

Center Presents Research to Legislative Study Commission on the Status of Education at the University of North Carolina

by Ran Coble

*During the 1993 General Assembly, the Legislative Study Commission on the Status of Education at the University of North Carolina was set up to study, among other things, assessment and evaluation of faculty teaching, rewards and incentives for undergraduate teaching, the role evaluations should play in the rewards system, and the use of teaching assistants. On October 25, 1994, Ran Coble, executive director of the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research, was invited to speak before the commission. Coble's remarks summarize the findings of the Center's report *How Do Universities in the UNC System Identify and Reward Excellent Teaching?*, published in February 1993. In his remarks, Coble commends the UNC Board of Governors, President C.D. Spangler Jr., and the General Assembly for their actions taken in the last year and a half, and identifies what remains to be done in increasing evaluation of teaching performance and rewards for excellent teaching. Below is Coble's presentation, edited for space.*

I am here today to share with you the findings of the Center's 429-page study which addresses the question *How Do Universities in the UNC System Identify and Reward Excellent Teaching?*¹ We tried to conduct our study in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect with the University. One way of doing that is to describe the process we used for this study. The Center surveyed every department chair, dean, and vice-chancellor for academic affairs—492 people in all—at every university and

got a 78 percent response rate. We also personally visited every campus. In 1990, we asked for input on what the questions should be, and then sent progress reports on the answers we were getting. And, we surveyed all 50 state legislatures and university governing bodies twice on their policies on teaching, research, and tenure. In February 1992, we sent our draft report for review to all the campuses and to UNC-General Administration. The purpose of the review process is to catch any factual errors, get suggestions for improvement,

and ensure that we have covered all sides of the issues. Finally, we briefed UNC System President C.D. Spangler Jr. and others in June 1992 and gave them the opportunity to comment on our draft findings and recommendations. Our final report was published in February 1993.

In our study, we asked two major questions: (a) How do the universities *evaluate* teaching? and (b) How do they *reward excellent teaching*?

Evaluating Teaching

In terms of evaluating teaching, we looked at the three most popular evaluation methods used in UNC system schools in 1990—(1) student course evaluations; (2) self-evaluations by faculty; and (3) peer review, or evaluations by fellow professors of a faculty member's knowledge, presentation, and organization of classes. We also looked at other evaluation methods used in UNC schools—reviews of a professor's syllabi, assignments, and tests; videotaping of faculty member's classes; exit interviews with senior departmental majors (which are used by UNC-Asheville's History department); and comparisons with national peers (which are used by UNC-Greensboro's Biology department).

Our first finding was that North Carolina's public universities lagged far behind their national counterparts in efforts to evaluate the quality of teaching. Now 99 percent of all departments in the UNC system already conducted student course evaluations, which is typical across the

U.S. But only about 30 percent of all departments in the UNC system used peer review of faculty teaching, compared with 54 percent of all departments in four-year universities across the country. Furthermore, only 45 percent of all UNC system departments required faculty self-evaluation, as compared with 60 percent nationwide. Clearly, there was much room for improvement.

Therefore, we recommended that the Board of Governors require evaluations of teaching performance in all departments and that those evaluations consist of student evaluations of each section of every course, as well as at least one other objective method of evaluation, preferably some form of peer review. Almost everyone in America gets an annual review of their job performance. You as legislators probably get two evaluations—one back home in your regular jobs and then another evaluation from the voters every two years. This principle also should apply to faculty teaching in public universities.

Tenure and Promotion

Let's move to tenure and promotion because more than any other element, tenure and promotion guidelines show how universities and their divisions really view the overall work of faculty members. For example, when we conducted our research, the only regular method of evaluating teaching that was used in more than half the departments—student evaluations—was not systematically used in tenure and promotion



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—RAN COBLE

decisions. That is, student course evaluations were used in *merit pay* decisions but not usually in *tenure* decisions.

At your meeting in September, Dr. Roy Carroll [UNC Vice-President for Planning] gave the rationale for using student course evaluations very eloquently. He said, "If you want an opinion about the quality of the dinner, it's better to ask the diner than the chef." That too is a very good argument for student course evaluations being part of evaluating teaching performance.

Overall, you had a situation a few years ago where the only method of evaluating teaching used in at least half of UNC departments was student course evaluations, and even that one method

"If you want an opinion about the quality of the dinner, it's better to ask the diner than the chef."

— DR. ROY CARROLL,
UNC VICE-PRESIDENT FOR
PLANNING, ON THE RATIONALE FOR
USING STUDENT COURSE EVALUATIONS
IN RATING TEACHING PERFORMANCE

wasn't usually used in tenure and promotion decisions. That led to our second recommendation. *We recommended that the Board of Governors require that the results of teaching evaluations be linked to the three most important decisions in a professor's career—tenure and promotion decisions, course assignments, and hiring.* The

reason for this recommendation was that you can require performance evaluation, but unless something is done with these evaluations, they will not be taken seriously. Our recommendation was designed not only to increase the amount of evaluation of teaching performance at public universities, but also to link these results of teaching evaluations to consequences—to the three key deci-

Table 1.
Members of the Legislative Study Commission on
the Status of Education at the University of North Carolina*

Sen. David Hoyle, <i>Co-Chair</i> (D-Gaston)	Rep. Martin Nesbitt, <i>Co-Chair</i> (D-Buncombe)
Sen. Betsy Cochrane (R-Davie)	Rep. Anne Barnes (D-Orange)
Sen. Howard Lee (D-Orange)	Rep. James Black (D-Mecklenburg)
Sen. Beverly Perdue (D-Craven)	Rep. Toby Fitch (D-Wilson)
Sen. Marvin Ward (D-Forsyth)	Rep. Robert Grady (R-Onslow)
Sen. Dennis Winner (D-Buncombe)	Rep. Pete Oldham (D-Forsyth)

* At the commission's final meeting on Feb. 20, 1995, House Speaker Harold Brubaker (R-Randolph) replaced the five Democratic representatives with four Republicans and one Democrat: Rep. Frances Cummings (R-Robeson), Rep. Richard Morgan (R-Moore), Rep. William Owens Jr. (D-Pasquotank), Rep. Jean Preston (R-Carteret), and Rep. Steve Wood (R-Guilford). Brubaker also promoted Rep. Robert Grady (R-Onslow) to be the new House Co-Chair.



