

NATIONAL PRESS CLUB LUNCHEON WITH CAROL FOLT

SUBJECT: THE CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL, CAROL L. FOLT, WILL DISCUSS THE IMPORTANCE OF PRESERVING ACCESSIBILITY TO AN AFFORDABLE COLLEGE DEGREE

MODERATOR: THOMAS BURR, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

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THOMAS BURR: (Sounds gavel.) Welcome to the National Press Club. My name is Thomas Burr. I'm the Washington correspondent for the *Salt Lake Tribune* and Vice-President of the National Press Club. Our guest today is Carol Folt, Chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Before we get to the Chancellor, I would like to introduce our distinguished head table. This group includes Press Club members and guests of our speaker. I would ask that each of you stand briefly while your name is announced. From the audience's right, Tim McDonough, Vice-President of Communications and Marketing at the American Council on Education. Peggy Orchowski, Congressional Correspondent for *Hispanic Outlook Magazine*. Eugene Alpert, Senior Vice-President Emeritus of the Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars. Joel Curran, Vice-Chancellor of Communications and Public Affairs at UNC Chapel Hill and a guest of our speaker. Michelle Givens, Publisher at Education Week. Mary Cooper, former UNC Chapel Hill Student Body President and a guest of our speaker. Donna Leinwand-Lege, breaking news editor for USA Today and past President of the National Press Club, current Vice-Chair of the Speakers Committee, and a graduate of UNC Chapel Hill.

Skipping over our speaker for a moment, Sam Fulwood, Senior Fellow. [laughter] We'll get to her, don't worry. Sam Fulwood, Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress and a guest of our speaker, and also a graduate of UNC Chapel Hill. Alan Holmes, Senior Reporter at the Center for Public Integrity and a graduate of UNC Chapel

Hill. Carol Sergeant, Director of Scholarly Publications at Georgetown University and a previous visiting scholar at UNC Chapel Hill. Carol Switzer, Editor in Chief of Business Officer at NACU. Dakarai Aarons, Director of Strategic Communications at the Data Quality Campaign. Thank you.

[applause]

I also want to welcome our CSPAN and Public Radio audiences. And I want to remind you that you can follow the action on Twitter using the hashtag NPCLunch.

As I previously mentioned, our guest today is Carol Folt, Chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The first woman to hold that post, Folt won the appointment in 2013 after a nationwide search, following the resignation of the former Chancellor amid a scandal that has put the school's accreditation and NCAA standing at risk. An investigation found that about 3,000 students, many athletes, took sham classes over two decades and received grades not based on academic performance.

In response, Folt instituted some 70 reforms. Nonetheless, the accrediting body and the NCAA have initiated inquiries. Sanctions on the athletic program are not out of the question. And UNC, which routinely ranks among the top 20 public universities, and is one of the nation's best bargains in college education, is on a one-year probation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commissions on Colleges.

Folt spent 30 years at Dartmouth College as a faculty member and administrator and served as Interim President for a year before moving to UNC Chapel Hill. In addition to resolving the academic and athletic scandal, Folt is keenly interested in boosting undergraduate graduation rates, particularly among low-income, first-generation and underrepresented students.

A decade ago, the University instituted the Carolina Covenant, a program that awards low-income students a combination of grants, scholarships, and work study opportunities so that—

[audio glitch from recording approximately 00:03:50]

[applause]

CAROL FOLT: Thank you, Tommy, for introducing me. It's just such a pleasure to be here. I've been really looking forward to this, and I'm looking forward to your question. So be sure to put down lots of good ones.

You are right, this is an extraordinary time to be the Chancellor at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. And I have to tell you, I wouldn't have any other job in America. Yes, Chapel Hill people. [applause] In fact, if you're interested in higher education I actually think this is the best time to be a president or a Chancellor in higher education in America. What happens in higher education is so important for the nation.

Our business is a very serious one. People take it very seriously. We have a huge impact on individuals and the future of the nation. And it is a time when we have the opportunity to really shepherd in the great changes that are taking place. So it's a real pleasure to be here.

Carolina itself has a very big footprint. It is the oldest public university in America. It was the first to actually graduate students in the—the only public university to graduate students in the 1700's. And it has an extremely proud legacy. And we are as proud of what we're doing to get past these issues that you raised than we—we're very, very proud of what we're trying to do.

I will say that working in higher education, the new normal is to be facing some of the greatest issues of the day. Yes, we're looking at how to balance athletics and academics. We're all thinking about how to deal with sexual assault. We're all trying to help the country understand the value proposition of higher education. These are the issues that we face, and these are the issues that those of you in the press cover all the time. And so I think it's really important that we have these conversations.

It's exciting to be at the kickoff of the month of August speaking here today, particularly about the importance of preserving affordability, accessibility and attainment in a great college—of a great college degree.

I'd also like to thank the National Press Club members, everyone at the head table. I'm looking particularly at Mary Cooper who's going to be our convocation speaker in Carolina, the first time we've had a graduate speak. We're very excited about that, right at that welcome.

And it's just wonderful, all of you at the table, the people that are here. We've got members from the North Carolina delegation. Their staffs that are here. So thank you all for coming. And of course, Carolina alumni, thank you for being here.

