

THE JAMES G.
MARTIN
CENTER
FOR ACADEMIC
RENEWAL

Political Reality on North Carolina Campuses:

Examining Policy Debates and Forums
with Diverse Viewpoints

George R. La Noue

February 2021



Author's Acknowledgments

I am greatly indebted to Rabbi Adam Shulman, UMBC School of Public Policy graduate, for his indefatigable work in examining the campus calendars that are the basis for this report. Rabbi Shulman was one of the principal researchers for my book *Silenced Stages: The Loss of Academic Freedom and Campus Policy Debates* (Carolina Academic Press, 2019). The James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal and the John William Pope Foundation provided the financial support for this research and I am grateful. The ideas expressed are solely my own and do not necessarily reflect those of any organization.

Executive Summary

Everywhere in higher education, there is a rhetorical affirmation of the values of free speech and the development of informed citizens. North Carolina's state motto in Latin is *Esse Quam Videri*, which translates to "To Be Rather Than to Seem." So it is reasonable to research what kind of speech actually exists on North Carolina campuses, particularly about public policy issues. Examination of official campus rules about free speech, as the Martin Center and the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education have done, is a good starting point. Campus climate surveys where students are asked if they feel free to express themselves and whether they might forcefully oppose a speaker they might not like are helpful. Understanding the partisan identifications of faculty can provide some context.

If, however, the issue is what actually happens (the "Be" rather than the "Seem") on campuses regarding the presentation of different public policy perspectives, research becomes more difficult. Public policy issues may be touched on by campus newspapers or addressed by occasional invited lecturers. Some courses deal directly with public policy, though students in many majors will not take them. Further, whether that instruction and course assignments are balanced is an impossible task to determine for the thousands of classes taught. Faculty committed to post-modern theory often reject the concept of objectivity and see advocacy of their preferred political positions as a personal and institutional duty.

The research reported here takes on a more modest scope, but an important subject nonetheless. Almost all American students are eligible to vote. So,

- What formal policy debates or forums with diverse viewpoints are sponsored for undergraduates on each of the North Carolina campuses studied?
- What issues are included; which are excluded?
- Without taking a whole policy-relevant course, will students have the opportunity to hear a civil discussion by well-informed persons with different perspectives on the great and complex policy issues affecting their lives, their nation, and the world?

As Americans and North Carolinians are increasingly politically polarized, it would seem incumbent on higher education to model the kind of policy discussions on which our democracy depends.

Consequently, this research examines the 2018 and 2019 online calendars for 37 four-year North Carolina campuses to record all their multi-speaker policy events. These events were then classified as debates or forums in 24 different policy areas. Because some calendars were incomplete or difficult to interpret, follow-up emails

were sent to campus reference librarians, archivists, and chief academic officers to try to assure accuracy. We believe our results are comprehensive, but no campus keeps information about public policy events with the meticulousness that its sports information is maintained.

We hope readers will delve into the report to understand its detailed findings. The bottom line, however, is clear.

Survey after survey shows that faculty are increasingly one-sided in their political identifications, that many students are fearful of expressing their policy opinions, and that an activist minority is willing to shut down speech it opposes. In this environment, public policy debates were almost entirely absent on North Carolina campuses and where policy-related forums were present, there seems to be no consistent effort to invite panelists with different viewpoints.

There are some exceptions, but most North Carolina campuses seem inhospitable locations for policy discourse open to all undergraduates.

During fierce 2020 protests over the meaning and implementation of justice (among other issues), campuses—when they were open—were subject to demonstrations, but had not developed models for more reflective discourse. As concluded in this report, it does not seem likely on most campuses that the energy for creating frequent and responsible civil discourse about controversial public policy issues exists. That stimulus may have to come from legislators for public institutions and governing boards for both private and public campuses. As is often the case, that initiative may require some funding and regular reporting about campus policy events.

Hopefully, those initiatives will result in productive discourse between those who hold campuses accountable and campus administrators and faculty who will be ultimately responsible for scheduling and selecting policy topics and participants.

Table of Contents

I. Introduction	1
II. Campus Intellectual Diversity	4
Figure A. North Carolina Faculty Partisan Affiliations and Donations	9
III. Student Perceptions of Campus Free Speech	11
IV. Measuring North Carolina Campus Policy Debates and Forums	16
V. Research Methodology	17
VI. Calendar Analysis Research Results	20
VII. Conclusions and Recommendations for the Future	34
Appendix	39
Bibliography	41
About the Author	45

I. Introduction

North Carolina has a proud history in public and private higher education. Founded in 1789, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) was the first public university in the nation. The state has three universities (Duke University, North Carolina State University, and UNC-CH) in the Carnegie Doctoral University Very High Research Activity category. In the R2 High Research Activity, the state is represented by East Carolina University, North Carolina A&T University, UNC-Charlotte, UNC-Greensboro, UNC-Wilmington, and Wake Forest University. The state also has several nationally ranked liberal arts campuses in the top 200 such as Davidson ranked #9, Salem #136, UNC-Asheville #148, and Guilford #158.

North Carolina higher education has not escaped controversy, however. The state was segregated until the Supreme Court decided *Brown v Board of Education* in 1954 and still has twelve Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). These five public and seven mostly small private campuses are the most numerous HBCUs of any state in the country.

