



June, 5, 2025

To Members of the UNC-Chapel Hill Board of Trustees:

Your delay in approving pending tenure cases for this academic year caused real and lasting harm to our academic community. The reasons for this delay must be acknowledged and addressed. UNC Chapel Hill's reputation as a top public university rests on the excellence of our faculty. However, we cannot have it both ways: we cannot claim to be a leading research institution while treating tenure as a favor to be granted or withheld at will. Tenure is the outcome of years of peer-reviewed excellence in research, teaching, and service.

We are supposed to be guided by our principles of *Lux Libertas*, but this recent delay has threatened to dim the very light that has defined us as the nation's oldest public university. When transparency and fairness falter, so does our promise to lead. What we are requesting today is reasonable: a transparent and public explanation for the delayed tenure votes, and safeguards to ensure that UNC-Chapel Hill upholds the integrity of the tenure process moving forward.

Repairing the harm caused by the Board of Trustees' delay begins with transparency. After years of political interference, surveillance of faculty, and the loss of external funding, the people of North Carolina deserve a clear explanation for why the Board did not follow its own policies.

As this Board wrote in its [Trustee Policies and Regulations Governing Academic Tenure in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#), (adopted in 1976 and last amended in 2020), "it is the policy of the University to maintain and encourage full freedom, within the law, of inquiry, discourse, teaching, research, and publication and to protect any member of the faculty against influences, from within or without the University, which would restrict the faculty member in the exercise of these freedoms in his or her area of scholarly interest." It is this protection that the award of tenure provides and that the Board wrote in that same policy is necessary "to secure (faculty) freedom and to aid this University in attracting and retaining faculty members of the high quality it seeks."

This recent action is driving pre-tenure faculty to consider other offers. Without a public commitment to upholding the tenure process and abiding by signed contracts, recruiting and retaining top faculty will become even more difficult. This loss would put our undergraduate and graduate students at risk; they depend on a diverse and stable faculty for mentorship, research opportunities, and a consistent educational experience. Failing to retain and recruit top faculty also jeopardizes the promises we make to parents, students, and the State of North Carolina that UNC-CH will honor its [mission](#) to "enhance access to learning and to foster the success and prosperity of each rising generation."

We call on you, in this moment of uncertainty that has demoralized faculty across higher education, to honor your role in shared governance. We ask for a clear explanation of the recent delay in tenure votes and for a reaffirmation of the tenure process that the Board has previously endorsed. Rebuilding the trust that has been eroded will require transparency and consistency. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

The UNC-Chapel Hill AAUP Chapter

Belle Boggs, President, NC AAUP