



Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees
February 28, 2025
8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Campus Commons, Multipurpose Hall
Greeley, Colorado

MINUTES

Trustees Present: Dick Monfort (chair), Greg Anton, Maia Babbs, Keegan Bradley, Brenda Campos-Spitze, Prateek Dutta, Fritz Fischer, Annette Martinez

Trustees Absent: Steve Jordan (vice chair)

University Staff Present: Andy Feinstein, Jennifer Almquist, Darren Dunn, Tamra English, Kirsty Fleming, Britney Kyle, Dale Pratt, Lori Riley, Allie Steg Haskett

Invited Guests: John Edwards (vice chair, UNC Foundation Board of Directors), Deanna Herbert (assistant vice president of communications), Ethan Mondy (CSC), Audry Stutler (PASC), Kayla Tibbals (Nexus Policy Group, *via Zoom*)

I. Call to Order / Roll / Approval of Agenda

Board Chair Dick Monfort called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m. General Counsel Tamra English noted the roll and verified a quorum.

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Trustee Greg Anton and seconded by Trustee Maia Babbs. The agenda was approved by all board members in attendance.

II. Consent Agenda

Chair Monfort reviewed the consent agenda.

A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Trustee Annette Martinez and seconded by Trustee Babbs. The consent agenda was approved by all board members in attendance.

III. Election of Officers

Chair Monfort noted that the election of officers occurs annually per Board bylaws and asked General Counsel English to give an overview of the process and officer descriptions. Chair Monfort asked for nominations for chair, vice chair, secretary, and treasurer. Trustee Greg Anton nominated Trustee Monfort for chair and Trustee Steve Jordan for vice chair; Trustee Brenda Campos-Spitze nominated General Counsel English for secretary and Vice President Dale Pratt for treasurer. A motion to approve the slate was made by Trustee Babbs and seconded by Trustee Martinez. The board officer slate was approved by all board members in attendance.

IV. Opening Comments and Reports

A. President's Report

President Feinstein delivered the report.

He thanked everyone who attended the previous night's State of the City address and reiterated the importance of the connection between the university and the City of Greeley.

Feinstein shared updates in the higher education landscape and noted that he recently launched a webpage to consolidate information and communications on federal updates that pertained to the UNC community. He noted that his team continues to monitor executive orders and policy proposals closely and will issue communication and guidance as needed. He added that the university community remains focused on the vision and objectives in the strategic plan and on UNC's stated values.

Feinstein noted that Colorado's 2025 legislative was underway and that UNC had hosted the annual legislative preview event in January 2025 and Greeley Day at the Capitol in February 2025. He outlined current budget challenges with the state facing more than a \$1.2B deficit. Feinstein noted that he and other Colorado higher education presidents testified before the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) with a collective ask for an increase of \$61.9M, noting the governor's proposal is currently an increase of \$12.1M. He noted that, in addition to tuition and fees, state funding is an important source of revenue and, because of the state's budget challenges, UNC will continue to be conservative in planning for FY2026. Feinstein stated that UNC lobbyist Kayla Tibbals will provide additional information on the current legislative session in her report.

Feinstein outlined budget topics discussed at the recent UNC Budget Town Halls noting that the UNC community has been effectively working together to be good stewards of resources. He stated that he and his leadership team remain optimistic about UNC's future with stabilizing

enrollment and strong retention and persistence rates. Next steps include reviewing current and future searches, continued advocacy at the state level, and working together with the City of Greeley to enhance the economic vitality of the region.

Feinstein thanked everyone who was involved in the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) re-accreditation process and recognized the contributions of faculty, student, and staff researchers in the process of achieving R2 research status for the university.

Feinstein thanked the campus community for the progress on Phase III of the strategic plan and stated that he will provide additional updates later in the meeting. He outlined the priorities of recruitment and retention of faculty and staff, competitive compensation, and continued investment in employees to include consistent and equitable compensation practices across divisions and employee groups.

Feinstein also noted that, after Cabinet discussion, the decision was made to proceed with the search for the next vice president of Student Affairs and noted finalists will visit campus the week of March 3, 2025.

Feinstein concluded with recognition and congratulations to Trustee Monfort and Trustee Campos-Spitze on their confirmation hearing earlier this month before the Senate Education Committee and thanked them for their service to UNC. He also extended congratulations to Trustee Martinez for being selected as one of this year's UNC honored alumni and thanked her for her service to the university.