How to remember and evaluate the state's Confederate past creates conflict on campuses in North Carolina as it does in other states. After a group of Chapel Hill students toppled the Confederate soldier "Silent Sam" campus statue during an April 20, 2018 night, Chancellor Carol L. Folt recognized that the monument had been "divisive" and "a source of frustration for many people not only on our campus but throughout the community." However, she added, pulling down the statue was "unlawful and dangerous and we are very fortunate no one was hurt."¹ Attempts in the aftermath of that event to find a satisfactory solution were very difficult.²

Free speech issues exist in North Carolina as well. Complaints about demanding ideological conformity for both faculty and staff recently have emerged at Duke³ and UNC-CH.⁴ The only such speech issue to be thoroughly adjudicated occurred when Professor Mike Adams sued the University of North Carolina-Wilmington (UNCW) after it denied his promotion to full professor. Adams was a provocative, prolific conservative blogger and he argued the denial was because some of his publications were thought

¹ Antonia Noori Farzan, "'Silent Sam': A racist Jim Crow-era speech inspired UNC students to topple a Confederate monument on campus," *The Washington Post*, April 21, 2018.

² A few months later, Folt resigned and in 2020 a judge overturned a settlement UNC had reached with the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Laurel Wamsley, "Judge Voids UNC's Controversial Settlement Over Confederate 'Silent Sam,'" *NPR*, February 12, 2020.

³ Evan Charney, "The End of Being a Duke Professor and What It Means for the Future of Higher Education." The James G. Martin Center, April 22, 2019. Charney was a well-published professor on a series of five-year contingent contracts in Duke's Sanford School of Public Policy. His research focus was on the genetic and biological explanations of complex human behaviors, a particularly treacherous area in the modern university. His Martin Center essay drew a remarkable 297 pro and con responses.

⁴ Chris West, "How Colleges Get Rid of Conservative Admins: An Example from UNC." The James G. Martin Center, May 11, 2020.

objectionable. Seven years after filing his complaint, resulting in a negative decision by a U.S. District Court, a partial reversal and remand by the U.S. Fourth Circuit of Appeals, Adams won a unanimous jury verdict in 2014.

The jury agreed that “the defendants [would not] have reached the same decision not to promote the plaintiff in the absence of the plaintiff’s speech activity” and that the University’s behavior violated Adams’ First Amendment rights. The Court then awarded Adams the promotion he sought, \$50,000 in back pay, and attorney’s fees.⁵ Two years later, however, Change.org launched a petition signed by 5,639 people asking that Adams be fired for some of his new statements, but UNCW, while publicly lamenting his language and the controversy it caused, took no further action.⁶ A few days before his retirement, Adams was found dead from suicide in his home without a clear explanation of what caused his despair.⁷

An example of what motivates free speech controversies in universities can be found in a blog by Jonathan Turley, a George Washington University law professor and a frequent commentator on public policy. Duke Law School’s Federalist Society chapter had invited Helen Alvare, a George Mason University law professor, to participate with two Duke University law professors in a virtual panel discussion, “Putting Children at the Front Door of Family Law,” on October 26, 2020. Professor Alvare had written a 2017 book on this subject and had argued against same-sex marriage. Attendance at the event was purely voluntary, but a substantial number of Duke Law students signed a letter demanding that Dean Kerry Abrams remove Alvare from the panel or cancel the event entirely. The students’ letter captures the views of many who would restrict campus free speech. They wrote:

When we ask a speaker to come to Duke, we are giving that person space and license to express their views on a particular subject—and by doing so we are implicitly signaling our willingness to tolerate or our approval of such ideas...By not condemning injustice, you condone it. And that is the signal Duke will be sending to not only current LGBTQ+ student body, but to all future potential students applying to Duke as well.⁸

⁵ *Michael S. Adams v. The Trustees of the University of North Carolina-Wilmington et al.* (Eastern District of the North Carolina Southern Division, No 7:07-CV-64-H). See also Eugene Volokh, “Conservative professor-blogger wins political retaliation case at trial.” *The Washington Post*, May 19, 2014 and David French, “A Federal Jury Speaks, and Academic Freedom Wins,” *National Review*, March 21, 2014.

⁶ Mary Emily O’Hara, “Free Speech or Harassment,” *NBC News*, November 30, 2016.

⁷ For his attorney’s view of Adam’s trial and death see, David French, “A Eulogy for a Friend, a Lament for our Nation,” *The Dispatch*, July 26, 2020.

⁸ Jonathan Turley, “We are Tired:” Duke Law Students Demand George Mason Professor Be Barred From Virtual Panel,” <https://jonathanturley.org/2020/10/23/we-are-tired-duke-law-students-demand-george-mason-professor-be-barred-from-virtual-panel/comment-page-1/>.

Professor Turley has long supported same-sex marriage. Nevertheless, he pointed out that by asking to censor speech in the name of the “diversity, equality, and tolerance” ethic at Duke, students would be undermining “intellectual diversity” and free speech in practice.⁹

Duke, of course, is a private university, but in 2017 the North Carolina legislature passed HB 527, “An Act to Restore and Preserve Free Speech on the Campuses and Constituent Institutions of University of North Carolina.” The Act required that: “Access to campus for purposes of free speech and expression shall be consistent with First Amendment jurisprudence regarding traditional public forums, designated public forums, and nonpublic forums, subject to reasonable time, place and manner restrictions.” The legislature added that if those restrictions are followed, “campuses are open to any speaker whom students, student groups or members of the faculty have invited.”

The next year, the James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal and the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) published a report titled “Do North Carolina Students have Freedom of Speech?”¹⁰ In this report, authors Azhar Majeed (FIRE) and Jenna A. Robinson (Martin Center) updated a 2010 survey of official campus policies regarding free speech for students. The authors found that:

In the eight years since the publication of that [2010] report, North Carolina colleges and universities have made remarkable progress in their protection of First Amendment rights on campus...North Carolina is now far and away the nation’s leader in terms of the number of green light schools within the state.

FIRE’s methodology used traffic light symbolism to classify campus-stated policies of 36 North Carolina institutions. A “red light” indicated that a campus had one or more policies that on its face restricted freedom of speech. The “yellow light” category referred to campus policies that were vague enough that they might deter protected speech depending on administrative application. “Green light” campuses were those where official policies “do not seriously imperil speech.”

