

Aug. 20, 2018

Dear UNC Community Members,

Welcome to Fall 2018! I am humbled and honored to be serving UNC and so very excited for the start of the semester. My first six weeks have been amazing.

The Feinsteins have been trying to take in as much of UNC and Greeley as possible. We have been stocking up on peaches at the Greeley Farmers' Market; enjoying pizza at Roma and Fonta's (cream cheese on pizza?); calling in orders from the table-phones at JB's; sampling Juicy Bits (just Kerry and I); running from hail; and shopping downtown (we love Lincoln Park Emporium.) We also saw three great Little Theatre of the Rockies productions and listened to the Colorado Jazz Orchestra at a Concert Under the Stars. John and Angela Schmidt hosted a wonderful reception to welcome us to UNC and introduce me to 80 fellow Bears in Castle Rock. The Chamber of Commerce invited me to speak at its Chairman's Circle; I joined Greeley's city manager, Roy Otto, for lunch; and had breakfast on Friday with UNC's Foundation Board. And just last week, I had the opportunity to speak at more than 15 student, faculty and staff gatherings—and even helped students move in on Thursday.

I still have considerable listening and learning to do but would like to tell you a little about the conversations I have been having. Of course, many people ask what drew me to UNC, and I start by talking about our students. They come from 58 Colorado counties, 47 states and 34 countries and very diverse backgrounds; 40 percent are the first in their family to go to college; and they are smart, excited and engaged. They are a big reason why I came here — and we will all help them succeed. I was also attracted to UNC's history as an innovator in teaching and learning, and to the thriving and welcoming community around UNC.

As I have shared with many people, I also like a challenge. It is no secret that UNC has been struggling with enrollment and resources, as are many universities across the nation. I knew this when I accepted the position as president, and I believe our university community is up to the challenge.

I do not have a plan yet — I am going to need your help with that — but I have been hearing four themes as I talk with people. First, we need to focus on student success. We have a four-year graduation rate of 31 percent and a six-year rate of 48 percent. This is unacceptable. Second, we must resolve our \$10-million annual structural deficit. Although we have \$40 million in carry-forward reserves, our current spending is unsustainable. As the Fall 2018 enrollment information in this morning's UNC Today [shows](#), it is most likely not feasible to grow our way out of this deficit. Third, in our increasingly competitive marketplace, we have to do a better job of articulating, reinforcing and sharing what makes UNC special. Fourth, we must create a more transparent and collaborative environment for doing all of this work.

I am eager to tackle these challenges. However, this work will take the entire university. It also requires open and honest dialogue. I am encouraged to have met so many students, faculty and staff who are simultaneously optimistic and willing to ask tough questions. This is exactly what we need.

Soon, I will convene a President's Leadership Council to advise me and our Cabinet on matters of broad institutional significance, including the budget. The Council will include our Cabinet members, the four leaders of our campus governance groups (Faculty Senate, Student Senate, PASC, and CSC), a dean, our Chief Information Officer, AVP for Equity and Inclusion, Athletics Director, and News and Public Relations Director. We are also convening a Provost search committee. I have asked Faculty Senate Chair Stan Luger to chair the committee and to work with the Senate to identify four more faculty members for the committee. The committee will also include student, staff, and administrative representation.

In closing, I would like to offer a special welcome to Dr. Theo Kalikow, who is serving as Interim Provost, and Dr. Burkhard Englert, our new College of Natural and Health Sciences Dean. I also want to thank everyone whose hard work made our campus so amazingly beautiful for the return of our students and faculty this fall.

It is going to be a great year! And....Go Bears!

Sincerely,

**Andy Feinstein**  
President

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