I thought I'd start by just giving a little bit of an overview of what the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is, because I think we rarely understand what goes on in a university. And to understand the context of affordability and accessibility it's good to know what are we trying to bring our students into?

UNC, or we call it Carolina, has a budget of between four and six billion dollars a year. It depends on whether I'm including our hospitals or not. So it's a major enterprise. It has more than a three billion dollar endowment. We raise a lot of money through philanthropy. This year we had over \$440 million dollars from our generous alumni. And that is in a single year. That actually happens to be Carolina's best year ever in philanthropy. So our alums are absolutely sticking with us through the times of trial. And I think that makes a really great statement.

We also get a lot of money from research. Carolina has been increasing its research portfolio. We're almost a billion dollars in research. That's mostly Washington

based federal funding from the NSF and the NIH. It's one of the top, maybe the seventh highest in NIH funding. This is a huge investment in research that will save lives and change the world.

We bring in more than seven billion dollars estimated in revenue to the state, more than ten thousand people employed in various aspects of our institution. We have more than thirty-three thousand applications for less than four thousand entry positions. And you know top ten, top one programs in so many fields from medicine, global health, pharmacy, humanity, social sciences. And I think one of the points I want to make is accessibility and affordability, especially for students of low income, first generation, should get them to the best universities in America. I think that's really important, that we consider that part of that mission.

It's important that they come in and understand what's happening in the world. We just recently had a number of stories you probably read about in the paper, historic partnership with GSK for Chapel Hill to solve AIDS. That program is going to have a number of undergraduates that are going to be working in it.

We have a population center that got a \$185 million dollar grant from USAID, the largest grant in history, last year to basically look at the metrics for global health and gender relations throughout the world. We received a \$100 million dollar gift to build entrepreneurial activities through pharmacy. This is what we want students to learn about as they're going to college.

So exactly two weeks from today, hard to believe classes are going to begin at Carolina, it's clearly one of the best times of the year. You just can't beat the buzz that happens on a campus. It wakes up. It's exciting. There are people every place. And it is a school where people smile and they sing as they walk along. I think it's the light blue, I think that helps.

You know, it is really exciting. But they also are scared to death. You know, this is a big deal. They're coming to college, and it is our job when they come to make sure they can be successful. I think that's a part of everything that we think about doing. For many of them, at Carolina it's over 20%, they will be the first generation to attend university. We're really proud of that. That's so important.

More than 14% of them are going to come from the lowest income families, families with median incomes of \$22,000 a year, or \$23,000 dollars a year. We're also going to have students coming from all rings of the socio-economic strata across the country. But that's what that place feels like.

I tell students at the start of the year to try to remember the magical feeling they feel on that very first day. That anything is possible, whatever they want is what they're going to really be able to find their work to do. And I think that's my message always to them, is that feel is good on a second day as you did on the first. A remember that there is no limit.

Of course that first day on August 18th, between that day there is another important day on the calendar. That's Friday, August 7, tuition bills are due. I don't know how many of you have students going to college right now. How many in here have students, paying tuition bills. Okay, well, I'm going to give you a number that I think will shock most people. The tuition at UNC Chapel Hill is about \$8,300. It is among the lowest tuitions in the country, and among the top peer institutions are peers in public universities, it's at the bottom. We have very low tuition.

The debt for students at North Carolina has not changed in inflation scaled dollars for more than fifteen years. So this is going to be a story about things that do work to try to do it. And I think it's really important, because we have to understand how to scale the parts of our institutions that are working to be more effective.

We have about twenty thousand undergraduates. And of those 43%, even with that tuition, are going to receive a form of need based aide. So there is still great need out there. The median income in North Carolina is less than \$50,000 dollars a year. So this can still be an important part of their experience.

North Carolina is one of possibly two public universities that still is need blind, which means we don't consider parent income in the application. And one of the only ones remaining that meets full need, which means that after they fill out their equations we cover the rest of that need. This is enormously important if you're going to help students actually attain a successful degree.

And I'm acutely aware that for students who attend Carolina, and many other universities in America, the start of the academic year is one of great excitement. But most of our high school students, less than half, are going to be going to college. They don't have that same sense of optimism. Many self select and think that they aren't going to be able to do it. They're fearful that they won't be able to afford it. And they're afraid to assume a debt load that they think they'll never be able to pay.

New data show that the average debt at graduation is about \$35,000 dollars for students who do go to college. At Carolina it's \$17,000 dollar. So again, keeping those costs low is a way to really help attract capable students to try.

It's very important . If you look at the United States statistics we have about 3.2 million students graduating from high school. About 1.8 million of them will apply to a four year university. But in the end only about 900 million of them are going to graduate. So that means about 2.3 million of our graduates right now, high school kids that can do anything, that are the talent pool of America, aren't even making it into college. And more than 50% that come are on average not graduating. So there's a lot of work here.

Many students who start don't finish. It's known to be a very negative cycle for them. We also know that educational attainment is one of the most prominent determinants of class status. It's an unofficial sorting that takes place, and it isn't helpful.

It tends to reinforce the socio-economic gaps, the disparities that I know everyone in this room wishes we could eliminate.