UNC System President C.D. Spangler Jr.

sions in a professor's career: tenure and promotion, course assignments, and hiring.

And while we recognize that UNC system universities have different missions, *we further recommended that teaching ability and effectiveness count for at least one-third of the weight in a faculty member's overall performance evaluation. A normal performance evaluation in a public university includes looking at three areas—teaching, research, and service.* Naturally, the weight given to teaching will vary based on the individual needs and missions of universities and their departments. But the Board of Governors' policy says, and I quote: "[T]eaching or instruction is the primary responsibility of each of the UNC institutions. Thus while neither teaching nor service nor research is the sole measure of a faculty member's competence and contribution at any UNC institution, teaching should be the *first* consideration at all of the UNC institutions."² And if UNC says that teach-

ing is primary among the three missions of teaching, research, and service, then teaching should count for at least a third of the weight in tenure and promotion decisions at all universities.

We also recommended that teaching should count for at least 40 percent of the weight at the Carnegie classified Comprehensive I universities, such as UNC-Wilmington, N.C. A&T, and Western Carolina, and that it should count for as much as 50 percent at the Carnegie classified Comprehensive II and Liberal Arts universities—such as Elizabeth City State, Pembroke State, and UNC-Asheville. This recommendation thus tried to respect the research emphasis of universities like

Carolina, State, and UNC-G, and it tried to tier the weight so that it ascends in importance from one third at the Research universities, to 40 percent at Comprehensive I universities, to 50 percent at Comprehensive II and Liberal Arts Universities like Winston-Salem State in Sen. Marvin Ward's and

If UNC says that teaching is primary among the three missions of teaching, research, and service, then teaching should count for at least a third of the weight in tenure and promotion decisions at all universities.

Our study concluded that the public universities in North Carolina did not give enough emphasis to evaluating teaching performance. Because most institutions didn't do much to evaluate teaching, they had no basis for denying tenure to bad teachers. And perhaps most importantly, they did not systematically reward excellent teaching.

Rep. Pete Oldham's district.

At this point, I think it is important to emphasize that our report contained praise for a variety of efforts already underway. Specifically, the Center praised the efforts of UNC-Wilmington Chancellor James Leutze for his efforts to put undergraduate teaching "first in terms of time, commitment, focus, and value." The Center also had praise for three of the centers for teaching enhancement and faculty development (at Western Carolina Univer-

sity, UNC-Chapel Hill, and Appalachian State University). We were also impressed with specific departments, such as the English Department at UNC-Charlotte in Rep. Jim Black's district.

I think it is also very important to emphasize that this was not a study designed to attack the research function of the university. After all, we are a research organization; we value its role in public life. But every great university system has to be great at both research and teaching, and every public university system has to be great at public service also. However, our study concluded that the public universities in North Carolina did not give enough emphasis to evaluating teaching performance. Because most institutions didn't do much to evaluate teaching, they had no basis for denying tenure to bad teachers. And perhaps most importantly, they did not systematically reward excellent teaching.

Training Teaching Assistants

Now to our findings on the controversial issue of graduate students who are teaching classes. As you're probably aware, teaching assistants have come under a lot of fire for problems they're perceived to have—lack of training and preparedness, inability to speak English well enough for students to understand, and a host of other com-



Karen Tam

Comments on the Center's Testimony

Roy Carroll

*Vice-President for Planning,
UNC General Administration*

“ . . . The Board of Governors undertook its study of *Tenure and Teaching within the University* to ensure that the quality of teaching continues to be a prime consideration in tenure decisions. The recommendations of that study have become policy. They are not options, they are requirements. Thus, now at every UNC campus: 100 percent of the departments conduct student evaluations of teaching of *all* faculty; 100 percent of the departments have adopted formal methods of peer review of faculty performance of *all* faculty; and 100 percent of the departments include, as *one method of peer review*, the direct observation of classroom teaching for all new faculty, non-tenured faculty, and graduate teaching assistants. Moreover, mission statements, tenure policies, and criteria for faculty personnel decisions give explicit recognition of the *primary* importance of teaching as mission and as a criteria for evaluating faculty performance.

“What this means is that the UNC system and its constituent institutions are ahead of their national counterparts. And if there is a need for clarification of these policies, the President and the Board of Governors of the University can do so without a statutory amendment. . . .”

—Comments continue on pages 108–109



plaints. Although not all departments in the UNC system use teaching assistants to teach undergraduate students, there are 2,918 teaching assistants in the 15 public universities that are part of the UNC system.³ UNC-Chapel Hill alone has 1,277 graduate teaching assistants, and 56 percent of the lower division classes are taught by graduate teaching assistants.⁴ The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Universities' Criteria for Accreditation contain standards for graduate teaching assistants. The Accreditation Commission's standard 4.4.4 states "An institution **must** avoid heavy dependence on graduate teaching assistants to conduct classroom instruction."⁵ You might want to ask whether 56 percent qualifies as heavy dependence on teaching assistants.

