



**NORTH CAROLINA CENTER FOR
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**UNC SYSTEM MAKES PROGRESS ON TEACHING, BUT MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE, SAYS
N.C. CENTER**

The UNC Board of Governors took some important steps toward boosting the emphasis on teaching in the state universities, but the Board stopped short of achieving true reform, says the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research. The Board of Governors adopted a report in September that makes new efforts to reward excellent teaching. The report is strong on rewards, the Center says, but weak on evaluating performance and tying teaching evaluations to tenure and hiring decisions.

"The UNC Board of Governors has moved toward increasing rewards for teaching, and for that it should be commended. But the Board has put a strong cart before a weak horse," says Center Executive Director Ran Coble. "The cart that carries rewards for good teaching should come after the horse that evaluates teaching performance. Plus, the Board should require that teaching carry greater weight in tenure and hiring decisions."

In February, the Center for Public Policy Research released a three-year study of how the state's public universities evaluate and reward excellent teaching, based on surveys of more than 400 academic departments in 15 universities (the study excluded the N.C. School of the Arts). Major findings included:

- * North Carolina's public universities lag far behind their national counterparts in efforts to evaluate the quality of teaching. Academic departments in N.C. institutions typically conduct student course evaluations, but only 30% use any form of peer evaluation or self-evaluation -- tools used by a majority of other four-year universities in the United States.
- * The quality of teaching is not given enough emphasis in tenure and promotion decisions.
- * The current rewards system heavily favors research over teaching. For example, the Kenan endowed chairs at UNC-Chapel Hill are given primarily for exemplary research, pay a \$4000 salary stipend, an annual research grant of \$4500, and are held for life. The best awards for teaching at Chapel Hill -- the Bowman and Gordon Gray chairs -- are one-time positions held for only three years with an annual \$5000 bonus.
- * Only 9% of all departments in the UNC system give awards for excellent teaching.
- * Exemplary efforts are underway at Western Carolina, UNC-Wilmington, and UNC-Chapel Hill to re-emphasize teaching.
- * Only half of the departments that use graduate students as teaching assistants (TAs) have any training procedures or programs preparing them to teach undergraduates.

The Center then made 10 recommendations to address these problems. These included:

- * The UNC Board of Governors should require all departments to evaluate teaching performance with at least two methods for every course taught. Departments should then use those teaching evaluations in hiring, teaching assignments, and tenure decisions.

- * The Board of Governors should require that teaching ability and effectiveness count for at least one-third of the weight in tenure and promotion decisions as part of faculty members' overall performance. Faculty duties usually include teaching, research, and service to the university and public.

- * All departments in the UNC system should establish some method for recognizing or supporting excellent teaching, and each university should establish endowed chairs for teaching.

- * The Board of Governors should ensure that no graduate student teaches an undergraduate course without extensive training, monitoring, and evaluation.

To the university's credit, says the Center, the Board of Governors assigned two of its committees to look at these questions and report back to the full Board in September. In the meantime, the 1993 N.C. General Assembly established a legislative commission to study the quality of undergraduate teaching. That study group is charged with examining the assessment and evaluation of faculty teaching, rewards and incentives for undergraduate teaching, the use of teaching assistants, and the impact and effect of research on the teaching mission of the university system.

On September 10th, the UNC committees reported back to the full Board of Governors, which oversees all 16 institutions in the UNC system. The Board adopted their report, which includes these five directives:

- (1) The Chancellors must ensure that both student evaluations and peer reviews are conducted in evaluating faculty and that student evaluations are conducted at least one semester each year. However, the peer review is only to include direct observation of new and non-tenured faculty and graduate teaching assistants.
- (2) The chancellors of institutions that currently have no teaching awards must establish awards at the institution-wide or college/school level.
- (3) The Board of Governors will create annual system-wide teaching awards with monetary stipends.
- (4) The Board of Governors will seek appropriations to establish or strengthen teaching centers for the enhancement of teaching on each campus.
- (5) Finally, the President of the UNC System must prepare a report with recommendations on how to strengthen the teaching skills of graduate students.

The Center says the Board of Governors' report is silent on the weight to be given to teaching in faculty evaluations, and it does not require a direct link between teaching evaluations and tenure decisions or teaching assignments. The Board's report also makes no recommendations to establish teaching as a central criterion in hiring decisions, it requires no training and monitoring of graduate students who are teaching undergraduates, and it does not seek to establish endowed chairs for teaching.

The Center's study and actions by the Board of Governors and legislature come on the heels of controversy over several tenure decisions. At UNC-Chapel Hill, several professors who had won teaching awards were denied tenure on grounds their research was not strong enough. One of these professors, Paul Ferguson of UNC-Chapel Hill, was later granted tenure upon appeal to the campus Board of Trustees. At N.C. State University, students staged a sit-in when a popular professor was denied tenure.

