
Joint Resolution Condemning the University of North Carolina Board of Governors and System Office

(JUNE 2022)

Following the April 2022 release of Report of a Special Committee: Governance, Academic Freedom, and Institutional Racism in the University of North Carolina System, the Committee on Historically Black Institutions and Scholars of Color, the Committee on College and University Governance, and Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure endorsed the following resolution. The Council approved the resolution at its June 16 meeting.

Whereas the UNC board of governors and system office have contravened AAUP-supported governance standards by their failure to participate in joint planning and effort with the faculty, to engage in appropriate self-limitation, to consult the faculty meaningfully when changing search and appointment procedures, and to fulfill their responsibility to serve as their institutions' champions when their support was urgently needed;

Whereas the UNC board of governors and system office have taken actions—among them the 2015 closure of three of the system's university-based policy centers, the nonreappointment of distinguished professor of law Eric Muller to the UNC Press board, and the adoption of a policy implementing the 2017 North Carolina state "Free Speech" legislation on UNC's seventeen campuses—that have placed the basic protections of academic freedom in jeopardy and made the overall environment for academic freedom in the UNC system insecure;

Whereas the UNC board of governors and system office, the racial composition of which is disproportionately white, have fostered a culture of exclusion, marked by a lack of transparency

and inclusion in decision making, that has prevented faculty members of color from moving into positions of leadership and authority, chilled the climate for academic freedom, represented a constant threat of political interference, and perpetuated institutional racism;

Whereas the UNC board of governors and system office have taken actions with regard to the system's minority-serving institutions to reduce budgets, defer maintenance, maintain low salaries, and increase the workloads of faculty members of color at these institutions, thereby further sustaining institutional racism in the UNC system; and

Whereas the UNC board of governors is "legally charged with the 'general determination, control, supervision, management, and governance of all affairs of the constituent institutions'" and the system office is "responsible for executing the policies of the UNC Board of Governors and providing University-wide leadership" and thus share ultimate responsibility for overreach and mismanagement by individual boards of trustees and administrations across various institutions in the system;

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Therefore, be it resolved, the AAUP's governing Council resoundingly condemns the University of North Carolina System board of governors and system office. ■

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Movers: **MARCUS ALFRED** (Howard University), *chair*, Committee on Historically Black Institutions and Scholars of Color; **ALLISON BUSKIRK-COHEN** (Delaware Valley University), *chair*, Committee on College and University Governance; **CHARLES TOOMBS** (San Diego State University), *chair*, Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure