Convene Meeting and Remarks

Andrea Hunter, Chair of the General Faculty and Faculty Senate

My name is Andrea Hunter, and I am affirmed by the pronouns she, her, and hers; and I am the Chair of the Faculty Senate and the General Faculty, and I now Call this Meeting to Order.

With recent political rhetoric, I reminded of the importance of speaking about social justice, the struggle for it, and its legacy. So, to honor MLK and the Civil Rights Movement and this February’s celebration of Black History Month, I share the following memory, and my hope for us.

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My child lives in a world as unknown to me as the world I came of age was a thing of dreams for those before me. Still, he must grapple with race and what we are left to remember---as we all do, knowing or not.

When in pre-school, my son came home and asked, “What happened to Martin Luther King?” In that moment, I was flooded with the memory of King, me, my mother, and death – catching my breath I repeated: “What happened?”

Having celebrated Martin Luther King Day at school, he wanted to know about King’s death. “The teachers won’t say,” he answered.

Choosing our words carefully, my husband and I explained that Dr. King had been assassinated, which meant that someone killed him. Our child’s forehead furrowed.

“He wanted everyone in America, no matter who they were, to be treated equally. Not everyone believed this should be so,” we said.

He was silent for a moment, then responded with a contemplative “Oh.” For the next few days, he would ask a question or two, trying to understand why someone would do a bad thing to someone who wanted to help people and do good things.

The assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr---more aptly, the contemplation of his death---is a part of me in the ways things are when children learn the most horrid things exist not in fairytales but in the world of the living but I said none of this.
Nor did I describe the cool, spring day when my mother and I stood at the graveside of Dr. King where he was first laid to rest at the Southview Cemetery in Atlanta, just a little more than a week after his assassination in Memphis on April 4, 1968. Flowers covered the entire length of the cemetery’s hillside, spilling from its crest threatening to engulf the road below more flowers than I had ever seen in one place, then or since, beautiful still. Their scent enveloped us.

It was quiet, curiously so. It was just me, my mother, and Martin Luther King. I do not know what all I thought in that moment but it felt sacred, as in prayer. There we were, just us, so close to him and death.

Having grown up with old folks and their talk of spirits, I wondered if King would somehow speak to me. There was a gentle breeze, but I heard nothing and felt only quiet and stillness. Even the heaviness of sadness I had seen on television just days before seemed to have left this place, leaving nothing of its self behind.

“Free at last . . . thank God Almighty; I’m free at last”—my mother read aloud the words on his crypt, and I silently followed.

I was just seven years-old, but these words, a refrain from an old spiritual, were as familiar to me as a Sunday morning sermon. I had heard the Baptist rhythms of “I Have a Dream” many times before on our family’s hi-fi.

As we stood there, my heart no longer raced, and I too was at peace.

I never told my son I was there—that the assassination was not history for me, that I stood at King’s graveside with my mother, or that my mother, his grandmother, waited in line for hours in her Sunday’s best to pay respects as King laid in state in Sisters Chapel at Spelman College.

And I, just a few years older than he, witnessed the convulsive grief of a people, and saw the riots on TV with black faces wet with grief, anger, and sweat or that Baby, my grandmother, grieved for King as she lay in the hospital days before her own death.

He does not know that I thought about this almost every day as a college freshman because the chapel, where King laid in state, was positioned right across from my dorm room window.

I do not know why I could not say more, and still have not. I carried these memories with me for a lifetime, never speaking of them; yet, these memories and the history that made them helped to forge who I would become.

King’s assassination steeled my spirit to “not let nobody turn me ‘round,” and through him, I began to understand that a righteous dream can survive even if we do not.

When my son was in middle school, I asked him what he learned from the life and assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., and after a pause, he said “That you have to fight for what is right.” I pray that he, and all of us, become the dedicated fighter King spoke of.
For this promise, I give over my memory to him, my son, and now to you, the Faculty Senate—of me, my mother, and Dr. King in the quietness of death—with the hope that King’s death, as much as his life, will fortify my son’s spirit, and yours, as they did mine.

Approval of November 1, 2017 & January 10, 2018 Minutes (Enc. A & B)
Brad Johnson, Secretary of the Faculty Senate
- No corrections for either set of minutes.
- Both sets of minutes passed.