Leaders of North Carolina's public universities are relieved by winning a tough vote on the \$310 million bond issue for university projects last Tuesday. The university bonds passed by 52-48%, but trailed the other three statewide bond issues on the ballot. While the UNC bonds passed by 38,077 votes, 55 of 100 counties voted against them.

Political observers noted that a string of controversies coming out of the university system had worried university officials about the bond vote outcome. Those included the tenure decisions, construction of a Black Cultural Center at UNC-CH, a recent policy allowing overnight visits by members of the opposite sex at six UNC-CH dorms, and a UNC-Charlotte professor who had a full-time job there and at the University of Minnesota.

Nationally, a 1993 Louis Harris poll found that the percentage of the public that had great confidence in the people running institutions of higher education had dropped to an all-time low of 23% -- a 59% decrease since 1966. Another national poll by Daniel Yankelovich also found the public concerned about the rising cost of a college education. Yankelovich noted that higher education and health care are the only two sectors of the economy in which costs are rising at three times the inflation rate.

"Luckily for the University, its 200th anniversary celebration and a high-powered media campaign for the bond issue unleashed a flood of good feelings about UNC that turned around the early anti-bond poll numbers," says Coble. "But the national polls and the closeness of the bond vote in North Carolina are wake-up calls for higher education. They suggest that some citizens feel they can't afford a college education, and many citizens who can afford it question the universities' commitment to teaching and public service. We hope that campus leaders and the Board of Governors will take the next steps to reclaim the public trust. In other states, when those in higher education didn't act, the legislators did."

The N.C. Center for Public Policy Research is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit corporation created to study public policy issues facing North Carolina and to evaluate state government programs. The Center receives general operating support from the Z. Smith Reynolds and Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundations, 108 corporate contributors, and more than 800 individual and organizational members. In addition to publishing *How Do Universities in the UNC System Identify and Reward Excellent Teaching?*, the Center has conducted recent studies on ways to increase voter participation, state regulation of nursing homes, and the cost of running for the state legislature. The Center also publishes a citizen's guide to the legislature, rankings of the effectiveness of all 170 legislators, and rankings of the most influential lobbyists. The Center's quarterly magazine is *North Carolina Insight*.

Copies of the Center's 450-page February report on *How Do Universities in the UNC System Identify and Reward Excellent Teaching?* are available for \$31.80 plus \$3.50 for postage and handling. To order, call (919) 832-2839, or write the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research, P.O. Box 430, Raleigh, N.C. 27602.

For more information, call Ran Coble at the Center at (919) 832-2839

Tenure and Teaching in the University of North Carolina: A Joint Report

Submitted by

The Committee on Personnel and Tenure
and
The Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs

to

The Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina

September 10, 1993

secure funds to increase the number of teaching awards should continue. In addition to these institutional or school awards, the Board of Governors is urged to create annual system-wide awards for excellence in teaching.

The board should also provide encouragement and support to the initiation and expansion of faculty professional development activities directed toward the improvement of teaching. It is clear that most of our institutions are already investing substantial resources in such activities. All of them should do so. Moreover, all of them should provide tangible incentives and encouragement for faculty and graduate teaching assistants to participate in these development opportunities. The institutions and the Board of Governors must find additional resources for this purpose.

To underscore the importance of teaching, and to encourage, identify, recognize, reward, and support good teaching within the University, the Committee on Personnel and Tenure and the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs submit jointly to the Board of Governors the following specific recommendations:

1. *That the Board of Governors, through the President of the University, instruct the Chancellors of each constituent institution to do the following:*
 - a. *Review institutional mission statements, tenure policies, and the criteria for making faculty personnel decisions and, where necessary, to revise them so as to give explicit recognition to the primary importance of teaching in the University;*
 - b. *Revise institutional policies and procedures, as necessary, to require (1) that clear and specific statements of criteria for evaluation of faculty performance at every level (institution, college/school, department) are provided in writing and discussed with each probationary faculty member before initial employment and at the beginning of the first term of employment and with each candidate being reviewed for reappointment or tenure at the beginning of the year in which the review is scheduled to be made, and (2) that a record of these discussions be kept in the individual's personnel file;*

- c. *Review procedures for the evaluation of faculty performance to ensure (1) that student evaluations and formal methods of peer review are included in teaching evaluation procedures, (2) that student evaluations are conducted at regular intervals (at least one semester each year) and on an ongoing basis, (3) that peer review of faculty includes direct observation of the classroom teaching of new and non-tenured faculty and of graduate teaching assistants, and (4) that appropriate and timely feedback from evaluations of performance is provided to those persons being reviewed.*
2. *That the President of the University be asked to report on these reviews to the Board of Governors by July 1, 1994.*
3. *That the Board of Governors, through the President of the University, call upon the chancellors of institutions which do not now have awards for outstanding teaching to establish such awards either campus-wide or at the college/school level.*
4. *That the Board of Governors create annual system-wide teaching awards with monetary stipends which are designated "Board of Governors' Awards for Excellence in Teaching." (The Chairman of the Board of Governors should name an ad hoc committee to work out the details and present recommendations concerning implementation of this proposal.)*
5. *That the Board of Governors seek appropriations for each campus in biennial budget requests to establish or to strengthen centers and activities designed to encourage and support teaching excellence and to improve teaching effectiveness throughout the University.*
6. *That greater efforts be made to develop and strengthen the teaching skills of graduate students, and that the Board of Governors ask the President to prepare, in consultation with the University-wide Graduate Council, a report with specific guidelines and recommendations for the training, monitoring, and evaluation of graduate students who teach courses in UNC institutions.*