According to the 2018 report, eight North Carolina campuses received a green rating, 11 campuses were yellow, and 17 campuses were red. All public campuses were rated green, except Elizabeth City State, Fayetteville State, North Carolina A&T, NC State,

⁹ Duke was also the site of an outline conversation hosted by classical studies Professor Jed Atkins on speech suppression as it emerged from campuses into the larger American society. This was certainly a valuable discussion, but the speakers Bari Weiss and Thomas Chatterton Williams largely agreed with each other, so the audience would not have heard proponents of speech restriction which would have made the dialogue more valuable. Shannon Watkins, “Where Did ‘Cancel Culture’ Come From? The James G. Martin Center, November 2, 2020.

¹⁰ Azhar Majeed and Jenna Robinson, “Do North Carolina Students Have Freedom of Speech: A Review of Campus Speech Codes,” The James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal and the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE), September, 2018.

UNC-Asheville, UNC-Pembroke, UNC School of the Arts, Western Carolina University, and Winston–Salem State. Over the eight-year period, Appalachian State, East Carolina University, North Carolina Central University, UNC-Charlotte, and UNC-Greensboro moved from red to green. Most of the red ratings were for private campuses, including such prominent institutions as Davidson, Elon, and Wake Forest.

In evaluating the commendable movement toward “green” in North Carolina, it is important to remember the caveat in the FIRE ratings, which states: “A green light rating does not indicate that a campus actively supports free expression in practice. It simply means that FIRE is not currently aware of any serious threats to student free speech rights in the written policies on that campus.” In short, the FIRE ratings based on official policies do not evaluate whether there is actually vigorous political discourse on a campus.

What the cause and effect of HB 527 on improving free speech policies at public campuses is beyond the scope of this research, but both the law and the Martin Center/FIRE survey focus attention on the problem of overt suppression. North Carolina’s state motto in Latin is “*Esse Quam Videri*” or “To Be Rather Than to Seem.” Research examining the debates and/or forums with diverse viewpoints that a campus sponsors adds to our understanding of the actual campus public policy discourse that occurs.

This report examines these events in 2018 and 2019 before COVID-19 slammed into every corner of American life and created enormous uncertainty for higher education. Why then focus on policy debates and forums? Untangling the complex motives and implementation consequences of public policy is always necessary for a democracy to work well. Now the pandemic has created the greatest lifestyle alterations in peace-time America in our history. We may not know for decades what its full impact will be. The need for debating the role of our constitutional governmental arrangements, the protection of individual liberties, and almost every one of the 24 policy issues this research covers (Appendix) will be greater, not lesser, as we work out our way from this unprecedented situation. Like many other states, North Carolina’s electoral map often shows a sea of red counties, with blue islands where campuses are located. If higher education does not actively seek a diversity of viewpoints, useful debates may not take place and students may not be exposed to the policy options available or to the views of their fellow citizens.

II. Campus Intellectual Diversity

In higher education circles, there have been many recent discussions about the increasing political homogeneity of campus faculty. The issue is not whether such

homogeneity exists in the politically relevant disciplines,¹¹ but what causes it, what its consequences are, and what remedies, if any, should be undertaken. A campus or a department that has minimal intellectual diversity may produce only an echo chamber rather than a vigorous search for empirical reality or even alternative values. Free speech is unlikely in that environment.

The American Council of Education (ACE), together with dozens of other higher education associations, issued a joint statement on intellectual diversity in 2005.¹² The ACE statement declared in lofty terms that “Intellectual pluralism and academic freedom are central principles of American Higher Education,” but then added language that created considerable wiggle room: “Individual campuses must give meaning and definition to these concerns within the context of disciplinary standards and institutional mission.” Four years later, the American Council of Trustees and Alumni followed up with a pamphlet illustrating some campus affirmations of the concept of “intellectual diversity,”¹³ but unless there is some way to measure and report on the events institutions actually sponsor for their students, the concept may be just one more higher education buzzword.

Many campuses have made it a priority to achieve more racial and gender representation in their departments. Even students seem to have bought into that goal.¹⁴ Since it would be illegal to simply try to achieve population proportional representation in faculty hiring, campuses claim they only consider race and gender in their personnel decisions to achieve “diversity.” This claim rests on the dubious assumption that a person’s race or gender will reflect differences in teaching style or performance or research agenda and achievements.

Almost any campus administration can instantly provide statistics about the race and gender composition of their faculty, but very few administrations are interested in

¹¹ For a review of this argument from someone who has done original and extensive research on the politically relevant disciplines, see Mitchell Lambert, “Who Says Academia Isn’t Awash in Liberal Bias.” The James G. Martin Center, October 28, 2020. For an opposing viewpoint based on faculty from all disciplines, see Naomi Orekes and Charlie Tyson, “Is Academia Awash in Liberal Bias?” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 14, 2020.

¹² American Council on Education, “Statement of Academic Rights and Responsibilities,” June, 2005. See also American Council of Trustees and Alumni, “Intellectual Diversity: Time for Action.” December, 2005.

¹³ American Council of Trustees and Alumni, “Protecting the Free Exchange of Ideas: How Trustees Can Advance Intellectual Diversity on Campus,” 2009. For example, Anthony Marx, the President of Amherst College announced: “To expose the College community to diverse perspectives, the President’s office has organized a series of talks that pair speakers of divergent perspectives to discuss the important issues of the day” p.28.

¹⁴ John M. Carey, Katherine Clayton, and Yusaku Horiuchi, *Campus Diversity: The Hidden Consensus* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

Whether whole departments have uniform views on important policy questions is rarely examined on campuses.

knowing or publishing how many faculty are Democrats, Republicans, Marxists, libertarians, conservatives, religious believers, or feminists. Whether whole departments have uniform views on important policy questions is rarely examined on campuses.