We found that of the 147 departments in the UNC system that have teaching assistants, only about half—48 percent—reported having any form of training program. Therefore, we recommended that the Board of Governors and the individual universities ensure that no graduate student teaches an undergraduate course without extensive training, monitoring, and evaluation.

Let's turn to our findings on how frequently teaching excellence was rewarded.

Teaching Awards

Although tenure and promotion are perhaps the greatest (and the most lucrative) "awards" bestowed by universities, we also looked in our research at awards given specifically for outstand-

Endowed teaching chairs could help universities in the UNC system attract and build a national reputation for outstanding teaching, just as endowed chairs for research enable universities to attract and keep faculty members with excellent reputations as researchers.

ing teaching. We found that only 9 percent of all departments gave awards for excellent teaching. Only about half—55 percent—of all schools or colleges within universities gave teaching awards. And, where it really counted—at the departmental level—awards were usually only some sort of recognition—not tenure or job security, and not increased pay. Instead, the recipient's name was usually added to a plaque of departmental award winners. At the school or college level—which is several departments together—recognition for good teaching was more likely to be a monetary award. At the university-wide level, teaching awards were almost all monetary, but they were small amounts of money—ranging from about \$500 to an infrequent \$5,000. *But let me repeat the major finding here—only 9 percent of more than 400 departments in 15 universities gave any kind of award for excellent teaching.*

Therefore, we recommended that all departments, schools, and universities in the system consider establishing some method for recognizing excellent teaching. Although teaching awards, in and of themselves, may not cause faculty members to teach well, they

do show that a university or department believes that teaching is important and worthy of reward, and they help establish a culture that's supportive of teaching.

We also recommended that universities seriously consider establishing endowed chairs for teaching. These would be lifetime positions recognizing outstanding achievement in teaching, similar to those recognizing research accomplishments. Currently, there are real differences in endowed chairs in the UNC system, with research chairs held for a much longer duration and with considerably more money attached. Endowed teaching chairs could help universities in the UNC system attract and build a national reputation for outstanding teaching, just as endowed chairs for research enable universities to attract and keep faculty mem-



Karen Tam

Table 2.
State Policies in Evaluation of Teaching Performance

Does your state have a policy of evaluating teaching performance in public colleges and universities?

	yes	no
Alabama	■	
Alaska did not respond to this survey.		
Arizona	■	
Arkansas	■	
California did not respond to this survey.		
Colorado		■
Connecticut		■
Delaware		■
Florida	■	
Georgia	■	
Hawaii did not respond to this survey.		
Idaho	■	
Illinois did not respond to this question.		
Indiana		■
Iowa	■	
Kansas	■	
Kentucky		■
Louisiana		■
Maine		■
Maryland did not respond to this survey.		
Massachusetts		■
Michigan		■
Minnesota		■
Mississippi did not respond to this question.		
Missouri		■
Montana		■
Nebraska		■
Nevada		■
New Hampshire		■
New Jersey		■
New Mexico		■
New York		■
North Carolina	■	
North Dakota	■	
Ohio		■
Oklahoma		■
Oregon	■	
Pennsylvania		■
Rhode Island		■
South Carolina		■
South Dakota did not respond to this survey.		
Tennessee did not respond to this survey.		
Texas		■
Utah		■
Vermont		■
Virginia		■
Washington		■
West Virginia	■	
Wisconsin	■	
Wyoming		■
TOTAL	13	29

Source: N.C. Center for Public Policy Research survey.

Table 3. Which Faculty Members Are Required to Have Their Teaching Performance Evaluated?

State	all faculty	new faculty	nontenured faculty	tenured faculty	TA's
Alabama	■				
Arizona	■				
Arkansas	■				
Florida	■				
Georgia	■				
Idaho	■				
Iowa	■				
Kansas	■				
Mississippi	■				
New York	■				■
North Carolina		■	■	■*	■
North Dakota			■	■	
Oregon	■				
West Virginia	■				
Wisconsin	■				■
TOTAL	13	1	2	2	3

* See the Center's testimony, p. 111, on this point.

Source: N.C. Center for Public Policy Research survey.

Table 4. Uses of Faculty Evaluations, by State

Are the results of evaluations used as a factor in determining . . .

State	tenure decisions?	promotion decisions?	salary decisions?	merit pay decisions?	teaching awards?
Arizona	■	■	■	■	■
Arkansas		■	■	■	
Florida	■	■	■	■	■
Idaho	■	■	■	■	■
Iowa	■	■	■	■	■
Kansas	■	■	■	■	■
Mississippi	■	■	■	■	
New York	■	■	■	■	■
North Carolina*	?	?	■	?	■
North Dakota	■	■	■	■	■
Oregon	■	■			■
West Virginia	■	■			
Wisconsin	■	■	■	■	■
TOTAL	11	12	11	10	10

* See the Center's testimony, pp. 111 and 113, on this point.

Source: N.C. Center for Public Policy Research survey.

bers with excellent reputations as researchers. *Both* are needed for a great university system.

Progress and Praise: What's Been Accomplished by the UNC Board of Governors and the Legislature

Since the Center's report on teaching was released in February 1993, much progress has been made on re-emphasizing the role of teaching in public universities. I want to give credit and praise to UNC President C.D. Spangler Jr., Vice-President for Planning Roy Carroll, the UNC Board of Governors, and you as legislators.

