

# RFA News/EXTRA

RFA — Part of the Carolina Family

Newsletter of the Retired Faculty Association of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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## AD again ready to take on the issues



Bubba Cunningham

*Cunningham can also provide his views on the national picture*

The stormed-out February RFA General Meeting featuring UNC Athletic Director Bubba Cunningham has been rescheduled for March 31 at the Friday Center. Registration will begin at noon in the Redbud Room, with lunch beginning at 12:15 p.m. and Cunningham speaking about 12:30 p.m.

Cunningham is prepared to speak to the specific issues around the long-running academic integrity scandal and what the Athletic Depart-

**RFA Quarterly Meeting**  
Tuesday, March 31, 12:15 p.m.  
(Registration starts at noon)  
The Friday Center, Redbud Room  
Registration form on Page 3

ment is doing to address the issues. He also may address what challenges and opportunities he sees ahead for major athletic programs here and nationally.

### From the President

## The BoG needs to realize which direction it should face

On almost every occasion when William Friday met with groups of aspiring University Chancellors and Presidents, he described the proper role of the leadership of the public universities, Presidents and Boards of Trustees, as standing with their backs to the University, facing the legislature, explaining, advocating, supporting and defending the institution and its faculty, students and administration.



Don Stedman

If ever there is a time, he would say, that the President or the Trustees stand with their backs to the N.C. General Assembly (or the state apparatus) to explain to the University what it is that the legislature demands it to be or to do, what it should say or teach, or what it should not do that might offend them, then the institution is at risk of failure. The recent statement by the UNC Faculty Assembly (printed on

Page 2) provides a thoughtful reminder that people may be facing in the wrong direction.

The recent actions of the members of the UNC Board of Governors seem to reflect an almost arrogant dismissal of their proper role. It might be better if they would spend more time helping to find ways to keep people like Joseph Haj rather than expend their energy pushing aside people like Gene Nichol. Who's next?

The Board needs to understand that the University System is made up of constituent institutions, each with its own history, its own traditions, its own mission played out in concert with others, and each with its own constituency.

It is not a corporation or a state agency. Each of its institutions is an important gear in a large and varied watchworks, offering choice for students, support for families, a future for underdogs and an experience that produces leadership for North Carolina.

Our system, the envy of nations, took centuries to build but could dissolve in a semester. Handle with care.



You can check out the University's "review, response and reform" in an interactive graphic at: <http://carolinacommithment.unc.edu/>

### Watchdog panel named

RFA President Don Stedman has appointed a group of the Executive Committee to track progress by the University's Administration in addressing academic integrity issues.

The group members are Jonathan Howes, Andy Dobelstein, Pat Pukkila and Jim Peacock. They will report regularly to the Executive Committee and to RFA members. You may contact any member of this subcommittee by using their contact information from the Executive Committee roster on Page 2 of RFA News.

# 'Restoring confidence in our University'

For the first time in memory, the Faculty Assembly of the UNC System, chaired by UNC-Chapel Hill Political Science



**Leonard**

Professor Stephen Leonard, has taken the initiative to advise the Board Of Governors on the wisdom of its decisions. The statement below was published in the Raleigh News & Observer on March 3. It was signed by Leonard, endorsed by the entire membership of the Assembly, 15 chairs of the UNC System campus faculty senates, 500 other signatories and the President of the UNC-CH Retired Faculty Association on behalf of its Executive Committee and membership.

As the North Carolina General Assembly gears up for its long session, the issue of appointments for the UNC Board of Governors is at the top of the near-term agenda. While

## Association notes:

### Did you get your invite to the reception?

The Friday Center is hosting its Annual Reception for all retired faculty and administrators on Monday, March 23, from 5 to 6:30 p.m. in the Atrium. Invitations were sent through e-mail. If you plan to attend, please e-mail Virginia Taylor at [vrt@email.unc.edu](mailto:vrt@email.unc.edu) or call at 919-962-1618.

### Howes, Pukkila chosen as council nominees

The RFA Executive Committee is set to nominate two members, Jonathan Howes and Patricia Pukkila, to run for election

to the one open seat on the Faculty Council. Howes currently holds the seat.

The nominations are expected to be confirmed at the Executive Committee meeting on March 17. The names will be sent to the Office of Faculty Governance and then forwarded to all retired faculty for the vote. Andrew Dobelstein is our other member on the council.

### 'Movies in the Morning' at the Friday Center

The Friday Center is hosting its first "Movies in the Morning" program on Tuesday, March 31, from 10 a.m. to noon. "A Farewell to Arms," with Helen Hayes and Gary Cooper, will be

filling these positions is not usually a front-page story, this year's actions will likely be remembered as a critical moment in the legislature's historical legacy. The choice is nothing less than a return to excellence in the governance of the University, or continuing the precedent of all-too-frequent missteps and overreach that have defined the work of the current Board.

