concerns.

President Tom Ross continues to lead the UNC System in the best interests of the University and all the people of the State of North Carolina. I am concerned by the direction the UNC system would take, should President Ross be removed from office.

The action of the Board of Bovernors continues a disturbing trend of appearing to let politics decide the fate of the leaders of the UNC system. This trend can only degrade the once-enviable higher education system in North Carolina.

I am outraged that the incredibly enlightened and energetic leadership of Tom Ross is being questioned and curtailed in this unprofessional and arrogant way. I urge reconsideration of this decision by our legislators.