When Everett Ladd and Seymour Lipset wrote *The Divided Academy* in 1975, they found that 37 percent of the faculty over age 55 identified as Republicans, while only 18 percent under 35 so identified.¹⁵ Thirty years later, a 2005 national survey found that 72 percent of all faculty described themselves as liberals and only 15 percent as conservatives, but that in English literature, philosophy, political science, and religious studies departments, at least 80 percent of the faculty considered themselves liberals and no more than 5 percent thought of themselves as conservative.¹⁶

Elite institutions may be even more one-sided. When an economist published findings in 2005 on political affiliations of Stanford University and the University of California Berkeley faculty, he found that the ratio of Democrats to Republicans was 8 to 1 or 10 to 1. The ratio of Democrats to Republicans was 28 to 1 for sociologists and 30 to 1 for anthropologists.¹⁷ There are also differences by region, where New England faculty are by far the most liberal, while professors in the Rocky Mountain region were less so.¹⁸

Some disciplines are more politically relevant than others, so generalizations about faculty political identifications as a whole may not be helpful in understanding the actual political discourse students are exposed to on campus.

For example, in their *Closed Minds* survey, Smith, Mayer, and Fritschler found that of those faculty with partisan identifications, 56 percent were Democrats while only 14 percent were Republicans—but more natural sciences faculty classified themselves as independents than those in the social sciences or humanities. On the other hand, their

¹⁵ As portrayed in Howard R. Bowen and Jack H. Schuster, *American Professors: A Natural Resource Imperiled* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986) p.42.

¹⁶ Howard Kuntz, "College Faculties: A Most Liberal Lot, A Study Finds," Federalist Society, March 29, 2005. The study reported on was by Stanley Rothman, S. Robert Lichter, and Neil Nevitte, "Politics and Professional Advancement Among College Faculty," *The Forum*, vol.3. no.1, article 2, (2005) 5.

¹⁷ Karl Zinsmeister, "Case Closed," *The American Enterprise*, January/ February, 2005, 42.

¹⁸ Samuel J. Adams, "There are Conservative Professors, Just not in These States," *New York Times Sunday Review*, July 1, 2016 and Sam Adams "The Blue Shift of the New England Professoriate," *The Heterodox Academy* website, July 6, 2016. There is apparently a shift in the political affiliations of British professors, as well, toward the Labour or Green parties away from the Conservative party. Noah Carl, "New Report on the Political Views of the British Academics," *The Heterodox Academy* website. March 6, 2017.

survey of college faculty found that, although they were overwhelmingly Democrats, those polled did not believe that affiliation affected hiring decisions or the political

Without other confirmation, simply asking faculty whether their political identifications affect their judgment and decisions may not be definitive proof.

climate on campus.¹⁹ The report on survey responses to possible ideological discrimination did not disaggregate by discipline or type of campus, so the aggregate response may mask some problems if the question is not defined more narrowly. The authors reported that sociologists reported a Democratic partisan affiliation to a Republican affiliation by a 28 to 1 ratio, while among

mathematicians, the ratio was a little more than 2 to 1. Mathematicians may accurately report that politics has little effect on their academic decisions, while sociologists may view the problem differently. Furthermore, without other confirmation, simply asking faculty whether their political identifications affect their judgment and decisions may not be definitive proof.

The political affiliations of faculty in economics, history, journalism/communications, law, and psychology at elite institutions were re-measured in 2016 by Mitchell Lambert using a voting list database compiled by Aristotle, a data-mining firm. Overall, his research showed professors registered as Democrats outnumber Republicans by 11.5 to 1. There were striking differences on particular campuses.

At Pepperdine, the ratio was 1.2 Democrats to 1 Republican, and at Ohio State, it was 3.2 Democrats to 1 Republican. But, at other institutions with high-profile professional and graduate programs in those fields, the ratios were:

- Harvard 10:1
- Stanford 11:1
- Duke 11:1
- Cornell 13:1
- UC-Berkeley 14:1
- NYU 16:1

¹⁹ Jeremy D. Mayer, Bruce L.R. Smith and A. Lee Fritschler, *Closed Minds? Politics and Ideology in American Universities* (Washington, D.C. The Brookings Institution, 2008). Pp.71-91. Table 5-8-5-11. The gateway question asked was how faculty handled political questions in their classes. Of the 1,154 respondents, 61 percent said that 'Politics seldom comes up in their classes because of the nature of the subject I teach.' p.84. So the most relevant analysis would be about the way professors who did handle politically sensitive issues acted in classroom settings. That analysis was not made. Nor was the question asked about whether political ideology in the politically relevant disciplines affects what research is funded and/or published or affects which speakers are invited to campus or what topics are discussed in open campus forums.

- Yale 16:1
- MIT 19:1
- Maryland 26:1
- Princeton 30:1
- Columbia 30:1
- Johns Hopkins 35.1
- Brown 60.1²⁰

Of course, there are viewpoint differences by people who identify with the same political party. Still, these imbalances should raise questions about whether students will be exposed to the various policy alternatives debated beyond the campus if all the members of an academic department hold the same partisan identities. Even more important may be whether all faculty in an academic unit hold the same ideological perspectives on policy issues central to their fields. For example, if all the professors in a college or department of education were opposed to school choice, would students be exposed to a fair treatment of arguments for charter schools or vouchers?