And it's happening even more so.. At college applications are relative percents are going down at the very moment when we know the skills of college are actually more valued. No matter what you read, we know that the lifetime earnings of someone with a college degree are considerably greater. We also know that the new knowledge economy, the one that is bursting and growing, the one the country wants to compete in, is requiring the skills of a college graduate.

And it's not just their stem skills and their programming; it's their writing skills, it's their critical thinking, it's their problem solving. Without those we are not going to bring those 2.3 million high school students every year back to be part of a flourishing national economy.

So we know we have to do it. And I'm going to give you some examples of ways that I think it's working well at UNC, things that I think can be scaled, but that's really the issue ahead.

First of all, you have to build universities that draw on the talent of people from all incomes and all backgrounds. Need blind admission is really critical to that. If you're self selecting already for wealth, you're going to get it. But that's hard. Most schools in the last five years when we had the pulling of money, funds from the state, most of them dropped their need blind admissions programs. So that's been a real tendency because they couldn't believe they could afford it.

We also know that we need to get them directly into the fields that contribute to the knowledge economy, so that they can be a part of that burgeoning growth area. We know that it is a world of change. If we are not getting students into programs that teach people change, I don't believe that you want to put people into single skill programs. Because everybody knows that the skill today is probably not even going to be the business that is hiring in five years.

It is our job to be training them to get the diverse skills of the multi-faceted learning. So our universities have to be the catalyst for this, the places where we nurture this type of energy. But the question is, are universities meeting that need if we are great, probably most of us would say we're not. And if we aren't we have to get on the ball fast. That's 3.2 million students a year that could be going where we want to go.

The Brookings Hamilton Project recently released a report that showed that family income is maybe the strongest predictor of graduation rate. That is a very sad statistic. Because they can even control for SAT and other levels of attainment. So that is something we're constantly trying to think about.

The likelihood of a student from high income bracket graduating is five times greater than students from the lowest income bracket all other things being equal. So

these disparities are growing. And they play out even more in under-represented populations. These trends are even greater.

So we find these troubling. I've spent my whole life in higher ed wanting to fight against these trends. And I think that's why I think I've actually found that southern part of heaven in North Carolina because I actually was able to come to the public university that really is doing this in such a deep and strong way.

Fourteen times Kipler named Carolina the best value in American public universities. The *New York Times* recently ranked Carolina the third most economically diverse top universities. And to be on that list you had to have graduate rates that were above 70%. Ours are much higher than that. There were only three public universities on the list.

Yet public universities educate more than 70% of the students in America. So I'm proud of what we've accomplished. I'm going to use some examples. But then that doesn't mean it's all right. We've got a lot of ways to go.

So how did Carolina get here? I think in a way you almost have to go back to 1789, I won't make you all go that far back with me, when Carolina really began as a great experiment. It came out of the Revolutionary War. It was an idea that if we're going to have freedom we better have education. It was actually founded the same time that we had our first president was inaugurated. And it said that we were going to give education to improve the life of North Carolinians at the lowest price practicable.

So it really is in the DNA of the institution. That has been part of it from the get-go. The first student walked 133 miles to get to that university. But we still pride ourselves in reaching out to people from every kind of community, not only in the state but across the country. And bringing people from every kind of means to the university.

How do we do it? Well, it's important that we think—I have to start by saying, we do it in part because we still have a very generous state. North Carolina is still supported well, we have had more than 30% cuts in the last five years, but we are still generously supported. That is important. All of the future has to find a way to continue to get some public dollars. If we care about this, public dollars are going to be important, even though we supplement with philanthropy and all sorts of other ideas, that is a real advantage for us.

Americans have one trillion dollar national student debt. They see tuition rising. And so we have to be able to counter that. We have low tuition; that helps counter that. But to keep our tuition low we have to make choices all the time. And some of those are not fun, are not very—they hurt. And in fact we hadn't been able to give faculty raises to the level we'd like. And yet we've got faculty bringing in a billion dollars of research. It is a very competitive environment. So you're dealing in your university with very tough decisions because this accessibility and affordability is probably at the heart of everything

that tends to still be our default position. But it won't exist if we don't continue to have that great faculty.

So with affordability, keeping tuition and debt low is a top priority for us. So is need blind, and meeting the demonstrated need. And I think those I'll come back to in a minute with an example from the Carolina Covenant, how that have really had a huge influence on student success. And I'll come back to that.

Accessibility has been the next part. That means that we do a lot of action going out and going into all 100 counties. Carolina still has almost 82% of the undergraduates come from the state of North Carolina. So that covenant with the state has been very important. I think that's why the state still supports us at such a high level. That's a very strong relationship. Lots of international students at the graduate level. Very global campus. But that's important.

But we've also developed a lot of programs to go right out into high school. If you want to solve these problems you can't start with the applicants. You need to get into the high schools. And I'll give you a really clear example of that in a moment.

You also have to focus when they're on campus very much on the advising especially what takes place in the first year. And if you don't put the money into that first year, and the money into getting them ready, no matter how much money you spend on getting them to start, they aren't going to be successful.

The third area we do is try to make sure that we're doing it in an institution that is still at the highest level of excellence. I don't believe affordability and accessibility without strength of program means much. I don't think low income students should be put in a less than great education. I think that's completely unfair. And I think you need these three working together to really solve these programs.