Over the last year and a half, President Spangler and Board of Governors have adopted new policies on teaching and tenure which accomplished these six things:

- 1) The Chancellors were ordered to review mission statements, tenure policies, and the criteria for making faculty personnel decisions and revise them to explicitly recognize "the primary importance of teaching."
- 2) The Chancellors also were asked to review procedures for the evaluation of faculty performance to ensure (a) that student evaluations and formal methods of peer review are included in teaching evaluation procedures; (b) that student evaluations are conducted at least one semester

each year; and (c) that peer review of faculty includes direct observation of the classroom teaching of new and non-tenured faculty and graduate teaching assistants.

- 3) The Chancellors of institutions without teaching awards were asked to establish awards at the institution-wide or college/school level.
- 4) With the legislature's help, the Board of Governors created annual systemwide teaching awards.
- 5) The Board of Governors said it expected all institutions without special teaching centers to create such centers as soon as possible.
- 6) And, in September this year, President Spangler sent out an excellent set of guidelines for training, monitoring, and evaluation of graduate teaching assistants who are assigned to teach undergraduate classes. Awards are also to be given for outstanding teaching by graduate students, and their proficiency in English is to be verified.⁶

Most of these new policies went into effect for this 1994-95 academic year. I want to publicly praise and recognize the University for the progress it has made at increasing evaluation of teaching performance, increasing teaching awards, increasing the number of teaching centers, and instituting



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better training, monitoring, and evaluation of graduate teaching assistants who are teaching undergraduates. So in large part today, I have come to praise Caesar, not to bury him.

The other progress that has been made has come from you, the members of the N.C. General Assembly, and you deserve equal praise for your efforts. As you know, during the 1993 session, this legislative commission was set up in the budget bill to study, among other things, the assess-

ment and evaluation of faculty teaching, rewards and incentives for undergraduate teaching, the role evaluations should play in the rewards system, and the use of teaching assistants.⁷ (Table 1 on p. 100 lists the members of the Legislative Study Commission on the Status of Education at the University of North Carolina.)

In that same budget bill, the legislature required the Board of Governors to allocate funds from the Reserve for University Operations to the

Comments on the Center's Testimony

(continued from page 103)

Joseph E. Johnson

Professor at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro

“ I applaud the Center's interest in the quality of the student's experience at the universities.

“While I support the intent, I have major concerns with your proposals for legislation. I do not believe that it is desirable to enact statutory provisions with regard to the evaluation of teaching. Encouraging such specificity of legislative action invites meddling in all areas of academic life and in my opinion will result in efforts to control the content of the classroom and campus activities in teaching and in research. . . .

“Therefore, while I support the renewed focus on the quality of teaching and the primacy of teaching in our institutions, I believe that it is the wiser course to direct the Board of Governors to assure that teaching is the primary function at each of our institutions, and that the Board of Governors shall assure that student and peer evaluations for each faculty member are conducted annually and that such evaluations are used in conjunction with other appropriate information as the basis for personnel decisions.

“Consistent with the objective of emphasizing teaching as primary, I believe that it is desirable to direct the Board of Governors to establish policies requiring that peer review findings regarding teaching be given determinative weight in personnel decisions at each institution while allowing for exceptions for unique cases. . . .

“During my professional life, research has been the basis for the reward system and it continues to be. While I hear comments about the renewal of teaching focus, they are largely along the lines of what we have to do politically. In these times of tight budgets and enrollment pressures, administrators in particular see the issue as one of teaching loads—number of classes and hours—rather than the quality of teaching. . . .

“These thoughts may be provocative, perhaps incendiary and even helpful. On the other hand, I might have better spent my time working on my teaching.”



Comments on the Center's Testimony

(continued from page 108)

Judith M. Stillion

Interim Vice-Chancellor of Academic Affairs at Western Carolina University

“ [T]here are a few misperceptions in this testimony. . . . The first seems to be a confusion concerning peer review of teaching and an annual review of job performance. . . . At every college I have been associated with (six in all), faculty are evaluated annually as part of an Annual Faculty Evaluation (AFE) process. This involves a review of their teaching, research and service commitments for the year. Student evaluations are almost always a part of such reviews and most departments involve peer committees in the process, although some delegate the evaluation process solely to department heads, who are also peers. The results of the Annual Faculty Evaluation process are used for making merit pay and reappointment recommendations, form the foundation for developmental plans for the ensuing year, and lend their cumulative weight to decisions involving tenure and promotion. . . .

“The point made . . . regarding weighting teaching differently for different campuses is interesting. However, it assumes that all professors on any given campus have exactly the same assignments and skills. Professors are not cookie cutters. . . . To lay any kind of formula on constituent institutions would be to interfere with the most basic of necessary conditions for excellence: the ability of individual department heads to assign professional loads and hold faculty accountable for fulfilling them with distinction.

“In addition, different types of teaching require different types of evaluation. . . . Attempting to force a formula of any kind onto an institution that had very different styles of teaching would not be useful. . . . While I applaud the goal of your presentation, I believe that setting arbitrary percentages for teaching by type of school seriously underestimates the complexity of the multiple types of teaching and the variable professional loads necessary in every university. . . .

“One other area of concern that I have with your comments relates to the call for action represented in the proposed legislation. . . . This form of redundant micro-management would not seem to serve the interests of the taxpayers.

“Finally, let me commend you and your organization for the work you are doing. Certainly, your report has been influential in helping to increase the visibility of teaching within the University of North Carolina, a position that we loudly applaud. Your suggestion of endowed chairs for excellence in teaching is a positive step and your understanding that teaching should explicitly count toward tenure and promotion helps to highlight its importance. While we may differ on some of the points you make, we certainly don't differ on the overall goal: to increase the quality of education for all North Carolinians attending our state's universities.”



