

**Board of Trustee Orientation & Retreat**  
**Monday, July 21, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**  
**Location: Google - 200 Morris Street, Durham, NC 27701**

---

**A G E N D A & M E E T I N G M I N U T E S**

---

**9:00am - Opening Remarks & Introductions**

- Dr. Karrie G. Dixon, Chancellor
- Mr. G. Keith Chadwell, Interim Chair of NCCU Board of Trustees
- Google Representative – Ms. Lilyn Hester

The NCCU Board of Trustees convened in person at Google, 200 Morris Street, Durham, North Carolina 27701 on Monday, July 21, 2025. Interim Chairman Keith Chadwell called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**OPEN SESSION**

Interim Chairman Keith Chadwell recognized the Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees, Deborah McQueen, to call the roll.

**ROLL CALL:**

Trustee G. Keith Chadwell	Yes
Trustee David Alexander	Yes
Trustee Farad Ali	Yes
Trustee Roderick G. Allison	Yes
Trustee William V. Bell	Yes
Trustee Ryan Combs	Absent
Trustee Courtney Crowder	Yes
Trustee Michael Goodmon	Yes
Trustee Francesca Gary	Yes
Trustee Lisa Martinez	Yes
Trustee Sha'Lexus Sanders	Absent
Trustee Orlando Stovall	Yes
Trustee Antwan Thornton	Yes

There were eleven (11) members present at roll call. A quorum was established.



### **CHAIR'S REMARKS:**

As Interim Chair of the Board of Trustees, it is my responsibility to remind all members of the Board of their duty under the State Government Ethics Act to avoid conflicts of interest and appearances of conflict of interest as required by this Act. Each member has received the agenda and related information for this Board of Trustees meeting. If any board member knows of any conflict of interest or appearance of conflict with respect to any matter coming before the Board of Trustees at this meeting, the conflict or appearance of conflict should be identified at this time.

Please note that all SEIs - Statements of Economic Interest have been filed for all new members, and documents are available for your review.

## **9:15am - Board of Trustee Orientation- Mission, History, Structure, Expectations**

- Facilitator: Dr. Gary L. Brown, Vice Chancellor & Chief of Staff

Dr. Gary Brown provided a comprehensive overview of North Carolina Central University's history, status, governance, and expectations for board members.

Dr. Brown began with a historical narrative, tracing NCCU's origins to 1910 when it was founded by Dr. James E. Shepard. The institution evolved from a religious training school into the first state-supported liberal arts college for Black students, eventually gaining university status in 1969. NCCU is home to North Carolina's only HBCU School of Law.

The university currently offers 71-degree programs and has achieved its highest enrollment to date with 8,579 students. It is the first HBCU to establish an AI Institute and has demonstrated a strong commitment to public service, contributing over 162,000 hours valued at \$5.4 million. Popular undergraduate majors include Business Administration, Pre-Nursing, Criminal Justice, Psychology, and Information Technology.

NCCU has received recognition for academic excellence and affordability, including high passage rates for nursing and counseling programs, and top rankings for online degrees in nutrition science and MBA programs.

The governance structure includes the UNC Board of Governors, NCCU Board of Trustees, Chancellor, North Carolina General Assembly, and Faculty and Staff Senates. Trustees are expected to uphold responsibilities such as reviewing the university's mission, evaluating the Chancellor, maintaining policy distinctions, managing conflicts of interest, and protecting the institution from external influence. Additional expectations include policy approval, legislative advocacy, meeting attendance, committee service, fundraising, and staying informed on higher education trends.

Associated entities like the NCCU Foundation and Alumni Association play key roles in supporting the university through scholarships and unrestricted funding. Compliance with UNC policies is required for all affiliated organizations.

Resources available to trustees include the board website, orientation manual, and principles of trusteeship. Key contacts for support are Deborah Y. McQueen and Dr. Gary L. Brown.

The presentation concluded with a schedule of upcoming meetings and events for the 2025–2026 academic year, including Board of Trustee meetings, Founder's Day, Homecoming, Commencement ceremonies, and the MEAC Tournament.

**10:30am - Budget & Finance Overview- Higher Education & NCCU Landscape**

- Facilitators: Jennifer Haygood, Sr. Vice President & CFO, UNC System
- Laurie Wilcox, Vice Chancellor/CFO, NCCU

**Jennifer Haygood, Sr. Vice President & CFO, UNC System** - The presentation titled “Navigating NCCU’s Financial Challenges: A System-Level Perspective” provided an in-depth look at the university’s financial landscape and the role of the Board of Trustees in supporting fiscal health. It began with an overview of university finances, explaining where revenue comes from—such as state appropriations, tuition, grants, and auxiliary services—and how it is allocated across various expense categories. VP Haygood’s presentation emphasized the importance of understanding different fund types and their restrictions, including general funds, trust funds, and foundation resources.