Partisan imbalance may also affect the identities and behaviors of professors in professional schools. Even in law schools, which sponsor many debates and forums on some topics, the faculty are not representative in either racial, religious, or partisan terms, and recent recruitment patterns are reinforcing the trends of fewer whites, Christians, and Republicans than available data would suggest should be the case.²¹ James C. Phillips has concluded in his study, “Why are there so few Conservatives and Libertarians in Legal Academia: An Empirical Exploration of Three Hypotheses,” that it is not because professors who are white, Christian, or Republican are less qualified, productive, or frequently cited.²² In 2005, Professor John O. McGinnis published a paper in the *Georgetown Law Journal* recording the partisan contributions of faculty at the top 21 law schools.²³ Of those who gave at least \$200 to federal campaigns, 81 percent gave wholly or predominantly to Democrats, while just 15 percent gave to Republicans. Not surprisingly, when these professors joined in open letters on political and legal matters, their comments followed partisan lines.

Ideological imbalance may also affect hiring and teaching behavior as well. A 2007 study found that 53 percent of university professors sampled had a cool or negative attitude toward evangelicals, though it is unlikely that any campus implementing a diversity policy has taken steps to protect such students or job applicants. A 2012

²⁰ Mitchell Langbert, Anthony J. Quain, and Daniel B. Klein, “Faculty Voting Registration in Economics, History, Journalism, Law and Psychology,” *Economic Journal Watch*, Vol.13. No.3, p.424.

²¹ James Lindgren “Measuring Diversity: Law Faculties in 1997 and 2013,” *Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy*, Vol. 39, No.1, Winter 2016).

²² *Ibid*, pp. 154-208.

²³ John O. McGinnis et al., “The Patterns and implications of Political Contributions by Elite Law School Faculty,” 93 *Geo L.J.*1167, 1187 (2005).

study found that 82 percent of liberal social psychologists—who constitute the vast majority of that discipline—acknowledge that they would be at least a little prejudiced against a conservative applicant for a departmental job.²⁴ Under those circumstances, students may not be exposed to fundamental differences of opinion, even if some campus forums occur.²⁵

In North Carolina, recent studies of faculty partisan affiliations and party donors of four campuses have been done by Mitchel Langbert and Sean Stevens.²⁶ The results are shown in Figure A below.

Figure A. North Carolina Faculty Partisan Affiliations and Donations

Campus	Sample Size	Party Affiliation	Party Donors
Davidson	161	87D/9R	8D/0R
Duke	158	74D/4R	31D/0R
NC State	168	74D/12R	16D/0R
UNC-Chapel Hill	166	96D/2R	31D/0R

By comparing sample size with party identification data, it can be seen that a substantial number of faculty do not list any party identification. Still, for those identified, it appears that partisan faculty imbalance among these four elite North Carolina campuses reflects similar national patterns.²⁷

²⁴ Jose L. Durate et.al. "Political Diversity Will Improve Social Psychological Science," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

²⁵ ACTA, "Intellectual Diversity," 3.

²⁶ Mitchell Langbert, "Homogenous: The Political Affiliations of Elite Liberal Arts College Faculty," *Academic Questions*, Summer, 2018 and Mitchell Langbert and Sean Stevens, "Partisan Registration and Contributions of Faculty in Flagship Colleges," *Academic Questions*, January 17, 2020.

²⁷ Michael Taffe and Kyle Ingram, "UNC System Board of Governors members' political contributions show conservative ties," *The Daily Tar Heel*, November 15, 2020.

If diversity is defined narrowly...to create preferences in search processes, non-discrimination and “diversity” may not be compatible.

There is a widespread consensus in higher education that faculty hiring should be non-discriminatory, given various federal and state laws,²⁸ while seeking simultaneously to increase “diversity.” If diversity is defined narrowly in racial, ethnic, and gender terms and operationalized to create preferences in search processes, non-discrimination and

“diversity” may not be compatible. Job advertisements often state “women and minorities are encouraged to apply,” so, then, who is not encouraged to apply? Whether these two goals are compatible depends a lot on the institutional definition of “diversity,” the administrative tools used to enforce their definitions, and how officials know when enough “diversity” exists. On the other hand, if “diversity” is defined in terms of multiplying intellectual viewpoints and encouraging well-balanced departmental research agendas and public events, then the search for added diversity may be quite defensible legally and educationally sound.²⁹

Sean Stevens and Debra Mashek have done research on institutional commitments to intellectual diversity in a sample of 201 Top National Universities and Top National Liberal Arts Colleges as listed in *US News and World Report*.³⁰ They found that only 17 (8.46 percent) of these institutions had non-discrimination policies that included political affiliation or political philosophy. The University of Colorado is one of the most forthright “declaring that political affiliation and political philosophy are protected characteristics under the Laws of the Regents.” While these policies may be useful, potential faculty candidates probably pay much more attention to the language in particular job descriptions. Stevens and Mashek describe job ads as:

*carefully crafted to signal institutional needs, interests, and values. Before they are made public, job ads are generally approved by the home department and the academic dean or provost. Some campuses also involve human resource officers and, increasingly, campus diversity officers who weigh in to insure the ad makes clear that the institution welcomes and celebrates diversity.*³¹

²⁸ The Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Discrimination on the basis of partisan identification is currently not illegal, but at public universities, if such discrimination could be proven, it might raise First Amendment questions.

²⁹ George R. La Noue, “Diversity and Exclusion,” *Academic Questions*, Fall, 2018.

³⁰ Sean Stevens and Debra Mashek, “Non-Discrimination Statements at the Institutional Level & What to Do About It (Part 1)”, The Heterodox Academy website, November 29, 2017.

³¹ Debra Mashek and Sean Stevens, “Hiring in Higher Ed: Do Job Ads Signal a Desire for Viewpoint Diversity? (Part 2)”, The Heterodox Academy website, December 1, 2017.