Our graduation rates are 80% at four years, and over 90% at six years. So putting Carolina right up there with the best of the privates. And when a student is accepted to a school where they believe they're going to graduate there is a lot of information coming out, some good data I think you probably collected that shows believing in them, investing in them is a major factor that will determine their success. So I'll give you three examples.

You heard a little bit about the Carolina Covenant. That's this program that brings students in from very low income. The big thing about that program, not only do we work to get them in, they graduate with no loan. And they do work study and they get grants. But that complete belief in those students has been so important. The program began in 2006. Looking at students from the exact same income and similar numbers and comparing graduation rates pre- and post-covenant, it's been extraordinary. Pre-covenant low income students in that program graduated at best at about 57%. African American males were graduating down in the 30%

Since the covenant has been in, the entire program's average graduation rate is just 3% lower than that 80%. It has skyrocketed. And the African American males has doubled. So this investment, and the advising that goes along with it, is very important. I could tell you stories of students, they come in with extraordinary records. Their average GPA coming in is over 4.0. These are very talented students. Yet, they have families back home that need them. They don't have the advising. And they frequently lack the confidence. And we have so many that say, "I'm going to drop out." And yet if they get that advising, they stick with it. And the stories are amazing.

I met three covenant scholars recently. And all three of them told me stories about their lives. And two of them graduated, had great jobs. One already bought a house. And two of them were putting their mothers through college. Because their mothers had been so instrumental in what they were doing. So these pave forward for society in an incredible way.

We also have programs that reach directly out into the high schools. In North Carolina the low income high schools, about 65 of them, we're part of a program called The Carolina Advisory Core. You may know about the National Advising Core. It's probably one of the best programs in America right now. And it started in Virginia, and was housed at UNC. Now has branched out.

They take recent graduates, the most dedicated students you could ever meet, and they put them into high schools. We were in 65 of the 90 porous schools in North Carolina right now. The time in those schools that can be given to any student that wants to apply to college, can you guess how much time they have to spend talking to them about college? Less than five minutes a year. They don't have parents, families, and people to get them in college. They can't possibly do it.

Since they've gone in with this advising program, they've seen application rates up about 12-15% just in the first couple of years. I went to one of them and I talked to the students there. A number of them will go to junior college. And then we have another program to take them from junior college to Carolina. And I told them that I'd gone to a junior college, because I did as part of my own background. I had no idea how meaningful that would be.

The students, they had a couple on tape afterwards who said, "The Chancellor at UNC went to junior college." So I don't think we can ever underestimate how just few touches can have such an impact. But those students come in through that program, get that advising with a young amazing North Carolina graduate. And it just changes the world.

Then we built another program to work with the junior colleges. And Carolina in about the last six years has started to really admit students. If they get selected in their first year and they achieve a certain level of success, first of all they graduate from the two year school, and the graduation rates from the two year schools are extremely low. They get automatic guarantee to get into UNC Chapel Hill. It has been phenomenal. And

if you meet some of those students, you would be blown away. One of them I met grew up in Nigeria from a very poor family, war torn area. Saw a poster of UNC and dreamed about being at UNC. How she ever made it I can't tell you. Went to junior college, graduated last year, head of her class in nursing, is going to medical school.

So we have to keep remembering not all students will do the traditional path. But if we're going to really make accessibility, affordability the brand for our nation we need to do this. We need to start before. We need to give them the support they need. We need the advising, on the ground. And we need to continue to draw from such a broad range, that we don't miss so many students who are out there.

If we start doing that, and we have programs that can help universities do this, and we have programs that can do it in places where graduation is what they do, I think we have a real chance to change things in the next three to five years. So I look at what's happening in the news right now, and I hope you'll ask me a lot of questions on any of these students—but how we're going to make the dream of higher education really the dream of this country, and reverse the trend that has really been taking over our nation, fewer people applying, higher expense, I think is one of our great challenges. And I hope in the next decade we really do achieve that.

I wouldn't be standing here if I couldn't have gone to college, and work as a waitress and pay my way through college. I did that many years ago. Couldn't be done now. But I want to make sure that all those other people like me and like probably many of you out there have that chance. And I think we've got some good ideas about how to do it.

So thank you for listening. And I'm looking forward to answering questions.
[applause]

THOMAS BURR: Thank you, Chancellor, we have quite a few questions. So I'm glad you're ready for those. The 2015, 2016 tuition—I think you mentioned the price here, so I hope I have this right—is \$33,644 for out of state, and \$8,562 dollars for in-state. While that's still a good deal compared with other universities, the growth in tuition at Carolina for out-of-state-students since the early 1980's has increased nearly six times the rate of inflation. For in-state students it's five times the rate of inflation. What has caused this huge increase? And will we ever see the costs slowing down to mass the rate of inflation, or even dropping below it?

CAROL FOLT: Thank you, it's a really great question. Well, I mean, I am in a great public university. And I am part of a university where the state taxpayers do really expect the majority of the support to go for in-state students.

What we have been doing, and so in times when there was a retrenchment as I said, something like 30%, we didn't actually choose those. Some of those have been legislated for us, where to actually take the increase. That \$30,000 as you said is still low compared to our peers. And you know, right now I think it's harder to get into UNC

Chapel Hill from out of state than any school in America. We have something like 18,000 students. It is a great place to go, they want to go.