B. Faculty Senate Report

Faculty Senate Chair Britney Kyle delivered the report. She outlined a number of topics the Faculty Senate is currently working on to include a four-day final exam schedule that will allow for adjustments due to inclement weather and ensure students who are graduating will not have Friday exams; artificial intelligence (AI) policy statements in the graduate catalog; micro-credentials; general education foundational skills credentials; faculty evaluation processes; faculty workload; clarification of language in the Board Policy Manual and University Regulations, catalog language alignment; and faculty salary increase distribution processes to prioritize equity and address inflation. Kyle thanked the administration for their partnership and collaboration to address the faculty compensation concerns that were discussed at the December 2024 Board meeting. Kyle also noted that the Faculty Senate will host an all-faculty meeting in April where topics will include faculty engagement in student recruitment and retention.

C. Student Government Association Report

Student Trustee Keegan Bradley delivered the report and noted that the Student Government Association (SGA) opened the election process this week. Discussion items this semester included consideration of a fall break, three-year degrees, SGA bylaws descriptions, and SGA fund distribution processes. The SGA also restarted two advisory boards to allow increased opportunities for student involvement on campus.

D. Classified Staff Council Report

Classified Staff Council Chair Ethan Mondy delivered the report. Mondy thanked the Board and administration for their partnership and support. He outlined the Council's participation in the new employee welcome fairs, updates on the annual CSC scholarship awards, and ongoing fundraising efforts to include the annual yard sale. The CSC also continues to co-host events with the Professional Administrative Staff Council.

E. Professional Administrative Staff Council Report

Professional Administrative Staff Council Chair Audry Stutler delivered the report. Stutler thanked the Board and administration for their ongoing support and partnership. She noted that the Council continues the Bigger Bear Campaign, the King Soopers fundraising program, and scholarship programs and has enhanced collaboration across campus through the new employee welcome fair. The Council continues to invite speakers to each meeting and will host a listening session this spring and informative sessions on homebuying and refinancing.

F. University of Northern Colorado Foundation Board Report

Chair Monfort welcomed UNC Foundation Board of Directors Vice Chair John Edwards. Edwards reported that the Board met last week with Trustee Martinez in attendance. He also noted that President Feinstein is a member of the Nominating and Governance Committee and Vice President Pratt is a member of the Audit and Finance and Investment Committees. Vice President Allie Steg Haskett will serve as a member a new Philanthropy Committee, once formed. Edwards reported that the Foundation Board continues to enhance campus involvement and provide student leadership opportunities and has included a student representative on the Foundation Investment Committee. The Board recently met with UNC volleyball and basketball coaches to share philanthropy support strategies and discuss how donor support impacts UNC's athletic programs. He stated the Board recently added three new members to include Kevin Ahern, Collin Richardson, and John Schmidt. He stated that the UNC Foundation has increased assets by 10% and has exceeded \$200M total funds for the first time

in history allowing for increased investments in scholarships. Edwards also announced that the Foundation Board voted to extend Board Chair Mary Ann Littler's term for three years.

Trustee Martinez thanked the Foundation Board for their management of UNC donor funds and their passion and commitment to university advancement.

G. Board Chair's Comments

Chair Monfort congratulated the City of Greeley for a successful State of the City address and noted that the UNC College of Osteopathic Medicine was mentioned as one of the city's highlights at the event. Monfort also commended the faculty and staff for the positive news on retention rates and thanked the university community for finding creative ways to partner with the university Admissions team.

H. Legislative Update

Kayla Tibbals, lobbyist for the University of Northern Colorado, delivered the report. Tibbals provided an overview of the pressing issues at the state legislature including addressing the state's significant budget deficit and replenishing the reserve. She noted that the higher education presidents' unified budget presentation to the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) included an ask for increased funding to address core minimum costs. Tibbals noted that the JBC has voiced their support for higher education and acknowledges the difficult budget environment. Current JBC topics of discussion include tuition caps, financial aid, and covering core minimum costs. Tibbals outlined additional bills currently being discussed that impact the university and thanked Chief of Staff Jennifer Almquist for her responsiveness in the bill analysis process. Tibbals stated she will continue to advocate for UNC and higher education throughout the session.

Chair Monfort thanked Tibbals for her work on behalf of UNC.

V. Reports of Committees of the Board

A. Finance and Audit Committee

Finance and Audit Committee Chair Anton delivered the report and shared an update on the February 27, 2025, Finance and Audit Committee meeting. He reported that the committee heard an update on the FY2024 UNC audit, annual report, and athletics financial report, noting there were no suggested adjustments, resulting in a clean audit opinion. The committee also received updates on the FY2025 second quarter financial report and FY2026 forecast, with a report of \$64.8M current cash reserves and a forecast of \$66.1M cash reserves for June 30, 2025,

and he stated that the university is forecasting a \$3.2M budget shortfall. Anton also noted there will be a preliminary budget update at the May 2025 Finance and Audit Committee meeting and the final budget approval request will be presented at the June 2025 Regular Board meeting.