So, of the 17 institutions that have political non-discrimination policies, how were these policies reflected in actual job ads? Only three mentioned non-discrimination based on political affiliation at all and then the phrase was just in the long list of categories the institution affirmed should not be considered in hiring. Only occasionally, such as in the following public policy/public administration job advertisement posted by Claremont McKenna Colleges was the concept of intellectual diversity made a positive characteristic:

*Given our commitment to cultivating a challenging and inclusive educational environment, we seek candidates who can demonstrate a commitment to teaching mentoring, teaching, and inspiring students representing a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds, political opinions, genders, race, ethnicities, nationalities, sexual orientations, and religions.*³²

The reality of the partisan imbalance among faculty, administrators, and campus speakers has finally reached public perceptions as well. Responding to a general question in a Pew Research Center poll about whether higher education had a positive or negative impact on the country, Republican perceptions had shifted from 54 percent positive in 2015 to 58 percent negative in 2017. On the other hand, the positive numbers among Democrats moved from 65 percent positive to 72 percent positive in that same period.³³ For higher education institutions that must seek support from Republican-controlled legislatures, this is an ominous trend in public opinion.³⁴ One newspaper editorialized, “This is a culture war that only produces losers” and then captioned its comments as “Higher education haters: Why must Republicans wage war on colleges and universities.”³⁵ It is possible that Congressional Republican proposals to tax very large university endowments and graduate student benefits may be influenced by their perception that these types of universities are hostile generally to their public policy agenda.

III. Student Perceptions of Campus Free Speech

While the *Closed Minds* survey in 2008 indicated that professors did not feel that faculty political affiliations affected their campuses’ political climate, by 2017, student survey data showed a different picture.

³² *Ibid.* The authors suggested the following template “We enthusiastically welcome applications from talented individuals from diverse backgrounds. [School Name] values diversity of perspectives, including those held by people from different racial, religious, ideological, ethnic and geographic backgrounds.”

³³ Pew Research Center, “Sharp Partisan Divisions in Views of National Institutions,” July 10, 2017.

³⁴ For a discussion of the recent budgetary conflict between Idaho higher education leaders and Republican state legislators, see Scott Yenor, “Idaho’s Higher Education Earthquake,” The James G. Martin Center, May 22, 2020.

³⁵ *Baltimore Sun*, July 13, 2017.

A Cato Free Speech and Tolerance Survey of undergraduate and graduate students found 72 percent of Republican students said their campuses' political climate prevented them from sharing their political views. Even 70 percent of Independents felt the same way, as did 51 percent of students who identified as Democrats. Only students who identified as "very liberal" did not feel the need to self-censor.³⁶

In the results from another 2017 survey of 1,227 college students, 53 percent reported they did *not* think their institution frequently "encourages students to consider a wide variety of viewpoints and perspectives." Students in particular were reluctant to discuss race and gender, with conservatives the most fearful.³⁷ More evidence describing student attitudes toward viewpoint diversity comes from the 2017 National Survey of Student Engagement's (NSSE) "Inclusiveness and engagement and cultural diversity module." Students reported that their institutions actively supported racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, and gender diversity, but far less so for political diversity.³⁸

In 2017, John Villasenor of the Brookings Institution conducted still another national survey of 1,500 undergraduate students from 49 states and the District of Columbia about their views about campus speech.³⁹ Regarding the question of whether the First Amendment protects "hate speech," most who had an opinion said no. With regard to shouting down a speaker (where no background or topic was stated), but which some students opposed for unknown reasons, a slender majority agreed with that action. But the partisan differences were substantial. Among students who identified as Democrats, 62 percent agreed with preventing the audience from hearing the speech, while only 39 percent of Republicans agreed. Even if the protests involved violence, about 20 percent of all students would condone that activity.

In a further question, students were given the option of choosing a campus that "creates a positive learning environment for all students by prohibiting certain speech or expression of viewpoints that are offensive or biased against certain groups of people" (Option 1), or "create an open learning environment where students are exposed to all types of speech and viewpoints, even if it means allowing speech that is offensive or biased against certain groups of people" (Option 2). Overall, 53 percent choose Option 1 with some significant partisan differences: 61 percent of Democrats chose Option 1 while 53 percent of Republicans chose Option 2. It would be interesting to know whether the division in student opinion actually reflected partisan

³⁶ Emily Ekins, "20% of College Students say College Faculty Has Balanced Mix of Political Views," November 6, 2017. <http://www.cato.org/blog/20-current-students-say-faculty...>

³⁷ Sean Stevens, "The Campus Expression Survey, Summary of New Data," <https://heterodoxacademy.org.2017/12/the-campus-expression-survey>.

³⁸ Samuel J. Abrams, "Many students embrace viewpoint diversity. Why Won't Colleges?" Real Clear Education, <https://realcleareducation.com/articles/2017/12/15/many-students>.

³⁹ John Villasenor, "Views among colleges students regarding the First Amendment: Results from a new survey," Brookings, September 18, 2017.

identifications or whether race, ethnic, and gender orientation identifications are more important.

Whatever the source of the misunderstandings about the scope of the First Amendment, Villasenor points out that “What happens on campuses often foreshadows broader societal trends. Today’s college students are tomorrow’s attorneys, teachers, professors, policymakers, legislators and judges.”

Surveys published in 2020 show the same consistent pattern. Students are divided and perhaps confused about the boundaries of free speech. An extensive Gallup survey, in cooperation with the Charles Koch, Stanton, and John S. and James L. Knight Foundations found that only 59 percent of college students in 2019 believe free speech rights are secure, compared to 73 percent in 2016.⁴⁰ Similarly, 63 percent of students agreed that the climate on their campus deters students from expressing themselves, up from 54 percent in 2016. Whether this downgrading of free speech opportunities is caused by changes in campus speech policies, increased campus attention to diversity and inclusion, or national political polarization is not clear. The percentages, however, do affirm the need for campuses to confront the problem by sponsoring responsible discourse about controversial public policy issues so students experience the benefits of free speech in their institutional settings.