So what we've been doing to counter that is using philanthropy and non-state targeted dollars. They're eligible for the covenant, which I think is great. And some of our covenant scholars do come from out of state. It's 50% of our covenant scholars are first generation out of state, 60% are students of color. We really do try to use these banner programs to attract them. and for me in the future a lot of our money that is not already targeted will be going to try to keep those levels down.

I think many states don't understand truly the benefit of the influx of students from out of state. First of all, all the students want to meet people from everywhere. But when students move to a place like Chapel Hill, they want to stay there forever. But the truth is they do come, they are important parts of building the state. And I think other institutions handle that differently. But that's something that we think about a lot.

THOMAS BURR: Somewhat related to what you're talking about. There are host of students now coming from public universities who are undocumented immigrants, but have spent most of their lives in this country. Many say they cannot afford to pay the high out-of-state tuition rates now imposed. Is there anything that universities can do to help these students in that situation?

CAROL FOLT: You know you're hitting two really big issues. I was saying earlier I'm actually wearing the pin from our Latino Latina organization. I wear different pins every single time, because it's a really growing part of the population in North Carolina.

We are not one of the states that forgives out-of-state tuition for undocumented students. So in that population, again we use philanthropy to help students get and be able to cover out-of-state rates. But it's a huge disadvantage for students if they can't get the out-of-state rate. We have recently, our state now makes it possible for all active duty military personnel to have in-state rates. And that too is another underserved population that we really want to get actively involved. So we're moving in that direction.

I think there are about 30 states, weren't you saying that earlier, that might actually do that. But I think beyond that what we have to do right now is continue to find resources that can be used in the area of most critical need. Until you can get that—If you can forgive it to be at the state level, it would really help in that area.

THOMAS BURR: Some have argued that making college more accessible can mean a decrease in the academic quality for the university students. Do you agree?

CAROL FOLT: This one I would have paid you to ask me. That's such a great one. Because this is great. I have a figure—We don't show tables and figures here, good thing, academics would never leave the stage. But it shows a diagram of all the students that come in on the Carolina Covenant. And it says—and then it poses them on the

quality of the entire UNC entering class. If you were to pull out the covenant and the needs based A students, every single metric, top 10, valedictorian, SAT, GPA, goes down. So I am absolutely—I don't buy into the argument that it has anything to do with reducing quality.

I do also realize, though, that being part of a great institution you do get to draw the students who have been capacity. And so par if the issue is what do we do then for the next tier of students that don't have that. How do we get them performing at a level that they could. But we are really [00:42:32] an incredible population. So their ability to graduate and lead the world in many different ways is absolutely theirs So we have to make sure that they can graduate.

THOMAS BURR: A lot of questions in the United States now about testing. So how do you monitor the quality of your education. Some of the factors you mentioned, problem solving, critical thinking, etc., how do you monitor that? How do you grade that in some form?

CAROL FOLT: I think I had an English professor up here with me. She might tell you how hard it is to grade a paper, and even feel like it's absolutely perfect. You know, universities have many ways of assessing individual performance. And we do give tests. And we do grade papers. And we give lots of feedback. What we aren't so good at doing is understanding the emergent hole when you finish.

You know, we don't give final exams for a bio major to understand what they developed throughout their environment at the University. But most schools, and through accrediting many of us have been leading in this way, there is a lot of effort put through every major one understanding that very clear skill sets—paper writing, critical thinking, problem solving, are really increasing.

Again, I'm most concerned that if we move to an educational system that starts looking like it's mass production, we will use the absolute critical pieces of feedback, of experimentation, of risk taking that are what create the great thinkers that cannot only take a job but that can create new jobs.

And the e was a great study, again at Chapel Hill study that I do want to mention that was in the *New York Times* recently where they redid all of their intro-stem courses. Now we want the entire population able to take stem. They don't all have to do it, but be able to take science, technology, engineering and math. And they did two separate classes, One, where everything was discussion based, hands on learning. They still had to take the same tests. And another one more traditional. The gap between low income students in t hose two ways of teaching, completely closed.

So there are ways that we can change the way we educate, that will have really measurable progress. But that's kind of in the infancy. And I'm sure metrics are part of that. But it's not all—It's not all something easy to measure.

THOMAS BURR: So let's talk politics for a second. Higher education seems to be bearing the brunt of some fierce political attacks across the country, as we've seen for example in Wisconsin. As the head of major public university, what message do you wish to send to legislators, politicians who want greater efficiency and accountability? And to faculty who want to keep their tenure and academic freedom?

CAROL FOLT: This is when I turn to you. You're all here in the—You probably have answers to that question. I think one of the big problems right now about higher education is that we tend to talk about it as it's a monolithic, that everything is the same. It is so completely different. I'm talking about Carolina. I told you what it was like to begin, to basically make clear it's not the same as many other institutions. I think we need to be much more nuanced.

I think we need to understand what community colleges do. We need to look at our historic black colleges and universities. We need to find what the great research universities do. What does the regional university do? And we need to start building in the metrics of success based on who they are, their mission and what they're actually doing. So I think that's one of the problems.