Trustees were reminded of their statutory duty to ensure efficient use of resources and to approve an annual comprehensive “all-funds” budget, a responsibility that cannot be delegated. Their role includes monitoring enrollment and performance metrics, recommending tuition and fee rates, approving housing and meal plan rates, and aligning financial decisions with strategic priorities. The presentation highlighted the importance of stewardship, transparency, and fiduciary oversight.

NCCU’s financial journey was reviewed, showing positive trends in state appropriations and tuition revenue driven by enrollment growth. However, significant challenges were acknowledged, including audit findings, negative fund balances, liquidity concerns, and unsustainable athletic spending. Deferred maintenance and unpaid bills were also noted.

Progress over the past year included hiring key financial personnel, improving internal controls, receiving substantial repair and renovation funding, and enhancing business processes. The presentation concluded by reinforcing the trustees’ critical role in guiding the university toward financial sustainability and strategic success.

**Laurie Wilcox, Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance** presented the **“Finance Update”**.

VC Wilcox began with an overview of the Administration and Finance Division’s leadership and scope, which includes general accounting, budgeting, purchasing, and student billing. Over the first 150 days, the division focused on assessing staff, restructuring the organization, hiring key leaders, addressing audit findings, mapping processes, and implementing initial business process improvements. These efforts culminated in the development of the FY26 All Funds Budget and the maintenance of NCCU’s Moody rating of A3 with a stable outlook.

The FY26 budget was approved by the Board of Trustees on May 12, 2025, and subsequently by the UNC Board of Governors on June 25, 2025. However, due to the State of North Carolina not approving a budget, revenue levels were set at FY25 authorized amounts, resulting in a net reduction of \$5.4 million. The university responded with a balancing strategy that included personnel reductions, reallocation of funds, and adjustments to athletic and auxiliary budgets.

Key challenges highlighted included increasing enrollment without corresponding funding, personnel caps imposed by the system, deferred maintenance, dormitory capacity issues, and deficits in athletics and scholarship funding. Risks and concerns were identified as federal policy changes, reduced state support, reputational harm, safety, affordability, and enrollment pressures.

Opportunities for improvement and growth included expanding online enrollment, enhancing campus financial literacy, improving operational efficiency, implementing new policies, and increasing donor support. A one-time carryforward of \$2.2 million was anticipated for strategic investments.

VC Wilcox concluded with suggestions for Board involvement, including building partnerships, cultivating donors, lobbying for funding, supporting enrollment initiatives, and contributing financially to the university.

**11:30am - Break**

**12:00pm - Working Lunch: BOG Policy Updates, New State Laws & Implications**

- Facilitators: Alyn Goodson, Executive Vice Chancellor
- Ontario Wooden, Provost & Vice Chancellor

EVC Alyn Goodson provided an overview of recent legislative and policy developments at both the state and federal levels that impact NCCU and the UNC System. New state legislation includes House Bill 373, which allows tuition discounts for military-affiliated and working students, and Senate Bill 118, which grants in-state tuition and deferment options for veterans and service members. These laws aim to improve access, affordability, and retention for military-connected students.

Senate Bill 375 and House Bill 362, known as “Harrison’s Law,” strengthen anti-hazing regulations by expanding definitions, increasing penalties, and mandating institutional policies and training. House Bill 378 introduces changes to technology procurement and expands protections for student-athletes involved in Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) agreements, including privacy safeguards and agent restrictions.

House Bill 74 makes technical corrections to budget reporting deadlines and grant reallocation procedures, providing institutions with more flexibility and time for compliance. Senate Bill 558 and House Bill 171, both vetoed by Governor Stein, sought to eliminate DEI programs and restrict the teaching of certain concepts. Although not enacted, these bills reflect ongoing debates around institutional neutrality and identity-based programming.

Federal updates include the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act,” which restructures student loan programs, imposes borrowing caps, and expands Pell Grant eligibility to short-term workforce training. It also reinstates and broadens gainful employment standards, requiring institutions to demonstrate that graduates can repay student loans. Programs failing to meet debt-to-earnings or earnings threshold metrics risk losing federal aid eligibility.

Executive orders issued in 2025 significantly affect federal funding and compliance. These include directives to eliminate DEI programs, revoke affirmative action in contracts, redefine Title IX protections, and restrict participation of transgender athletes. Institutions must navigate complex and evolving federal requirements, including grant freezes and rulemaking updates.

UNC System policy updates include memoranda on federal contracting compliance, requiring institutions to certify the absence of DEI programs that violate anti-discrimination laws. Immediate actions include suspending DEI-related majors and implementing waiver processes.



The June 17 memorandum outlines open and closed session briefing requirements for the Board of Trustees, focusing on staff training, role realignment, and disciplinary actions. A subcommittee must oversee the Equality Policy Certification process, with NCCU's submission due by September 1, 2025.