VI. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

VII. Action Items

A. Curriculum Actions

Provost Fleming presented the action item and outlined the proposed curriculum changes for academic year 2025-2026 and the rationale for the updates, noting the request is to restructure existing programs or repackaging programs as certificates to attract additional students and provide additional access to current students. She stated the changes are presented as an action item to maintain transparency to faculty, staff, and students.

Discussion included ways to continue to be creative in adapting course offerings to current demands. Trustees commended the university's efforts to update the curriculum to align with the shifting higher education landscape.

Chair Monfort sought a motion to approve the proposed curriculum updates as presented. Trustee Martinez made a motion, which was seconded by Trustee Prateek Dutta and approved by all board members in attendance.

B. Permanent Potable Water Easement and Covenant

Vice President Pratt presented the action item and outlined the request to authorize the President or designee to execute the easement and covenant agreement between the university and the City of Greeley as part of the construction of the College of Osteopathic Medicine building site to provide access to city water.

Discussion included clarification of whether this is a new or existing easement. Vice President Pratt confirmed it is a new easement agreement to include access to a new location on the building site.

Chair Monfort sought a motion to approve the proposal to allow execution of the easement and covenant agreement between the university and the City of Greeley. Trustee Anton made a motion, which was seconded by Trustee Babbs and approved by all board members in attendance.

C. Board Policy Manual Updates

i. Section 1-1-201(2) Student and Faculty Trustees

General Counsel English presented the action item and outlined the proposed updates to Section 1-1-201(1) Student and Faculty Trustees of the Board Policy Manual to clarify language.

Chair Monfort sought a motion to approve the proposed updates to the Board Policy Manual as presented. Trustee Martinez made a motion, which was seconded by Trustee Dutta and approved by all board members in attendance.

VIII. Discussion Items

A. Faculty Sabbaticals

Provost Fleming outlined sabbatical leave approval information for the 2025-2026 academic year noting all 24 requests were reviewed at the faculty and dean levels before submission to the provost. She noted that 21 requests were approved for AY2026 and two were delayed until the following year.

B. Curriculum Updates

Provost Fleming presented an overview of recent curriculum updates to include restructuring, deactivation, and addition of degree programs.

Trustee Martinez asked for clarification of the process for curriculum decisions. Provost Fleming summarized actions she has led to help streamline and simplify the curriculum process and improve ease of navigation.

C. Rowing, Not Drifting 2030, Phase III

i. Progress Report

Feinstein provided a progress update and highlights for Phase III of the strategic plan referencing the UNC Strategic Plan Phase III Progress Report, which outlines the progress on key actions and is updated every six months. He noted that the Institutional Planning Group meets monthly to review the progress and confirm the tactics are on track and troubleshoot areas as needed. As an example, Feinstein outlined Key Action 5 and noted the work being done to recruit and retain excellent faculty and staff, including revision of compensation processes to ensure clarity and consistency across employee groups, Board Policy Manual university funding priority guideline updates, and a continued commitment to prioritize compensation within the context of the budget. He also noted the work being done to continue to advance UNC's commitment to welcome and support all members of the university community. Feinstein noted

that, due to the uncertainties about the level of state funding for the next fiscal year, a decision was made to pause all searches to allow for careful review by the Cabinet.

Feinstein also spoke about Key Action 4, noting that there are discussions underway regarding ways to continue addressing themes from the climate survey and to engage students, faculty, and staff in this work. Other highlights include Key Action 1, focusing on strategic enrollment and working with Greeley-Evans School District 6 on a direct admissions program to launch in fall 2026, and Key Action 6, focusing on continued enhancement of curricular offerings, progress on the proposed UNC College of Osteopathic Medicine, and achievement of designation as an R2 research institution. He noted that the strategic plan helps guide decisions and the university is committed to making continued progress on all key actions and tactics.

ii. University Strategic Metrics Report

Feinstein referred to the University Strategic Metrics dashboard and outlined highlights to include fall-to-fall retention data and 4- and 6-year graduation rates, noting UNC is making progress toward the goals set for 2030. He noted the importance of the UNC Tuition Promise, which not only attracts new students but also aids in the retention of current students. Feinstein also outlined progress in support of the university's next campaign following a record fundraising year in FY2024.