In September 2020, FIRE, College Pulse, and Real Clear Education released what they called the largest-ever college free speech survey with 20,000 participants, but with the difference that attitudes were not only reported in the aggregate, but individual campuses were rated.⁴¹ The aggregate statistics were consistent with earlier reports about which groups were most likely to favor speech restrictions, except that there was a finding that Ivy League students were more intolerant of speech they disagreed with than students at less-prestigious places. Among North Carolina campuses, Duke was ranked #7 as supportive of speech, UNC-CH #37, and Wake Forest #47 of the 55 campuses ranked.

An informal discussion on free speech with 60 Duke freshmen led by Professor of Law H. Jefferson Powell, First Amendment Supervising Attorney Nicole Ligon, and Jacqueline Pfeffer Merrill, Director of the Bipartisan Policy Institute’s Campus Free Expression Project, took place in October 2019. The most intense discussions focused on whether “campuses can be safe, diverse, and inclusive while remaining wide open to speech and expression.” Students had to be reminded that many of the civil rights and other values they support were once thought too controversial or hateful to be expressed.

⁴⁰ Gallup, “The First Amendment on Campus 2020 Report: College Student’s View of Free Expression.”

⁴¹ FIRE, “2020 College Free Speech Rankings: What’s the Climate for Free Speech on American Campuses?”

Merrill summarized her conclusion as:

Students who learn during their college years to sustain civil and respectful discussions are empowered to assess and counter hateful speech wherever they encounter it-but more, they are able to engage in conversations about the pursuit of truth. College leaders from professors to college presidents, must explain to them how campuses can welcome all students while protecting free speech. If more students absorb that lesson, students might find they are more able to tolerate student groups with unpopular views and classroom discussions on polarizing topics.⁴²

A more scientific survey specific to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has investigated similar issues. The report, “Free Expression and Constructive Dialogue at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill”, was authored by Professors Jennifer Larson (English and Comparative Literature), Mark McNeilly (Kenan-Flagler Business School), and Timothy J. Ryan (Political Science).⁴³ It is the kind of campus climate survey advocated by Heterodox Academy and provides a perspective on how these students see speech issues that may not be reflected in official campus statements.⁴⁴

The UNC-CH report was carefully done, respecting social science concerns about the validity of samples and describing the data in a variety of ways. Using two different samples and interviewing leaders of campus political groups, the survey results were mixed. While about half of students did not change their ideological orientations while at UNC, of the other half twice as many became liberals than conservative. Most students, however, believed professors to be open-minded, encouraging class participation from different perspectives. Both liberal and conservative students worried about how others responded to their political views and so self-censored. Both those attitudes are most prevalent among conservative students. All students said they were concerned more about censure from peers than faculty. Students held divisive stereotypes about the politics of others and disparaging comments about conservatives were common on the UNC campus. While students across the political spectrum reported a willingness to participate in constructive dialogue, 19 percent of self-identified liberals and 3 percent of moderates and conservatives supported blocking a speaker they disagreed with.

⁴² Jacqueline Pfeffer Merrill, “Free Expression at Duke: What do Freshman Blue Devils Think?” The James G. Martin Center, January 20, 2020.

⁴³ Jennifer Larson, Mark McNeilly, Timothy J Ryan, “Free Expression and Constructive Dialogue at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill,” March 2, 2020. Commendably, this report was financed by the Provost’s Office and supported by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment.

⁴⁴ Pete Peterson, “College Climate Surveys Needed to Understand Free Expression on Campus,” The James G. Martin Center, February 20, 2020.

The authors' final recommendations were intended "as the start of conversations about how to improve the climate for free expression and constructive dialogue at UNC."⁴⁵ They included four points:

1. Remind students about the importance of free expression and teach them appropriate ways of constructive dialogue.
2. Train faculty how to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment in classrooms.
3. Expand research on free expression and up-date it frequently to track progress and identify emerging issues.
4. Provide the UNC community with more opportunities to hear external speakers across the political, social, and cultural spectrum.

The report noted that UNC relies on professors, administrators, and students to invite guest speakers, "which might result in an imbalance among invited speakers." Specifically, the report recommends that a campus office should be created that would report to and be funded by the provost's office that would "organize campus events (debates, forums, panels, and lectures)" and "publicize these events widely on campus and record them with the purpose of hosting and sharing them on a public website." These are all useful suggestions, perhaps applicable to all North Carolina campuses, and certainly consistent with the goals of the research reported here.

For undergraduate audiences, the problem of the lack of intellectual diversity about public policy issues was raised firmly by John Etchemendy, former Stanford provost, in a speech to his University's Board of Trustees. He pointed out:

Over the years I have watched a growing intolerance at universities in this country. Not intolerance along racial or ethnic or gender lines—there, we have made laudable progress. Rather, a kind of intellectual intolerance, a political one-sidedness, that is the antithesis of what universities should stand for. It manifests itself in many ways: in the intellectual monocultures that have taken over certain disciplines; in the demands to disinvite speakers and outlaw groups whose views we find offensive; in constant calls for the university itself to take political stands. We decry certain news outlets as echo chambers, while we fail to notice the echo chambers we have built around ourselves...The university is not a megaphone to amplify this or that political view and when it does it violates a core mission.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ UNC-CH report, p.48.

⁴⁶ John Etchemendy, "The Threat from Within," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 17, 2017.

The ideological composition of the faculty is unlikely to change in any foreseeable future, so what can administrators and those who hold them accountable do to be certain that campuses expose students to a variety of perspectives on important public policy issues? Investigating particular course syllabi is labor intensive and overly intrusive. Further, a syllabus might not reveal much about the actual tenor of classroom discussions.