Overwhelmingly, if a state requires evaluation of teaching performance, it is required of all faculty members—including those with tenure.

Distinguished Professors Endowment Trust Fund—set up under Sen. Dennis Winner's leadership—for the establishment of endowed chairs that recognize excellence in undergraduate teaching.⁸ You might want to ask the university for a progress report on how they're coming on creating endowed teaching chairs. And, in a third provision in the budget bill, the legislature required the Board of Governors to allocate \$250,000 from overhead receipts each year to establish faculty awards for excellent teaching.⁹

As a result, the Board of Governors will divide that \$250,000 into two equal pots—one for their new systemwide teaching awards, and one for teaching awards at each institution. The *systemwide award* winners will receive \$7,500, and there will be one recipient from each of the 16 institutions. The *institutional award* winners will receive from \$250 to \$2,500. The seven institutions that did not already have teaching awards or had more limited resources got a total of \$9,500 each (Elizabeth City State, Fayetteville State, N.C. Central, Pembroke State, UNC-Asheville, Winston-Salem State, and the School of the Arts). The other nine institutions got a total of \$6,500 each to allocate. Both of these new award programs go into effect for the first time this academic year,¹⁰ and your actions in the budget bill made this possible.

New Research on Actions by Other States

Let's turn now to what is happening in other states. Recently, we went back to all 50 states and sent a follow-up survey to state higher education governing boards or coordinating offices for higher education to determine state policies on evaluating and rewarding teaching performance in public colleges and universities. Forty-three states responded to the survey (88 percent). *Thirteen states indicated that they now have policies for evaluating teaching performance, compared to only two states a few*

years ago. (See Table 2 on p. 105.) It was usually the system governing boards or the institutions themselves that initiated this requirement that teaching performance be evaluated. By contrast, in Arkansas, the governor and state legislature required the evaluation of teaching performance through a state statute that requires annual faculty evaluations. And, Florida's state legislature also crafted a state law that requires faculty evaluation.¹¹ *Overwhelmingly, if a state requires evaluation of teaching performance, it is required of all faculty members—including those with tenure (13 states)—and most evaluations are required at least once a year.* (See Table 3 on p. 106.) In two states, poor reviews can be used to challenge a professor's tenured status. The results of faculty evaluation are used for a variety of purposes, including tenure, promotion, salary, and merit pay decisions, as well as for determining recipients of teaching awards. (See Table 4 on p. 106.)

Only seven states indicated that their state has a system of rewards for teaching performance. Florida is the clear leader in terms of the amount of money available for teaching awards annually, with \$5,300,000 in state appropriations alone. Three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) is appropriated annually for one-time awards of \$2,000 that recognize excellent undergraduate teaching and advising. Five million dollars (\$5,000,000) is also appropriated annually for a Teaching Incentive Program. The Florida program provides \$5,000 salary awards to faculty in recognition of excellent, productive teaching at the undergraduate level, and about 800 awards are given each year.

What Remains To Be Done

What remains to be done to ensure that teaching performance is properly evaluated and that excellent teaching is recognized and rewarded? I would suggest that this study commission recommend four needed actions to the 1995 General Assembly:

1 Make the Appropriation for Teaching Awards and Endowed Chairs a More Permanent Commitment in the State Budget

The first action needed is to make the appropriation for teaching awards and endowed chairs a more permanent commitment in the budget. Because the provisions for \$250,000 for teaching awards and the use of the reserve for endowed chairs were in last year's budget bill, they will expire in June 1995 unless renewed in some way,

either in the 1995 budget bill or in separate legislation.

University officials told us that they have submitted a request to renew the \$250,000 for teaching awards and an expansion request of \$2 million for the Distinguished Professors Endowment Trust Fund. On the Trust Fund request, however, there is no mention of earmarking money for teaching chairs, and we think that should be added. The University's requests are included as part of Priorities #3 and #9 in the Board of Governors' budget.¹² We strongly endorse the parts of these requests that would go toward teaching awards and endowed chairs for teaching.

2 Reinforce the University's Policy on Teaching Evaluation by Putting It in State Statutes

The second action you should take is to put the policies enacted by the Board of Governors into the state statutes in order to affirm and reinforce the seriousness of this matter with both the public and the faculty within the institutions. Several states have done this. For example, the Arkansas legislature enacted a statute that says:

"Each state-supported college and university shall conduct a rigorous, consistently applied, annual review of the performance of all full-time faculty members. This review shall include assessments by peers, students, and administrators and shall be utilized to insure a consistently high level of performance and serve in conjunction with other appropriate information as a basis for decisions on promotion, salary in-

A recent national study of more than 4,000 faculty members across the country by James Fairweather, a researcher at Penn State, concluded that teaching simply is not valued in most universities. He found that 1) the greater the time spent on research, the higher the compensation; 2) the more time spent on teaching, the lower the compensation; and 3) the more hours in class per week, the lower the pay.

creases, and job retention. This review shall not be used to demote a tenured faculty member to a nontenured status."¹³

We recommend that the Board of Governors' current administrative policy be enacted into law. Such a statute would: first, restate the Board of Governors' position that teaching is the primary mission of the university system; second, restate the requirement that both student evaluations and peer reviews of teaching would be conducted at least once a year; third, make it clear that these evaluations would apply to *all* faculty—new, nontenured and tenured faculty; and fourth, stipulate that direct observation of classroom teaching would be part of the peer review for new and non-tenured faculty and graduate teaching assistants.