Provost Remarks
Dana Dunn, Provost & Executive Vice Chancellor
- Provost Dunn spoke of luncheon for alumni and Board of Governor teaching awards winners and the experiences of the committee members
- Provost said this is the first in a series of upcoming events that celebrate our faculty, staff, and students in their accomplishments and asked Senators to take the opportunity to attend these celebratory events
- Provost shared that UNCG has made a decision after consultations with Deans, faculty chairs, etc. to move to faculty activity reporting platform (Digital Measures is the vendor; the tool is called Faculty Insights)—formal communication for implementation timeline will be forthcoming
  - Provost has great confidence in the return of investment with respect to faculty time will be good once the platform is in place
  - Gloria Thornton will be the project manager for this initiative by interfacing with faculty and IT
  - Will assist with processes like promotion and tenure, can be mined for searching for faculty expertise
  - This will be replacing Sedona but not all units are currently utilizing Sedona
    - Seamless transfer of information in Sedona to Faculty Insights can occur
- Provost shared that there is a new set of academic policies and procedures posted on her website
  - A communication will be forthcoming this week encouraging faculty to read and review the policies
  - These policies developed out of necessity with input from faculty
  - Most policies revolve around bringing UNCG into compliance with SACSCOC
  - Problems and challenges with data have arisen because we have not had common understandings of concepts like “majors,” “minors,” etc.
  - This is the first step in resolving data quality and integrity issues moving forward
- Provost reminded Senators for important searches underway:
  - Deans search for HHS
  - February 14 will start the on-campus interviews for Associate Vice Chancellor for Research
- Provost shared that Colin Whitehead author of Underground Railroad will be on campus this week to an already sold-out audience
UNC Faculty Assembly Report (Enc. C)
Anna Marshall-Baker, Lead Delegate
UNCG Faculty Assembly Delegates

- Anna shared faculty assembly has not met since November 2017
- Anna shared updates since the November mtg.
- Faculty Assembly passed resolution in support of existing leadership and the organizational structure; the establishment of separate administration was redundant
- At Dec. mtg of Board of Governor approved free speech, 120 credit hour policy, and increase of salary of some chancellors
- In Dec. mtg, Prosper Act introduced by Virginia Foxx which rolls back
  - Simplifies FAFSA application and to remove federal requirement for credit hour definition
  - Addressing some for-profit schools awarding more credits for courses than should have been allowed
- In Dec, informational report presented to Board of Governors
- In January BOG meeting, UNC system was rebranded with new logo and name change of General Administration
- Also impact of summer school for retention purposes?
- Resolution passed by Faculty Assembly and Staff Assembly of NC about representation
  - Chairs of Faculty and Staff Senates are viewed as non-voting members of Board of Trustees
- Question from floor: Sounds like Board of Governors would like to move toward supporting summer school?
  - Yes, that is what Anna interpreted the report to mean

Report and Senate Discussion: Options for 120 Credit Hrs Policy (Enc. D)
David Carlone, Chair, General Education Council
Chuck Bolton, Chair, General Education Self-Study Task Force

- PowerPoints from Andrea—reviewed process that has occurred related to the 120 Credit Hour policy
  - Phase 1 process (concurs with the end of this current Faculty Senate Mtg.)
  - Phase 2: originally thought would go back and poll faculty but timeline is too tight before March so Andrea has suggested Unit Senator’s “Town Hall” for Senators to share with their unit faculty members
- Andrea shared several resources present (David Carlone, Chuck Bolton, Jennifer Clark, Jodi Pettazzoni, Gail Pack, Nancy Bucknall, Ciara Marable, Jacqueline Dozier, etc. (University Advising Council)
- Hard copy of GEC report sent out by email (separate email)
- David reviewed the report that was sent out to Senators earlier this week and highlighted some aspects of the report:
  - GEC has not come to any final recommendations at this point
  - GEC has learned:
    - If General Education is cut, would be simple for everyone but the Bulletin copy will need to be revised by many departments
Self-study report will be coming out in a few months and cutting Gen Ed would affect the Self-Study by GEC

- 2 working drafts are representative of several options of the study by the Council
  - 3 hour cut proposal: Primarily to Natural Sciences and Social & Behavior Sciences

Questions from Floor
- Explain the adding back parts of the proposals
  - Rather than doing straight deletions which undermines some programs
  - Allows them to add back some courses through electives to meet the needs of their program categories
- Credit hours added back would not be specific to marker or general education areas but could come from anywhere??
- How does UNCG compare to peer institutions (last sheet in packet)
  - UNCG seems to be where our peers are (36-37 required courses)—some are lower or higher than UNCG
  - Provost asked when data was compiled, do we know if these institutions had elaborate marker system like UNCG has
    - Some peer institutions do have marker systems like UNCG but not many
    - Provost shared that the addition of the marker overlay on the credit hour requirement means our students take more hours to satisfy the core
    - David shared that Bulletin states markers can be completed without additional hours
  - David shared it’s hard to read the Bulletin and discern exactly how many hours programs are requiring because often times the Bulletin is not accurate
  - Senator shared almost all programs are at 122 or below—relatively number of small programs that would have problems with reducing down 2 hours
  - Senator stated a cut into Gen Ed would not preclude a unit from keeping the old/original system(??)
  - Senator shared two option: cut Gen Ed by 2 hours and tell the Deans to “deal with it”; or just tell the Deans to “deal with it” at the start
  - Provost pointed out University Advising Council in email about if Gen Ed hours could be cut