While the members of the Board may be sincere in their intent to act in the public interest, there has been in many cases a significant gap between those intentions and the effects and implications of the Board's decisions. Students, staff, faculty, administrators and citizens have repeatedly urged the Board to consider the potential destructiveness of policies and practices they have pursued, often to no avail. The full list of these occasions is too long to enumerate here, but consideration of a few of the Board's recent

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shown, and Kimball King will lead a discussion after the film. This program will take place immediately before the RFA General Meeting at noon. For tickets (\$10) or more information, visit <http://fridaycenter.unc.edu/moviesintheam> or call 919-962-2643.

### Retirees can march at May Commencement

RFA has a chance to show the flag and support the graduating students by marching at Commencement from 9 to 11 a.m. on Sunday, May 10. Plans are afoot for transportation. Email Don Stedman [djsnvf@aol.com](mailto:djsnvf@aol.com) to get on the mailing list.

#### RFA OFFICERS 2014-2015

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##### Faculty Council Delegate

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**A class with Professor Snow**

Students add a scarf as a finishing touch on a snowman they made on the lower quad on Feb. 26.

The weather may have played havoc with class schedules, but it also brought winter fun to campus.

UNC News Photo by Dan Sears

**UNC Retired Faculty Association Quarterly Meeting  
Luncheon registration at noon Tuesday, March 31, 2015**

Fill out form, clip and mail with your check to:  
Treasurer, UNC Retired Faculty Association  
2119 Markham Drive  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514-2122

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Number of luncheon reservations @ \$16.00 (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_



Luncheon reservations must be received by March 27.

*If you think your check might not be delivered by then, please notify us at [uncrfa@gmail.com](mailto:uncrfa@gmail.com) or 919-942-2192.*

**Already paid? Need a refund?** Those of you who paid for the Feb. 26 luncheon will be credited for the luncheon at this meeting unless you notify us that you want a refund.

**A note on parking:** Permits are now required at the Friday Center. Electronic permits will be sent out to those who sign up for the meeting, and cars with handicapped permits don't need a Friday Center permit. Other visitors should park at the curb and get a pass from the front desk before parking in the lot.

# 'Restoring confidence in our University'

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actions may be enough to make the point:

- Changing the employment terms for President Thomas Ross. The public outcry over this decision showed that President Ross enjoys great respect for his leadership of the University. Even the Board of Governors had to admit that Ross has done an outstanding job. Yet the Board still hasn't offered a compelling case for its decision. Eroding public confidence in the Board's capacity for wise use of its decision-making powers has been the result. By extension, those doubts have also come to reflect badly on our elected representatives.

- Changes in the search process for the President of the University. Despite the stated concerns of students, staff, faculty and even one of its own members, the Board decided to endorse a policy rife with encouragements for autocratic abuse and discouragement of inclusiveness in the search process. Under its new policy, the Board has a single individual – over whose appointment the Officers of the Board would have undue influence – chairing every committee in the search proceedings. The difficulty is that any nominee coming out of this process will be seen as a creature of the Board officers, rather than the best qualified candidate available.

- Consideration of Board intervention in campus Chancellor search processes. The Board says it respects the autonomy of campus leadership search committees, but doesn't follow good governance practices. The Board now wants to insert its members into campus leadership search committees, the near-certain effect of which will be to stifle open discussion and candor in the deliberations of those who have the relevant experience, expertise and knowledge required to make well-informed recommendations. As with the President search process, any nominee for campus leadership coming out of such proceedings will be seriously compromised. New chancellors lacking the full support of their campuses rarely last long in the job.

- Intervention in campus-based research and service activities. The decision to scrutinize all 240 research and service centers in the system was pursued over the vociferous objection of students, staff, faculty and a very broad public. This process has been enormously costly and wasteful, it has interfered with Chancellors' and Provosts' efforts to effectively manage their institutions, it will make it difficult for faculty to recruit and retain talented colleagues, it has discouraged staff from having confidence in the judgment of governing bodies, and it has raised serious doubts on the part of students who believe that their institutions should serve the public good, not narrowly partisan party interests.

Taken together, these decisions (along with many not listed here) suggest that this Board does not trust the judgment and expertise of those who have made the University system a richly diverse and enormously successful institution of higher learning, and a highly effective engine of prosperity. This is contrary to best practices of corporate leadership, and it is contrary to proven principles of successful governance in higher education.

History has shown that officers of centralized authority who use their power to manage rather than enable the pursuit of effectiveness and efficiency cultivate cultures of mediocrity, misdirected initiative, stifled innovation, distrust, fearful self-interest, and wasteful bureaucratic burden. Unfortunately, all of these failings are beginning to define the legacy of this Board. In a just a few years the University has been increasingly pushed toward dysfunction, degradation and national disrepute.

The question now is whether this will also be the historical legacy of the N.C. General Assembly. It needn't be so: Our elected representatives can restore confidence in our University by simply appointing men and women who both cherish the University and understand that great institutions deserve great governance.