I think second everyone's quite willing to do efficiency. It isn't true—I mean, yes, universities are like hurting cats. But they are innovation centers. Every single invention that makes your life better has actually come from a university. Some beginning of that innovation—our industry right now in America used to be 70% R&D and industry 30 in universities. It's moved to less than 30% in industry all in university. So to be that innovative you have to be flexible.

I think again we need to talk about the specifics. I think it's really important to understand that where economies come in you should allow those universities maybe to feed it back in to the innovation. You know I think there's a lot of misunderstanding there. The biggest misunderstanding is what they bring value. And I just saw the University of Wisconsin recently did this study, we did one in North Carolina, and that \$7 billion dollars is about a \$7 dollar return for every dollar given—Well, it's more than that, for every dollar given to us by the state. We just aren't—I think in part we aren't giving the nuance.

The last thing, tenure and academic freedom, I think you would destroy America if you destroy American universities by eliminating academic freedom. I think that is at the core. What it is exactly might be misunderstood, and it may be abused, and there may be things like that. But in general the idea that what people study and the work they do has to be held to a standard that is not bound by the mores of the day is really important. And I think that tenure still serves a very useful purpose. Although I understand that it—You know, I don't think tenure means no accountability. And I think that's another mistake. Even tenured professors go through post-tenure review. They have to still achieve levels of accountability and performance that are very important. So in part I think we need to make those things understood and real.

THOMAS BURR: By your answer I'm going to guess that you supported President Barack Obama back in all this plan to have the government rate higher education institutions?

CAROL FOLT: Yes.

THOMAS BURR: We'll get through a lot of these questions if the answers are like that. Speaking of college costs, do you think the trend of colleges, including public universities having nicer and fancier dorms, fitness facilities, buildings contributes to the problem of the rising college costs?

CAROL FOLT: It does, it does. You know, people have tried to figure out what are the main drivers that have increased cost. And facilities are a part of it. Do remember, though, most of America's great universities were built in the 20's, in the 30's. We have an aging infrastructure. We are going to be building buildings, and they do cost money. /and they cost a lot more money to build now than they used to because we have to comply with all sorts of standards that are very different.

So to say it's all about climbing [00:49:08] it's a tiny fraction of what it really is. There is also a race for better facilities for students where they live. And I understand that. I do think though that we are—you know, we are part of the times. You know, I used to send my son to a camp that didn't believe in having mosquito netting. And I wanted him to be tough. But you know they aren't coming out of that. That's not what they're looking at. He didn't like that either. That was a New Hampshire thing.

But you know I do think that we are sort of working with the student generation. And I think what's actually more important to them than fancy facilities is that they feel that they're a part of a place where the facilities will allow them to be part of the great things that are happening. So for example, if I'm going to put something in at UNC I want to put in maker spaces. Now you might say we shouldn't do that. These are just rooms that you build into dorms, and they might have a 3D planter, they might have new expensive digital equipment, but in a maker's space, in a basement of a dorm in North Carolina last year a young student in his junior year had been working with a disadvantaged child in the region who had to have an artificial hand.

As he was growing they couldn't afford the \$100,000 dollars it took to build the hand. For \$20 dollars with a 3D printer in the basement of a dorm, he built him an artificial hand. That's actually what I think students want, is access to stuff that's going to let them do great things. And they want to be fit, and they want to feel part of action, but they really are still looking at things that we want to give them. And that's really where I think we get the best return.

THOMAS BURR: Thank you. Now to a bit of a more controversial question. Recent events including both campus shootings and campus police using weapons from pepper sprays to guns both on and off campus have put a spotlight on the law

enforcement powers of those police officers. What do you consider to be the proper role of campus police? And what limits, if any, should be placed upon their use of weapons when dealing with students or citizens? Should they be, for example, allowed to be armed with live ammunition? And should students be allowed to carry guns on campus?

CAROL FOLT: Well, the idea of whether you carry guns again in a public institution, I don't get to make that choice. That is a decision by the state legislature. And of course we know that across the country there are different decisions by different legislatures. A lot of them do want guns to be allowed on campus, and have enforced that. On the other hand, usually they have to be locked up. I mean, it's rare, I have not seen a campus where people walk around with pistols and are doing that at this point. And I think every college President and Chancellor is deeply worried about that.

I think that our campus police, what you saw and what has been the news, I do not think reflects the majority of campus police. Most campus police, and I'm now speaking directly from my UNC campus police, but I knew all, every single officer at Dartmouth. I know a lot of them on every campus at NC State. I met so many of them when we had our recent tragedy and we worked together.

Most of the campus police officers are campus police officers because they love students. So I actually think there is a huge role for campus police to play as a liaison and a safety coordinator on campuses, and to interface with their towns. We have to get those partnerships to be very strong. We need to keep them really working. But students often really like their security police if they developed a relationship that is positive and strong.

So I think there's a lot of work to be done there. But there are many great examples where they do it. Our police just recently voluntarily decided to get cameras together with the local towns in part so that they could say to the students, we want to do this because we'll do anything to make you more comfortable.

These tragedies are highlighting it and so every time something like this happens, we all go back and ask ourselves again—I had meetings with the police in all our towns and the security police on our campus the next day saying, “What can we do better? Are we prepared for making sure this would never happen.” But I think it's a tragedy. I don't think it reflects most security forces on campuses.