3 Clarify State Policy That Evaluation of Teaching Performance Includes Evaluating Tenured Faculty

The third action we recommend relates to clarifying state policy in one respect. The area that needs clarification is whether the current Board of Governors' policy requiring student and peer evaluation of teaching performance applies to *tenured* faculty, as well as new faculty, non-tenured faculty, and graduate teaching assistants. The reason this is important is that more than 50 percent of the faculty in the UNC system already have tenure. Dr. Carroll has assured us that the Board's intent was to require evaluation of teaching performance of *all* faculty, including those with tenure, and we applaud him for that. Because we misunderstand the policy language passed by the Board, we wondered if others might too. So in the last few days, we called the offices of the Vice Chancellors for Academic Affairs on 12 campuses to see what their understanding was. We found that six campuses understood the evaluation policy correctly to apply to tenured faculty; five, however, said it did not apply to tenured faculty, and one said it didn't apply to tenured faculty but they were going to implement it that way anyway.¹⁴ With that in mind, I think the Board could use your help in reinforcing in the statutes that evaluation of teaching performance applies to all faculty. That would clear up this misunderstanding.

4 Plug Two Loopholes: Ensure That Teaching Is Given Adequate Weight, and Link Evaluation To Tenure, Course Assignments, and Hiring Decisions

When the Fiscal Research Division was set up in 1971, I was one of the first researchers to work

Table 5. Proposed Changes in the Statutes on Higher Education

Most statutes on higher education are located in Chapter 116 of the North Carolina General Statutes. Article 1, Part 1 contains general provisions. The only statute regarding the purpose of the University of North Carolina system is the following:

§116-1. *Purpose*

In order to foster the development of a well-planned and coordinated system of higher education, to improve the quality of education, to extend its benefits and to encourage an economical use of the State's resources, the University of North Carolina is hereby redefined in accordance with the provisions of this Article.

The N.C. Center for Public Policy Research proposes that the following statute be enacted to supplement § 116-1 above.

Section 1. Chapter 116 of the N.C. General Statutes would be amended by adding new sections to read as follows:

THIS SECTION WOULD ENACT CURRENT BOARD OF GOVERNORS' POLICY:

§116-11.3 *Missions of the University System*

(a) The primary missions of the University of North Carolina are teaching, research, and public service. Of these, teaching should be the first consideration at all of the UNC constituent institutions. Each institution must give explicit recognition to the primary importance of teaching in its mission statements, tenure policies, and criteria for making faculty personnel decisions.

(b) Each institution shall conduct a rigorous, consistently applied, annual evaluation of all full-time faculty members, including new, nontenured, and tenured faculty and graduate students who are teaching classes. This evaluation shall include evaluations by students at least one semester each year and evaluation by peer members of the faculty each year. Direct observation of classroom teaching shall be part of peer evaluation of teaching performance for new and nontenured faculty and for graduate students teaching classes.

THIS SECTION WOULD GO BEYOND CURRENT BOARD OF GOVERNORS' POLICY (MODELED AFTER ARKANSAS LAW):

§116-11.4 *Evaluations of Teaching Mission: Uses of Teaching Evaluations and Weight To Be Given in Overall Performance*

(a) All evaluations of teaching performance shall be utilized to ensure a consistently high level of performance and serve in conjunction with other appropriate information as a basis for decisions on tenure and promotion, salary increases, course assignments, hiring, and job retention.

(b) Each faculty member's performance should be evaluated in terms of furthering the University's missions of teaching, research, and public service. In such reviews, the evaluations of a faculty member's teaching performance shall count at least 33 percent of the weight in overall performance. The Board of Governors is authorized to adopt administrative regulations that require teaching to carry greater weight at various constituent institutions.

for you in those early years. One of the best lessons I ever got about public policy was from a representative from Asheville who told me to always write the best law you could for 90 percent of the situations and then try to anticipate the loopholes that the other 10 percent would use to try to get around the law.

There are two loopholes in the current Board of Governors' policy on evaluating teaching performance. The main loophole is that the Board of Governors' policy doesn't give guidance on the *weight* to be given to teaching in relation to the other two university missions—research and public service. And, the current policy also does not clearly require that these new evaluations of teaching performance are to be used in those three key decisions on tenure, course assignments, and hiring.

If you'll think about what's likely to happen in tenure and other decisions for the next few years, the university committees are going to be looking at file folders or portfolios full of information about a faculty member up for tenure or promotion or merit pay. In that folder are going to be a resume, all of their course syllabi, student evaluations, all of their research publications, and copies of any peer evaluations available. But for the next several years, there may be only one or two peer evaluations available, but there will be years worth of research publications. How is teaching performance going to fare in that scenario? This is one reason that we've recommended that teaching

count for at least a third in all tenure decisions. Unless a weight is specified, there is a way for department chairs to beat this new process, and the Board of Governors has come too far to let that happen.

The second loophole you need to plug is to make it clear that evaluations of teaching performance are to be used in tenure and promotion decisions, course assignments, and hiring. The Board policy is very clear on requiring that student course evaluations and peer review are to be conducted as part of an overall program of evaluating faculty performance. And, though I think the Board is also clear in its intent to bring the student and peer evaluations into tenure decisions, we're not sure the policy language sent out to the constituent institutions actually says that. And, it is definitely silent on the need for teaching evaluations to be used in decisions on course assignments and hiring.

