

### In This Issue

- Strategic Plan Implementation Brainstorming Sessions for Faculty
- Election Results for 2021-2022 Faculty Governance Positions
- News from the Faculty Council
- International Scholar and Faculty Town Hall
- Lori Thomas Named Interim Director of Urban Institute
- Virtual STEM Summit
- Holshouser, Maguire Named Top Teaching Assistants for 2020-21
- Universal Design Fast Facts Series Session 10 Focuses on Accessible Pictures
- Ventureprise Launch NSF I-Corps Summer 2021 Virtual Cohort Accepting Applications
- Atkins Library News and Events
- Dissertation Defenses
- Latest AA News
- Upcoming Events

### Strategic Plan Implementation Brainstorming Sessions for Faculty

All faculty are invited to join an implementation brainstorming session led by members of the Strategic Planning Committee and facilitated by consultant Dr. Sharon McDade to learn about the Plan's objectives and contribute ideas to the process. We are offering four times to participate and have suggested times for specific colleges. If your calendar doesn't fit with your college's designated time, you can attend another meeting.

Thursday, May 6

9:00-10:30 - College of Liberal Arts & Sciences ([Register](#))

11:00-12:30 - Colleges of Business, Education, and Engineering ([Register](#))

1:00-2:30 - Colleges of Arts + Architecture, Computing and Informatics, and Health and Human Services ([Register](#))

Friday, May 7

11:00-12:30 - Open to all ([Register](#))

### Election Results for 2021-2022 Faculty Governance Positions

The 2021-2022 elections for Faculty Governance campus-wide positions concluded on April 23. [The election results are posted on the Faculty Governance website.](#) Thank you to those who participated in the democratic process and congratulations to the winners.

### News from the Faculty Council

The Faculty Council at its April 29, 2021, meeting approved the Graduate Standardized Tests Policy and Authorship Dispute Resolution Policy among other actions ([Faculty Council Actions](#)).

New Business: Faculty will consider a recommendation by the Chancellor and Provost to eliminate the Faculty Ombuds (peer) position in Academic Affairs and replace it with an Ombuds professional administrative position serving both faculty and staff housed in the Office of the Chancellor. Information about this proposal will be forthcoming in May.

Congratulations to the new slate of Officers for the 2021-22 term: Faculty President Susan Harden, Past President Joel Avrin, and Faculty Secretary Debra Smith. Special thanks for Dr. Joel Avrin for his service as Faculty Council President. Joel will continue to serve the Faculty as Past President.

### International Scholar and Faculty Town Hall

On May 5 at 3:00 p.m., the Office of International Program's International Student and Scholar Office will hold a virtual town hall for international scholars and faculty. Topics will include health and safety, travel updates, and reminders on maintaining valid status. Faculty and staff are welcome to participate and should register [here](#).

## Dr. Lori Thomas Named Interim Director of the Urban Institute

Lori Thomas, Director of Research and Faculty Engagement at the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute, will assume the role of Interim Director of the institute effective May 1. Thomas will replace Jeff Michael, the Institute's long-time director, who is leaving the position April 30 after serving 18 years to become North Carolina's Deputy Secretary for Natural Resources. Thomas' appointment was announced by Byron White, Associate Provost for Urban Research and Community Engagement, who leads the institute's parent unit. Thomas, who is also an Associate Professor of Social Work, serves as executive director of the Institute for Social Capital, an integrated data system operated by the Urban Institute. In her current role, she leads the work of community-engaged researchers and graduate students and facilitates use of linked administrative data by faculty researchers and community organizations. "While Jeff's departure leaves a huge hole in our organization, I am very pleased that Dr. Thomas has agreed to step into this important role," White said. "She is well-positioned and more than qualified to assume these duties through the next transition of the Institute."

## Virtual STEM Summit

### Promoting Educational Reform in STEM at the Course, Department, and Institutional Level

The keynote speaker for the summit is Dr. Paula Lemons, Professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the University of Georgia. The COVID-19 pandemic and heightened attention to systemic racism have highlighted the fact that outdated teaching practices can stunt student learning and trust of science, maintain systemic biases, and prevent equitable education. Institutions can dismantle these problems, and rebuild equitable and just systems through collective action among instructors, administrators, and change agents. This talk will describe a transformation project that aims to shift the University towards new core commitments for education. The summit is open to the campus community and is supported by Transforming STEM Teaching and Learning Academy, Center for Teaching and Learning and the Office of Undergraduate Education.