Discussion included work on a direct admissions program, efforts to remove application barriers, the pressures of in-state competition, the importance of providing award information early, the benefits of encouraging campus tours for prospective students, and timelines for student communications. Trustees discussed the importance of clearly communicating UNC's identity and making early connections with prospective students. Provost Fleming outlined curricular innovation updates that allow UNC to attract students that may not otherwise explore the university as a destination.

D. University Communication Philosophy

Feinstein began with a brief review of the discussion at the December 2024 meeting about creation of a guide to aid UNC in making principle-based decisions about when the university does or does not communicate. He discussed conversations about the role of university leaders in communicating on social and political issues and tragedies that may directly affect the university community. Feinstein outlined the current philosophy and guidelines used for communication decisions to help leadership be thoughtful and deliberate about when and what the university communicates. He stated that leadership is guided by the consideration of whether and how a message would serve to support members of the university community and

our mission and strategic priorities as well as taking into consideration the range of viewpoints that are represented within the university community.

Feinstein invited Vice President Steg Haskett and Assistant Vice President of Communications Deanna Herbert to provide an overview of the communication philosophy and share some examples. Vice President Steg Haskett noted the importance of employing a framework when making communication decisions. Assistant Vice President Herbert began by providing the university communications flowchart that is shared with campus communication partners. She outlined communication protocol areas to include identification of the issue, level of emergency, the purpose of communication, coordination processes, plans and announcements, audiences, philosophies, communication channels, communication authors, emergency alerts, and overall strategies to align with the purpose of the communication. Herbert then outlined the communication philosophy, which was written after extensive research and includes goals and protocol for communication decisions taking into consideration individual rights, intellectual freedom, differing viewpoints, first amendment rights, and effective use of resources. Herbert noted that the communication guide will continue to evolve.

Discussion included processes for communication coming from campus leaders across the organization, medium and channels for communication, proper use of email for campus-wide communication, freedom of speech resources, personal versus professional statements, metric tracking, relationship of the communication philosophy to current UNC public relations policies and practices, and the importance of making principled and strategic decisions about communications.

E. University Funding Priority Guidelines

Feinstein recounted discussion from the December 2024 Board meeting regarding guidelines for university funding procedures in Board Policy Manual Section 1-1-201(4) Budget Process, which has been framed as a concern that budget priorities may need realignment. He also noted that the Faculty Senate has called for an assessment of the current budget allocations related to the Board Policy Manual guidelines. He noted that the policy was originally intended to be aspirational, but there is no data to suggest that the allocations have been met. Feinstein stated that the administration is committed to having conversations as part of this year's budget planning process to consider how the budget is allocated. He offered options for next steps to include retaining the current Board Policy Manual budget allocation section, updating the Board Policy Manual with new percentages, or developing a set of guiding principles on how best to align resources with strategic priorities. Feinstein stated that the third option is his recommendation for consideration noting that clarifying the principles used to guide decision-

making, paired with tracking and reporting on allocations each year and over time, ensures budget decisions are clearly aligned with UNC's values and priorities and preserves the flexibility of the Board to fulfill their fiduciary duties. He stated that his leadership team has conducted preliminary research on budget allocation approaches used by other institutions and will develop a set of principles and share them with each of UNC's shared governance groups, then return with an update and recommendation for the Board's consideration.

Discussion included the current policy language, the importance of not being tied to a certain percentage amount, clarity in the guideline proposals, the importance of faculty and staff input, prioritizing the mission of the university, strategic planning to attract and retain employees and students, policy guideline impacts on retention and data driven decisions, understanding the context for budget decisions, continued research on other institution practices and UNC percentage comparisons for instruction, and clarification of university goals and actions through budget priorities. Following discussion, trustees indicated their support of Feinstein's recommendation to develop a set of principles to guide the Board's budget allocation decisions.

IX. Executive Session

With no further discussion or business, Chair Monfort asked General Counsel English to make the following announcement to move the Board into executive session:

"Pursuant to §24-6-402(3)(a)(II), C.R.S. the University of Northern Colorado Board of Trustees will go into Executive Session to receive legal advice regarding pending legal issues."

Chair Monfort sought a motion to take the Board into executive session. Trustee Martinez made a motion, which was seconded by Trustee Dutta and approved by all board members in attendance. The Board invited President Feinstein, General Counsel English, and other relevant staff members to join executive session. The Board entered executive session at 10:49 a.m.

Following executive session, General Counsel English provided public record of affirmation regarding the executive session and reconvened the regular meeting at 11:30 a.m.

X. Adjourn

With no further discussion or business, Chair Monfort asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved by all Board members in attendance. The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.