I have been a student in a system that encouraged evaluation of faculty performance but only as new information given to faculty—not as the primary tool for making policy decisions. You do not just want to create more paper that's not used. As a result of the Board of Governors' action, new evaluations of teaching performance will be on paper. What you want to ensure is that those evaluations of teaching performance are both used in key decisions and given adequate weight to fulfill the university's primary mission. And then you want the outstanding teachers to benefit from

THIS SECTION WOULD MAKE MORE PERMANENT THE PROGRAMS FOR TEACHING AWARDS AND ENDOWED CHAIRS FOR TEACHING:

§116-11.5 *Teaching Awards and Endowed Chairs for Teaching*

(a) In order to affirm that teaching is the primary mission at all constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina, each institution is to establish and administer awards to recognize and reward excellence in teaching performance. In addition, the Board of Governors is to establish and administer a systemwide program of teaching awards.

(b) In order to recognize and reward excellence in teaching and to foster a culture where teaching is the primary mission of the University of North Carolina, there is hereby established a program of Endowed Chairs for Excellence in Teaching.

Section 2. There is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the University of North Carolina the sum of one million, two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$1,250,000) for each year of the 1995-97 biennium for making teaching awards and for establishing Endowed Chairs for Excellence in Teaching.



Karen Tam

your appropriations for teaching awards and endowed chairs.

The draft bill we propose would statutorily enact current Board policy on evaluation of teaching performance, clear up the murky area of whether tenured faculty are to be evaluated, plug those two loopholes I described, and make permanent the legislature's commitment to programs for teaching awards and endowed chairs for teaching. (See Table 5 on p. 112–113.) The draft statute is modeled after the Arkansas law I mentioned earlier, but adapted to fit the Board of Governors' current policy in North Carolina.

At your last meeting, one of your co-chairs, Rep. Martin Nesbitt, made a very astute observation. He said the only two ways the General Assembly affects policy are with money and the statutes, and that the legislature already had given the university system flexible budgeting, as well as all salary money in a block grant. If I remember correctly, he concluded, "We ate our carrot."

At the same meeting, one of your consultants, Peter Ewell, talked about the wisdom of setting aside some money for achieving legislative priorities. Your staff reinforced this by suggesting that you focus on what they called "change money" to help move forward on the legislature's priorities. Taking all this together, I think you and the University are now in agreement that teaching is the

primary mission of all 16 institutions, but there is nothing in the statutes that says that. In fact, if you'll look at Chapter 116 of the North Carolina General Statutes [the chapter dealing with the University of North Carolina], there is little in the statutes at all on the University's missions.

The Board of Governors has put a good new evaluation system into place. As with all state

Notwithstanding the improvements that may have taken place in the quality of undergraduate teaching in this country, the public has finally come to believe quite strongly that our institutions—particularly our leading universities—are not making the education of students a top priority.

— DEREK BOK
FORMER PRESIDENT,
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

agencies and employees, you want to ensure that performance in relation to the primary mission is evaluated. And, you've begun a pot of "change money"—the money for teaching awards and endowed chairs for teaching. The Center recommends that you reinforce the Board of Governors' policy on evaluating teaching performance by putting it into the statutes, plug the two loopholes we mentioned, and then link the policy of evaluating teaching with the carrot of increased appropriations for teaching awards and endowed chairs for teaching excellence. That would be a fine legacy for this study commission to leave.

A final word about the environment for higher education right now and the importance of what

this study commission produces, because I think the public is very concerned about higher education. Both the public and the faculty seem to feel that the pendulum has swung too far toward incentives and rewards for research. If you talk to university students and their parents, you'll find concern about these issues runs very deep. Louis Harris, the national pollster, released a poll in 1993 that found that the percentage of the public that had great confidence in the people running institutions of higher education had dropped to an all-time low of 23 percent—a 59 percent decrease from the level in 1966. You see evidence of that in North Carolina in the 1993 vote on the bond package for the University system that passed by only

52 percent and which failed in 57 counties—including the home counties of Senators David Hoyle, Betsy Cochrane, and Beverly Perdue, and Representatives Toby Fitch and Robert Grady.

You also might have read what the *Chronicle of Higher Education* found, as part of its Survey of Faculty Attitudes, when it asked faculty, "Do your interests lie primarily in teaching or research?" Among faculty in the United States, 37 percent indicated that their primary interest was in research, but 63 percent indicated that their primary interest was in teaching. So, almost two-thirds of the faculty *want* the priorities to lie with teaching.

Yet a recent national study of more than 4,000 faculty members across the country by James Fairweather, a researcher at Penn State, concluded that teaching simply is not valued in most universities. He found that 1) the greater the time spent on research, the higher the compensation; 2) the more time spent on teaching, the lower the compensation; and 3) the more hours in class per week, the lower the pay.

Former President of



Karen Tam

Legislative Panel Endorses Center's Proposals on Evaluating and Rewarding Teaching in the UNC System

The Legislative Study Commission on the Status of Education at the University of North Carolina approved its findings and recommendations to the 1995 N.C. General Assembly in a final report adopted on Feb. 20, 1995. That report included five recommendations on Teaching and Learning that would carry out proposals in the North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research's report, *How Do Universities in the UNC System Identify and Reward Excellent Teaching?* Those recommendations are:

- 1a. The General Assembly should enact AN ACT TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE LEGISLATIVE STUDY COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA TO CODIFY THE UNIVERSITY'S MISSION, WHICH EMPHASIZES THE PRIMARY IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING.
- 1b. The General Assembly should enact legislation that would appropriate sufficient funds annually to establish a system of teaching awards to encourage good teaching throughout the University system.
- 1c. The General Assembly should enact legislation in support of the Board of Governors' policy that directs that teaching be given primary consideration in making faculty personnel decisions regarding tenure, hiring, and promotional decisions for those positions with teaching as the primary responsibility, and to assure that the personnel policies reflect the Board's directions.
- 1d. The Board of Governors should review its policies on peer evaluations of teaching performance to ensure that they apply to all teaching faculty, including those who are tenured.
2. The Board of Governors is encouraged to review the procedures used to screen and employ teaching assistants to ensure their ability to communicate effectively in the classroom. As part of this review, the Board may wish to consider the following issues:
 - a. Whether all proposed teaching assistants and all new faculty should be required to attend teaching workshops before they teach their first classes.
 - b. Whether there is a need to strengthen the role of faculty who supervise teaching assistants.
 - c. Whether all faculty should attend periodic teacher training sessions.
 - d. Whether teaching faculty should be required to have their teaching skills reviewed by established Centers for Teaching and Learning.
 - e. Whether the English proficiency of all persons offering classroom instruction should be assessed prior to classroom contact with students.
 - f. Whether undergraduate majors should take comprehensive exams to assess the degree of learning in the teaching/learning equation.
 - g. If the use of contextual course evaluations would capture the unique aspects of differing disciplines and courses.

Harvard University Derek Bok summed this up by saying:

"[R]ather than just react [to attacks on universities], we need to understand more deeply what is bothering the public. . . . Notwithstanding the improvements that may have taken place in the quality of undergraduate teaching in this country, the public has finally come to believe quite strongly that our institutions—particularly our leading universities—are not making the education of students a top priority. This is especially true for our undergraduates within the arts and sciences. . . . There are many everyday signs that betray these priorities. When we go to recruit a star professor, the bargaining chip is always a reduced teaching load—never a reduced research load. . . . They [the public] are often wrong about the facts—but they are right about our priorities, and they do not like what they see."¹⁵

The point that Bok makes about language is reinforced when you hear people on campuses in North Carolina speak of teaching *loads* and research *opportunities*. When we published our study, we dedicated it to some of our favorite teachers. Thanks to one of those teachers, I developed a lifelong love of history and literature. Therefore, I want to close with a quotation from one of this nation's most enduring autobiographies—*The Education of Henry Adams*. Adams was the grandson of President John Quincy Adams and great-grandson of President John Adams. He was also a history professor and the following passage underscores the importance of teaching and its long-lasting impact. Adams wrote:

"A parent gives life, but as parent gives no more.

A murderer takes life, but his deed stops there. A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops."¹⁶

We at the Center for Public Policy Research commend the members of this commission for what you have already done and what you are doing, we commend the University for what it has done, and we challenge you both to keep the momentum going. You will never know where your influence stops. ☐☐

FOOTNOTES

¹ Kim Kebschull Otten, *How Do Universities in the UNC System Identify and Reward Excellent Teaching?*, North Caro-

lina Center for Public Policy Research, 1993.

² The University of North Carolina Office of the President, Administrative Memorandum #338, UNC Board of Governors, "Tenure and Teaching in the University of North Carolina," Sept. 28, 1993, p. 1 (emphasis in the original).

³ The N.C. School of the Arts was not surveyed.

⁴ UNC Office of Institutional Research, *Who Teaches Undergraduates? University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Fall 1991*, released June 16, 1992, attachment II (The Percentage of Lower Division and Upper Division Undergraduate Courses/Sections Taught by Full Professors, Tenure Track Faculty and Teaching Assistants as the Primary Instructor).

⁵ Commission on Colleges, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Criterion for Accreditation 4.4.4 (emphasis in the original).

⁶ The University of North Carolina Office of the President, Administrative Memorandum #349, "Training, Monitoring, and Evaluation of Graduate Teaching Assistants," Sept. 22, 1994.

⁷ Chapter 321 of the 1993 Session Laws, Senate Bill 27, § 101.5, pp. 78–80.

⁸ Chapter 321 of the 1993 Session Laws, Senate Bill 27, § 89(d), p. 74.

⁹ Chapter 321 of the 1993 Session Laws, Senate Bill 27, § 89(c), p. 74.

¹⁰ The University of North Carolina Office of the President, Administrative Memorandum #343, "University Teaching Awards", April 29, 1994.

¹¹ Fla. Stat. Ch. 240.245 (1991).

¹² The University of North Carolina Board of Governors, 1995–97 Budget Request, Schedule of Priorities, pp. 124, 159, and 197–99.

¹³ Ark. Code Ann. § 6-61-219 (Michie Supp. 1993).

¹⁴ The actual language in Administrative Memorandum #338, see note 1, reads, "That the Board of Governors, through the President of the University, instruct the Chancellors of each constituent institution to do the following: . . . (c) Review procedures for the evaluation of faculty performance to ensure (1) that student evaluations and formal methods of peer review are included in teaching evaluation procedures, (2) that student evaluations are conducted at regular intervals (at least one semester each year) and on an ongoing basis, (3) that *peer review* of faculty includes *direct observation* of the classroom teaching of *new and nontenured faculty* and of graduate teaching assistants . . ." (emphasis added).

¹⁵ Derek Bok, "Reclaiming the Public Trust," *Change*, American Association of Higher Education, July/August 1992, pp. 14–18.

¹⁶ Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams*, 1918, p. 300 (Houghton Mifflin Company: Boston, 1961 edition). Adams probably underestimated the longlasting impacts of parents and murderers in his effort to emphasize the impact of teachers.

**"A teacher affects eternity;
he can never tell where his
influence stops."**

— HENRY ADAMS
FROM *THE EDUCATION OF HENRY ADAMS*