THOMAS BURR: Sticking with the controversial for a minute. On the periphery of the UNC Chapel Hill campus sits the Silent Sam Memorial dedicated to the university students who served in the Confederacy. In July it was vandalized with spray paint to say KKK Murder, and Black Lives Matter. As Chancellor should the statue remain? And if so should any changes be made to the signage accompanying it?

CAROL FOLT: Well, we've been through a major year when our campus was really looking at not just the memorial, but also names on buildings and the issues associated with it. I think this is a very national issue. It isn't just the confederate flag. And I'm sort of very happy to have my friend, Sam Foard(?) here. We have been thinking

about it as an institution. And the Board of Trustees took action. They decided to rename one of the halls that had the named in honor of a person who was known to have been the leader of the KKK. They changed that name. It's now called Carolina Hall.

At the same time they said we are not going to go down the road of changing every name. And recently our state actually said that you can't change memorials, unless you get action from the state. You know, and sometimes you're working in a very changing environment. So I have to adjust and work with whatever is happening around me. But what we really said we were going to do is spend a lot of time understanding how to contextualize history.

Now that is a really big job. And that is going to require voices from throughout the community to come together to have those conversations about what does it mean to be from the oldest public university in America, where people's names are on buildings from a time in the past to a time in the present? How do we actually honor the past, learn from the past, and then respect the dialogue that shapes today?

So I can't give you the answer, but that is probably one of our top priorities going forward in this year. And I think that that memorial to Silent Sam is really just one of the pieces. I think we're going to end up with much broader conversations that talk about the role of race in the south. I think we're going to be talking about that, the role of race in America. So these aren't confined to any one campus. These are some of our biggest issues of the day.

THOMAS BURR: Recent revelations at such places as the University of Oklahoma have cast a spotlight on the Pan Hellenic, a system of fraternities and sororities on campuses. What do you see as the future of this system? And do you see it as a help or a hindrance to your efforts to make college more accessible to a more diverse population of students?

CAROL FOLT: This is going down the list of all the hard issues. You really did mean it. You know, there's a great article—The Chronicle of Higher Education and Inside Higher—A lot of the journals have been covering a lot of issues associated by this. Chapel Hill, it's less than 20% fraternities and sororities, so it is not numerically that large. But of course they're influential. They have a real place there. I think that the scrutiny that has been coming to campuses starting with sexual assault, but also with binge drinking, hazing, this is extremely healthy for universities. We need that kind of conversation.

But I will tell you as someone whose been in higher ed for more than 30 years, and a woman in higher ed, when I started in higher ed nobody would go talk to anybody except the woman in the bio department. Because students that were suffering from sexual assault, or some of these issues, felt very little opportunity to talk. And most of the people driving these issues, especially with gender, would have been women. This is really changing. We are seeing a lot more men and women talking about things. So I'm

looking at the way the Pan Hellenic Councils are changing. In our institution the fraternities were the first to put in a whole program of sexual assault training.

So I'm not saying it's all perfect, but I am saying that we need to continue to turn to the students themselves to involve them in the process. Social engineering is a very difficult idea. And if you're going to really change people, you have to work with people. That does still mean you have to have very serious consequences when people are really doing things—they're doing the things that we can't believe that they should do.

I think that the national organizations have started to be more active. I think you're starting to see a much bigger movement towards getting people spaces that are not just associated with sororities and fraternities. That's the big issue on a college campus is they own houses. And students want to be a part of a place that has separate spaces. So to really make this work we have to give alternatives where students can still have spaces so that they don't necessarily find their only alternatives in a great system. They could find other things that would give them that richness of experience.

THOMAS BURR: Thank you. What would you like to see high schools do differently to improve the college readiness of incoming students? And along that line of questioning, North Carolina is reviewing its commitment to the Common Core state standards, and most states have adopted them. Do you think adopting Common Core will help the readiness of incoming college students?

CAROL FOLT: [;laughter] I might not have an answer to the last one. I actually have not really gotten that involved in the Common Core debate. Although we spend a lot of time in education. The big focus for our university and the whole UNC system has actually been to get more ready teachers to really improve the pipeline of teachers, and also improve the success of teachers in the classroom, and the retention. And they've recently been really trying to deal with that issue. It's very important.

I think we need to teach students in high school how to write and critically think. Because I think those are skills—I know everyone of my generation is going to agree with that one. But it's something that we do see. The online world has done some positive things. Some students read more because of the online world. I've never been a purist and said, "You have to read only one kind of book, and write only one kind of [01:00:11] to actually be learning those skills."

So we have things at our fingertips that can engage students at different levels. And there's a lot of evidence that shows that if you can get a student to read anything, you can probably start directing them to read more and more of what you want. But the online world has probably not helped very much in good writing, or even critical thinking skills, unless it has really taken on, people can use the online world to completely ignore critical analysis.

