

Board of Trustees Remarks
Marianna Walker, Chair of the Faculty
September 23, 2011

Good Morning.

I bring greetings from the faculty – at the beginning of the 2011-2012 academic year.

I am honored to serve the university again in my third term as Chair of the Faculty. My fellow Faculty Officers are also beginning their third year (Mark Sprague, Vice Chair - Physics; Hunt McKinnon, Secretary - Interior Design and Merchandising; and Brenda Killingsworth, Parliamentarian – Business). Present today is B. Killingsworth – Professor Sprague and McKinnon are engaged in academic activities and could not attend today.

We will continue our work in leading the faculty and Faculty Senate, and will collaborate with our administration, in the tradition of shared governance to address common university goals and missions. One of the most important relationships in a university is between the faculty and the administration. I can tell you that our shared governance model and the relationship between the faculty and administration is one of the best, if not the best, in the UNC system. Through mutual respect, advocacy, active collaboration, and compromise, we can tackle anything! My sincerest thanks to the Chancellor, Provost, and Vice Chancellors, Deans and other administrators for all their efforts in dealing with all of us!

A now a brief preview of the priorities for the new academic year. We have a long agenda today, so my remarks will be brief.

For the past two years, the Faculty Senate and its university standing committees, including the Faculty Manual Steering Committee, has been reviewing, revising, and reorganizing the Faculty Manual, which has been in place for the past 46 years. Last year our theme was “Come Together”, and that is how I would describe the collective work of the administration and the faculty in this endeavor. Out of 132 sections, only 36 remain to be reviewed. We are examining current practices, UNC code, federal and state mandates/statutes, and contemporary academic needs. Faculty and administrators on these committees have collectively become experts in faculty matters relating to the curriculum, academic standards, program development, and tenure and promotion policies.

One of the sections, Appendix C – Personnel Policies and Procedures for the Faculty is on the present BOT agenda, for consideration. The changes to this document outline needs and changes relative to fixed-term faculty appointments, faculty workload guidelines, new state laws pertaining to personnel records, and a change in nomenclature for faculty responsibilities pertaining to research. We are recommending that the category of **research**, as one of the responsibilities of tenured and tenure-track faculty is changed to **scholarship**. This change in nomenclature, if approved, will allow faculty to engage in multiple types of scholarship, from traditional research, to creative activity, engagement, innovation, and outreach. This category and responsibility still is measured by scholarly and peer-reviewed work and publications and will be one of the benchmarks for evaluation relative to tenure and promotion. As we know, scholarship comes in many different forms and this update to our criteria, acknowledges the important contributions of many different forms of scholarship from faculty, especially for those whom the university is making an investment.

So, you will hear of our work in this continued review this year with anticipation that our Faculty Manual will be completed this year and will result in a manual that, while user friendly, will provide updated policy, regulations, and guides for faculty in all academic and welfare issues pertaining to the

faculty. In a tradition that was started two years ago, I will present the BOT Chair will an updated matrix of the progress on ECU's Faculty Manual. I have also made a few other copies for other members as well.

Other priorities and actions this year, involving the faculty and the Faculty Senate include such issues as effects of budget cuts on degree programs, course offerings, faculty retention, and scholarly productivity; program prioritization, distance education training, professional conduct and academic integrity, tenure and promotion policies, and appellate committee procedures.

In addition to these priorities and issues, we have all been engaged in our SACS committees and have worked diligently within our units, colleges, and university as we move toward reaffirmation of accreditation in 2013. I commend all for their commitment and engagement with this work, as we showcase the excellence in our university, especially in our focus on student success. Evidence of this academic excellence, creativity, and commitment to student success and learning can be seen in the multiple forms of assessment, as showcased during the Assessment Day Conference that is being held as we speak. We appreciate the presence of Dr. Belle Wheelman, President of SACS, for this important event.

Throughout the year, I would like to provide the Board of Trustees with examples of the excellence in our faculty and of the many responsibilities that we have in the education of our students. The faculty are the university's best resources! While the students are the heart of the university, the faculty are the soul! In light of these budget times, faculty members are under more scrutiny, in many ways, and often by groups who do not understand what our responsibilities are and how we collectively provide opportunities for our graduates, as they progress through our curriculum. East Carolina University provides many opportunities and directions for study for students with diverse interests and passions. As we all know, just one academic course and interaction with a particular professor may result in a student a changing a major and ultimately a graduate's career. We must look to the faculty as keys to our students' success, whether an undergraduate, Master's, medical or dental student, or Ph.D. candidate.

So, this year, I will be happy to provide you with information about our faculty and I welcome the suggestions for topics or to answer questions that the Board of Trustees may have pertaining to our faculty, Faculty Senate, or our academic programs.

The faculty remain dedicated in our roles and responsibilities to assist in solving the many challenging issues that face us in the next few years and appreciate the support of the BOT for their support and encouragement. Thank you for your commitment to our university.