

Dear Chancellor Moeser,

We would like to introduce ourselves as members of the Progressive Faculty Network, a group of faculty members concerned with issues of social justice and intellectual freedom on the UNC campus. We come from at least twenty departments across Arts and Sciences, Health Affairs, and the professional schools. We are delighted to have the chance to welcome you at this time of significant change both in the character of UNC and in the culture of higher education more generally. We are especially encouraged by the themes you touched upon in your University Day speech.

We would like to arrange a meeting with you to discuss our concerns and issues. In this letter, we summarize these issues to lay the groundwork for this meeting. We are especially concerned with the trend toward increased corporate financing of public education and a related tendency to model the culture of UNC (and that of many other public universities) on the culture of the corporate world. A number of our more specific concerns are directly or indirectly linked to this broad issue. These include:

- the hiring of more low-paid non-tenure track faculty and teaching assistants
- licensing requirements for university vendors
- increases in the costs to students of public higher education
- “downsizing” staff in ways that overwork employees and compromise our educational mission
- pressures to use ever more complex and costly technology in the classroom
- constraints on students’ political expression
- a diminishing commitment to diversity among students and faculty

These issues have engendered little public discussion about the changing nature of public higher education. We would like UNC personnel to become more involved in reflecting upon and discussing the meaning of education, with both other members of the UNC community and those outside the university--state officials, employers, and other citizens. In our view, the university needs to become proactive in debates and policy-making about the profound transformations in local, national, and global culture and economy that we are witnessing.

To this end, we would like to help initiate such productive discussions by meeting with you, discussing our perspectives, and hearing your views on these and related topics. We look forward to the opportunity to initiate what we expect to be an on-going conversation with you and other university leaders and an effort to make UNC a thriving, vital center of cultural, academic, and educational energies.

Sincerely,

The Progressive Faculty Network