Comparison of UNC Board of Governors' Report
Recommendations & Recommendations of the
N.C. Center for Public Policy Research

Board of Governors 9/10/93 Recommendations

1. a. Chancellors to review mission statements & tenure policies to ensure the "primary importance of teaching."
- b. Chancellors to revise institutional policies to require clear statement of criteria for evaluation of faculty and keep a record of evaluation.
- c. Chancellors to ensure that student evaluations and peer reviews are conducted in evaluating faculty, that student evaluations are conducted at least one semester each year, and that peer review includes direct observation of new and non-tenured faculty and teaching assistants. Feedback to be provided to those evaluated.
2. President of UNC System to report on the above by 7/1/94.
3. Chancellors of institutions without teaching awards are called upon to establish awards at the institution-wide or college/school level.
4. Board of Governors to create annual system-wide teaching awards with monetary stipends.
5. Board of Governors to seek appropriations to establish or strengthen teaching centers on each campus.
6. President of UNC System to prepare a report with recommendations on how to strengthen the teaching skills of graduate students.

Center Report Recommendations

- 1.a. The Center actually reviewed the mission statement of each campus in Chapters 3 and 4 of our report and reprinted what the mission statements say about teaching. However, there is nothing in the UNC report to guarantee the primacy of teaching. The Center recommended (# 5) that teaching count for at least one-third of the weight in tenure decisions at research universities and more at other institutions.
- c. Similar to Center recommendation # 1, except that we recommended that the Board of Governors require 2 methods of evaluating teaching (student evaluations and peer review) for each section of every course taught. Also, the Center recommended (# 2) that the teaching evaluations be tied both to tenure decisions and teaching assignments, and the UNC report does not do this. Finally, the UNC recommendation for peer review applies only to new and non-tenured faculty; the Center recommends evaluating all faculty.
3. After finding that only 9% of all departments in the UNC system give teaching awards, the Center recommended (#7) that all departments give teaching awards of some kind. The UNC report seems to assume that such awards have to be monetary and stops short of recommending awards at the departmental level.
Note: The 1993 General Assembly allocated \$250,000 for establishing faculty awards for excellent teaching.
4. The Center recommended (# 8) that each university should establish endowed chairs for teaching.
Note: The 1993 General Assembly allocated funds to establish endowed chairs which recognize excellence in undergraduate teaching.
5. Same as Center recommendation # 6.
6. Because we found that only half of the departments that use graduate students as teaching assistants have any form of training procedure or program for preparing TAs to teach undergraduates, the Center recommended (# 9) that the Board of Governors ensure that no graduate student teach an undergraduate course without extensive training, monitoring, and evaluation.
Note: The regional accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools' Commission on Colleges, now requires that graduate teaching assistants "receive regular in-service training and be regularly evaluated."

- Other Comments:
1. The UNC report is strong on taking steps to improve teaching skills and reward excellent teaching, but it is weak in the steps it recommends to evaluate teaching. The report states four times that teaching should be the first consideration at all of the UNC institutions, but nothing in the report would change the current weighting in evaluating teaching, research, and public service in tenure decisions. The report is silent on the weight to be given to teaching in faculty evaluations, and it does not require that teaching evaluations be linked directly to tenure decisions or to teaching assignments.
 2. The UNC report makes no recommendations (a) to ensure that teaching is a central criterion in hiring decisions, (b) to train and monitor graduate students who are teaching undergraduates, or (c) to establish endowed chairs for teaching.
 3. In its 200th Anniversary Year, the university system has a great opportunity to reclaim the public trust by taking further steps to ensure the public that teaching is indeed "the first consideration at all of the UNC institutions."
 4. The General Assembly is moving faster than the Board of Governors on this issue. In addition to the funds appropriated on the legislature's own initiative above, the legislature established a legislative study commission to look at various issues in higher education, including:
 - "Rewards and incentives for quality undergraduate teaching;"
 - "Assessment and evaluation of faculty teaching, and the role of this assessment in the rewards system, including salary increases and the granting of tenure;"
 - "Student contact with tenured faculty and the use of teaching assistants;" and
 - "The impact and effect of research on the teaching mission of The University of North Carolina."
 5. Legislatures in Arkansas and Texas have mandated policies both on identifying good teaching and rewarding good teaching.