Finally, the UNC System has implemented a system-wide personnel hiring cap, restricting salary spending and administrative headcount to April 2025 levels. All new hires must be approved by the chancellor or designated officers, with consideration of long-term financial sustainability.

### **1:15pm - Soaring to New Heights: Vision 2030 Year One Overview**

- Facilitator: Dr. Karrie G. Dixon, Chancellor & Selected Vice Chancellors

Chancellor Dixon outlined the strategic planning process at North Carolina Central University, emphasizing the importance of Board of Trustees review, stakeholder engagement, and data-informed decision-making. The mission and vision statements reaffirm NCCU's commitment to preparing students for global leadership and community transformation, while aspiring to be a catalyst for excellence and innovation.

Core values guiding the plan include excellence, impact, opportunity, and innovation. The strategic plan is organized around five major goals. The first goal, Academic Excellence, focuses on enhancing teaching, research, and community engagement through new degree pathways, investment in research infrastructure, faculty development, and expanded service learning. Objectives also include achieving Carnegie Research 2 status and strengthening partnerships with community colleges.

The second goal, Student Experience, aims to promote student success and well-being by improving facilities, expanding support services, enhancing career readiness, and increasing global engagement. It also emphasizes life skills development, flexible learning environments, accessibility, and support for student-athletes.

Institutional Sustainability is the third goal, centered on financial strength and resource optimization. Objectives include growing enrollment in targeted areas, improving retention and graduation rates, strengthening financial stewardship, and integrating advancement efforts across philanthropy, research, and corporate partnerships.

Operational Excellence is the fourth goal, focused on improving institutional efficiency through professional development, performance-based accountability, succession planning, and data-driven decision-making. It also includes strengthening risk management, competitive compensation, and campus safety.

The fifth goal, Transformational Engagement, seeks to expand NCCU's role in innovation and development by enhancing branding, strengthening athletics, and deepening partnerships with industry, government, and community organizations. The plan emphasizes NCCU's impact on economic and social development locally and globally.

Chancellor Dixon concluded with next steps, including collaborative development of metrics, progress tracking, and strategic reporting. Trustees were invited to provide feedback via a survey to help refine and finalize the strategic goals and objectives.



## **2:30pm - Board Elections & Committee Assignments**

The election instructions below were submitted by current Governance Committee Chair David Alexander.

The board elections and committee assignments document outlines updated procedures for officer elections during the NCCU Board of Trustees retreat held on July 21, 2025. These changes were approved by the Board on June 24, 2025, and temporarily suspend specific bylaw sections to allow for early elections. The update aligns with a directive from the UNC Board of Governors requiring each Board Chair to appoint five members to a subcommittee supporting the Equality Policy Certification, with appointments due by July 31, 2025.

Nominations for officer positions will be taken from the floor during the retreat. Trustees may nominate themselves or others and may be nominated for multiple offices. Candidates will have the opportunity to make brief remarks before voting. Voting will be conducted using printed ballots, with one vote per office. Ballots will be collected and tallied immediately by Assistant Secretary Deborah McQueen, and results will be announced live. In the event of a tie, a runoff vote will occur immediately. Only trustees present in person may vote, as absentee or proxy voting is not permitted under the bylaws.

Following the election of the Chair, the newly elected Chair will appoint five trustees to the Equality Policy Certification subcommittee. These names must be submitted to UNC System President Peter Hans by July 31, 2025. The document emphasizes the importance of in-person participation and encourages trustees to reach out to Governance Chair David Alexander or Assistant Secretary Deborah McQueen with any questions.

### **Election Results:**

**Chairman of the Board of Trustees - Courtney Crowder**

**Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees – Francesca Gary**

**Secretary – Farad Ali**



**3:30pm - Strategic Conversations**

Googlers Dr. Patrick Musau provided history and future insights related to AI, and Conner Williford spoke to Higher Ed and AI, innovation and Cloud.

**4:00pm - Closing Remarks- Dr. Karrie G. Dixon, Chancellor**

Chancellor Dixon enthusiastically thanked the board members and her executive team for their commitment and oversight to the university's Strategic Plan. The VC retreat in August will identify a timeline for strategic plan next steps and measurable outcomes.

October 15, 2025, Board of Trustees Orientation Workshop presented by the UNC System Board of Governors will be held at the Lenovo Center, 1400 Edwards Mill Rd, Raleigh, NC 27607.

This concludes the Chancellor's remarks.

There being no other business before the Board, Chairman Courtney Crowder sought a motion to adjourn.

All Aye, None Opposed.

**MEETING IS ADJOURNED at 4:00 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted:  
Deborah Y. McQueen

**PRE-READING**

1. [Principles of Trusteeship: How to Become a Highly Effective Board Member for Colleges, Universities and Foundations](#) (2021). Association of Governing Boards
2. [NCCU 2025-2030 Strategic Plan](#)