- Thursday, May 13, 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM via Zoom ([Register](#))

## Holshouser, Maguire Named Top Teaching Assistants for 2020-21

Kaitlyn Holshouser, Curriculum & Instruction-Urban Elementary Education, and Jules Maguire, English, recently were named top Teaching Assistant and Instructor of Record for 2020-21, respectively. The Graduate School hosts the Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Awards annually to honor top TAs nominated by faculty supervisors for their work. The awards, one to the top Teaching Assistant and one to the top Instructor of Record, recognize outstanding and innovative teaching techniques. This year 31 students were nominated for the awards. Read more at the [Graduate School](#).

## Universal Design Fast Facts Series Session 10 Focuses on Accessible Pictures

UNC Charlotte is a rapidly growing university with almost 30,000 students from diverse backgrounds. This diversity includes not only culture or knowledge background but also students who live with a disability. At UNC Charlotte we are committed to providing equality of educational opportunity and ensuring accessible education to all students. This series focuses on Universal Design, and how full accessibility not only benefits students with disabilities but also adds quality to your course. The series consists of small topics of Universal Design instructions presented in 10-15 minutes followed by a Q&A session. Participants can bring their electronic content to discuss its accessibility. Electronic content can be a web page, PDF file, Word file, Canvas Course, etc. An upcoming session will focus on how to differentiate between Alternative Text and Long Description, and how to add appropriate alternative text to pictures, charts, and tables. [Register](#).

## Ventureprise Launch NSF I-Corps Summer 2021 Virtual Cohort Now Accepting Applications

Join 350+ UNC Charlotte faculty and students that have already completed the Ventureprise Launch program. Apply to participate in the Summer 2021 Ventureprise Launch National Science Foundation I-Corps Virtual Cohort to receive up to \$5,000 for your research or business idea. The program provides UNC Charlotte faculty, staff and students with commercialization training and new NSF funding. Applications will close May 20. This virtual cohort with a tiered approach launches June 2. The goal of the program is to identify potential commercial uses for technology and research. The next stage is a six month \$50,000 NSF I-Corps Teams grant. Applications are currently open and are reviewed as they are submitted. More information and the application form can be found on the [NSF I-Corps webpage](#). For additional questions, contact [Devin Collins](#) or [Laura Smailes](#).

## J. Murrey Atkins Library News and Events

### Two Exhibits Explore April 30 Memorial Collection

In the days following the tragic events of April 30, 2019, impromptu memorials at the Kennedy building and the Miner statue were filled with hundreds of candles, flowers, letters of condolence, and other mementos of our collective grief and sadness. When rain threatened to destroy these items, staff members with Atkins Library Special Collections and University Archives stepped in to protect the remembrances from damage, and now they have a home in the archives as part of the UNC Charlotte April 30 Tragedy Memorial Collection.

In remembrance, University Archives is sharing this collection with the UNC Charlotte community through two exhibits. Visitors to the Popp Martin Student Union will be able to see candles, posters, and cards from the memorials. They will be able to watch video clips of the vigil and news conferences and can hear numerous oral histories conducted with first responders, administrators, and students. This exhibit will run in the Popp Martin Student Union Art Gallery from April 30-May 28, 2021. In the [Niners Remember April 30 permanent online exhibit](#), all are invited to view photos, video, and audio recordings made in the days, weeks, and months after April 30. The online exhibit highlights the May 1 vigil, the numerous memorials made to honor Reed and Riley, and the ways in which the Charlotte community reached out in support of the University.

### Diversity In Gaming Study

Help us create our new Diversity in Gaming Collection by playing video games & using controllers! Please give us your [feedback by May 13](#). The purpose of this study is to determine whether specific video game titles and controllers should be eligible for UNC Charlotte's Diversity In Gaming Collection in Atkins Library, which would highlight and make available games featuring traditionally marginalized populations and games and controllers designed with accessibility in mind.

## Dissertation Defenses

The dissertation defense is one of the ways a new scholar demonstrates readiness to join the academy and is an opportunity to share their research widely. [View All Dissertation Defense Announcements](#)

## Latest AA News

For up-to-the-minute news from Academic Affairs (faculty awards, research, recognition, initiatives), follow us on Twitter ([www.twitter.com/UNCC\\_Academics](http://www.twitter.com/UNCC_Academics)) or visit the [Academic Affairs Division News webpage](#).

## Upcoming Events

### This Week:

- May-July** [UNC Charlotte Botanical Gardens events](#)
- May-July** [Diversity events](#)

**Upcoming:** [provost.uncc.edu/division-news/weekly-news-digest/upcoming-events](http://provost.uncc.edu/division-news/weekly-news-digest/upcoming-events)

*The [DAA News Digest](#) is distributed each Monday to Academic Affairs faculty and staff. To have items included in the digest, complete the [NEWS DIGEST REQUEST FORM](#). Deadline for submission is 11:00 a.m. every Friday.*