So I think in high schools if given the right amount of help they could take advantage of the age that these students are, their excitement about this online world and

use that in new and exciting ways to improve those skills. We also need to make sure the schools have class sizes that are small enough so that they can have engaged learning. There is not anything the same about being in a class of 60 and being in a class of 30, no matter how super human that teacher is. It's really, really difficult. And I tend to believe that we need to pay our K-12 teachers more if they're going to be held to a standard that I think is absolute right. We need to continue to make it a really viable career, because we do want great thinkers going in and bringing those 3.2 million students through high school in a way that does prepare them. I say writing; I'm going to have to say math too. That's a really important skill for the future.

And if we let them say, "I don't like algebra. I don't like geometry." We're allowing them to cut themselves off from a major set of life opportunities. And we shouldn't let that happen.

THOMAS BURR: Two questions. How UNC's athletic recruiting practices changed in the wake of the Paper Class Scandal? And are there lessons other universities can take from your experience, particularly regarding the athletic scandal and the integrity issue?

CAROL FOLT: We've been working on this a lot. I think you heard at the beginning more than 70 reforms. I think some of those reforms are cutting edge. You know, they're reforms not only in the way we monitor classes, the event that happened really that we talk about all the time should have been stopped. There should have been a process in place almost instantly that evaluated that Chair every single year and could have stopped it

It's the great tragedy and look and say, "My goodness, we could have stopped it." Well, we would stop it now. So we know things like that. And people share that. I think the better parts of it, why I think we're a much stronger institution coming out of it than we may have been is that we've also completely redone our advising.

So for example all this that I was telling about the covenant scholars and that advising program, we actually have a pilot program to share that exact same advising with all of our students including all of our athletic advising. We've also developed programs that allow us to really make sure that our students are coming in and not being tracked into a few majors. This is not just Carolina. This is really important. And it isn't just for busy athletes; it's true for many students, probably many of them who work or may have other outside activities may find themselves with a narrow subset of majors because they can't get the courses at the right time.

So we're changing all of those sorts of things. I think these are the types of programs that help us recruit. In the end, most athletes that come to Carolina are going to be great, they're going to be on absolutely outstanding teams, but they're going to graduate and go on to careers that are not as active playing their sport. "So it is our job to recruit them to get a great chance to play on a great team. But get a chance to go to a

great university. So I think it's putting our effort increasingly on that duality. We think you can come here and do both. And then we have to make it real.

THOMAS BURR: UNC students have put issues of race and diversity high on their priority list, especially after the killing of three Muslim students earlier this year. How do you facilitate the conversation about these tricky topics as Chancellor?

CAROL FOLT: When we had the death of the three Muslim students it was the most terrible moment you can imagine for anybody, to wake up or to hear that that's going on. What I saw then was the beginnings of real opportunity. And I think we saw that in Charlestown too. The families of the slain students were incredible. They came forward and they too said, "We want to talk about the love, the hope of these students. We want to talk about how our families produce wonderful children. How they grow and nurture a community."

And so the community almost as a whole turned towards the celebration of life. And it really had a big impact on the way people started talking about these conversations. It doesn't mean people weren't extremely angry, but the anger was not the driver.

We immediately put in a program that we're calling Carolina Conversations, and invited students to help us do it. And it's going to be starting this year. And the very first conversation was on race. In setting that up we went around to all the student groups. I had two or three big dinners at my house, and I invited students from every organization. I invited students from across the political spectrum. And every one of them committed in a way to bring people to that meeting.

And one of the most meaningful conversations of this that I heard at that was between two young men, different races, talking. And one of the students going, "Why are we here? We're supposed to talk about race. This is really hard. I'm not sure why I even came. This is so hard." And the other student said, "You came because this is the first time, and maybe the only time you would have ever talked to someone who looked like me."

So I see hope. These aren't always for everyone. I don't think you have to worry as much about getting everyone in the conversation, as starting the conversation. And bringing students in and building these conversations out with real action items that people can try. The more experimental we are on these difficult issues, the better. If we think every time we meet we have to change the entire curriculum, or redo everything, we won't make progress. But if every time we meet we have an incremental idea, we try it, we test it and we put it back in place, students will come. They will start believing in that process.

So I think that Carolina Conversations is one step. And stay tuned I'll come back next year and tell you about the rest of them. But it's pretty important, I think almost

every campus in America is probably going to be doing something, or trying something like that, or I hope they are.

THOMAS BURR: Thank you. Before I ask the last question I have a few announcements. The National Press Club is the world's leading professional organization for journalists. And we fight for a free press worldwide. For more information about the Club please visit our website www.press.org, and to donate to our non-profit journalism institute, visit ww.press.org/institute. I would also like to remind you about some upcoming programs. Tomorrow we're hosting Admiral Paul Zukunft, Command Commandant of the United States Coast Guard. In August 12, the Right Reverend John Richard Bryant, Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. And on August 18, nearly ten years after Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans mayor Mitch Landrieu will speak from this podium.

Also registration is now open for the National Press Club Beat the Deadline 5K on September 5th. For more information go to press.org. Now I would like to present our speaker with the traditional National Press Club mug which I'm sorry is not in Carolina blue.

CAROL FOLT: Thank you that's great.

THOMAS BURR: So for our last question, UNC did basketball score this season and we're going to hold you to it.

CAROL FOLT: Wow, I've got to think about that. It's going to be a really good game. And there's going to be a high score, I'm giving Carolina 96, Duke 88.

THOMAS BURR: You heard it here first. Thank you, Chancellor Folt.

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