Nancy Bucknall (Chair, Undergraduate Curriculum Committee) and Jennifer Clark (Chair, University Advising Council)
- Nancy shared that University Advising Council includes lead advisor for every academic unit
- Nancy shared that within the College (science and mathematics major), cutting this by 3 credit hours makes course selection paramount right at the very beginning by starting out as a major in these areas in the very first semester
○ Nancy agreed that it would be a simple solution/decision for the College of Arts & Sciences
○ Senator stated it would have been nice to ask department heads or those with insights into the disciplines about the possibility of cutting hours from the program
  ■ Nancy shared the survey was for 3 credit hours begin removed from the elective hours and not from department/major/program requirements
○ Senator shared the Gen Ed cut seems to be the best, most flexible option for everyone
○ Senator asked if we have to worry about transfer students and how these students will be advised on community college campuses and how they’ll come to us to fulfill their major requirements
  ■ Nancy shared that we maintain articulation agreements with community colleges and that students with Associate’s degrees allows students to meet general education requirements
○ Senator shared that 120 credit hour limit is not a cap for how many hours a student can take; we’re not talking about removing a student’s freedom
○ David encouraged faculty to review how specific their programs require students to take general ed requirements
○ Senator made point that UNCG is above the 30 credit hour requirement that SACSCOC has and recommends letting the departments decide
○ Senator stated the we have to be cognizant of what “General Education” means and if departments/units are able to add back hours, then that is not “general education”
○ Senator shared that Gen Ed Self-Study Task Force will be coming out with recommendations report around April 1
○ Provost shared that some UNC system schools in the report have more Gen Ed hours than UNCG but are already at 120 credit hours overall
○ Nancy shared that 1 course could satisfy credit hours across multiple arenas (major requirement, gen ed, marker, etc.)
○ Senator asked for rationale about why we ask/require students to take certain courses
  ■ David shared the Self-Study is looking at questions like this
○ Senator asked for a way for Nancy Bucknall or someone more knowledgeable about these areas to help come to speak to Senators’ constituents because Senators won’t know answers to all the questions that could be asked
  ■ FAQ sheet, website, attending faculty mtgs, etc.
○ Senator asked the Provost for the possibility for more time to review considerations because there have been no new ideas
  ■ Andrea shared that we don’t have time; we have to come up with something in order to move it forward
  ■ Andrea shared that some legislative action will need to happen in March
Andrea shared that we will need to be prepared for Spring advising in 2019 under the new 120 credit hour policy

○ Provost shared additional option that it would be possible to reframe the charge for the Gen Ed committee if Faculty Senate would be willing to move quickly

○ Chuck shared that this is a difficult decision because we have a complex Gen Ed program
  ■ Task Force shared that Gen Ed program needs to be clarified and simplified

○ Senator questioned calendar timeline and that there doesn’t seem to be anything to preclude a decision being made before April 1 when the Self-Study would be ready
  ■ Jodi Pettazzoni said the timeline was for programs to revise their programs and didn’t take into effect the Self-Study
  ■ Provost shared that she didn’t say we didn’t have time to review the Self-Study but the Task Force would only make recommendations or provide options and may not provide us with anything new to move forward

● Senator suggested a Gen Ed reduction for short term which would allow a more deep review in the next 2 years of Gen Ed

● Previous suggestion of either Gen Ed reduction or program by program reduction

● Andrea motioned to suspend the rules to allow for a straw poll, which would require a majority vote; motion seconded; motion passed unanimously

● Senator proposed 3 hour Gen Ed reduction for departments (but don’t cut 6 credit hours) followed by any additional cuts necessary as determined by specific departments to be followed up on in 2 years to allow for a proper follow-up on the Gen Ed policy
  ○ Straw poll is an advisory vote that would lead to a resolution: Yeah=19; Nays=5; Abstentions=1

● Senator asked that this will only affect incoming students and not current students
  ○ Provost confirmed an opt-in choice to go with the 120 credit hour policy if they wish but they are grand-parented into previous plan they started on

● Senators asked for way to poll all the faculty since this seems to be a swift position for the choices
  ○ Andrea shared that Faculty Senate is the legislative arm of the Faculty; Town Halls would be an option as well as electronic polling but there are a lot of layers to this and electronic means would be difficult to address specific questions
  ○ Anne responded that while the General Faculty may consider and vote on many other issues and actions, the only actions that actually require discussion and approval by the General Faculty, after review by the Faculty Senate, are University-level P&T documents/policies, and changes to the General Faculty Constitution.
Announcements & Adjournment

- Faculty Forum: Topic TBD
  - Wednesday, February 21, 2018, 3pm-5pm, Virginia Dare Room, Alumni House
- Next meeting of Faculty Senate: Wednesday, March 14, 2018 from 3pm-5pm in Virginia Dare Room, Alumni House

Respectfully submitted,

Brad Johnson
Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Approved at the March 14, 2018 Faculty Senate Meeting