The goal should not be to censor or subtract from the existing campus political discourse, but to add to the variety of viewpoints expressed in events open to all students. Such events are not a panacea, but sponsoring systematic programs of public policy debates or forums with diverse viewpoints can serve several purposes:

1. They can remind the campus community that these issues are complicated and that respectful dissent is quite appropriate in an academic setting.
2. For students who find themselves in a minority about these issues, an event where respected advocates voice that minority opinion may empower these students to speak out themselves in a variety of settings.
3. Such events may convince an increasing skeptical public that campuses are open to a variety of political viewpoints, despite the political homogeneity of sectors of the faculty.

Policy debates can function like tilling exhausted soil so that new life can grow.

IV. Measuring North Carolina Campus Debates and Forums

The question for this research is whether open policy forums with speakers taking divergent positions are regularly occurring on North Carolina campuses and, if so, what topics were discussed, and who were the participants? The source for investigating these questions were campus events calendars which ordinarily list on the internet activities available to all connected to the campus community. Generally, these accessible calendars provide a comprehensive overview of policy events open to the whole campus.

Although there are few higher education institutions of any size that do not maintain electronically accessible and comprehensive calendars of athletic events and their outcomes, not all institutions have similar calendars for their intellectual, cultural, and political events. Almost all campuses have directors of sports information, but similar attention is not given to preserving their records of institutional intellectual activity. About 21 percent of North Carolina campuses we wished to include could not be analyzed because their website calendars were non-existent or highly incomplete in

terms of listing debates, forums, or lectures on public policy in 2018 and 2019. Institutions without accessible calendars should ask themselves whether they deserve public confidence without providing that information.

As it turns out, on-campus policy debates, though very infrequent, are easy to identify on events calendars. Multi-speaker forums are more common, but it was sometimes difficult to determine whether the participants were invited because they represented divergent viewpoints or whether the panel members were just friends of the convener or chosen to advocate a single policy goal. Even when there is an obvious difference in the forum speaker's background, professional courtesy or narrow perspectives might limit the panel members' actual engagement with each other. The joke might be that on a social science panel on pluralism, the political scientist might focus only on federalism, the economist on globalism's efficiencies, the anthropologist on tribalism, and no one would question the sociologist because she is always politically correct.

Even panelists with the same partisan identification can hold a diversity of opinions among them. In that case, where possible, it was helpful to follow up with the sponsor or moderator of the panel or view the event on a website to find out whether divergent views were expressed. Not every university panel needs to represent the full spectrum of relevant policy viewpoints, but universities should ask themselves whether they are fully educating their students if some policy perspectives are never heard on campus.

V. Research Methodology

Political discourse on a campus can take place in a variety of monitored and unmonitored spaces.

Some definitions are necessary to set the boundaries of this research, such as what constitutes a policy event accessible to all members of the campus community. Those events should be open without a registration fee and be sponsored by a campus office, program, or group. Rental of campus facilities for conventions, advocacy groups, or political candidates are not counted. Presentations of departmental research and capstone seminars or degree defenses would not ordinarily fit this definition because these formats are rarely open to the entire campus.

There are limitations in this research as a measure of the whole climate of campus political discourse and it does not purport to be such. This research does not examine what occurs in individual classrooms or whether those lectures and readings are reasonably well balanced. Particularly in the social sciences, many policy issues will be

discussed, but only a small fraction of the student body will take classes in American history or the Constitution, economic policy, or foreign affairs.⁴⁷

This research also does not include what information campus members may find online. Some of that online information may be informative and from credible sources, and some not, existing only in an ideological echo chamber. Blogs or YouTube videos usually do not lend themselves to sustained discourse with a larger audience. Facebook, Snapchat, and other forms of internet communication can be sustained among participants, but often with a siloed audience and sometimes characterized by a cancel or censor culture in which political dissent is not tolerated.

It also does not cover what faculty or students write about public policy or what policy discussions may find their way into student newspapers. In William D. Cohen's *The Price of Silence: The Duke Lacrosse Scandal, The Power of the Elite and the Corruption of our Great Universities* and Stuart Taylor, Jr. and KC Johnson's *Until Proven Innocent*, the authors recorded that Duke's independent student newspaper, *The Chronicle*, published a variety of pro and con letters from faculty and students about what constituted justice as the case facts unfolded. But that was a unique situation and letters to an editor, though sometimes valuable, are not a substitute for face-to-face debates or forums with the opportunity for questions.

This research includes some of the topics, affiliations, and viewpoints of individual speakers invited by campuses. That information was usually recorded "below the grid" in campus data sheets where it is available. Such speeches may be informative occasions, but there are several problems with using them to measure viewpoint diversity on a campus. It is very rare to see a program of single-person lectures that appears to be coordinated in such a way as to give audiences diverse viewpoints on the same topic. Usually, it appears those invited to a campus are friends of the invitee or are prominent enough to draw an audience and add some prestige to the campus. Further, lectures often do not lead to much dialogue. Frequently, many in the audience will not be acquainted with the speaker's arguments before the event and will not be able instantly to evaluate them. In those settings, students in particular may be reluctant to challenge the positions of guest speakers. For that reason, we have focused on campus-sponsored formal debates or forums where diverse viewpoints will be presented.

⁴⁷ Citing an American Council of Trustees and Alumni study, Douglas Belkin pointed out that only 18 percent of a sample of 1,098 public and private colleges and universities required a course in American history or government and only 3 percent in economics. "Study Finds Many Colleges Don't Require Core Subjects Like History Government," *Wall Street Journal*, October 15, 2014. See also, Jasper Scherer, "Most History Majors at Top US Schools Can Skip American History," *Fortune*, June 30, 2016 and Melissa Korn, "Few Top Schools Require History Majors to Broadly Study U.S.'s past," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 29, 2016.

Marie K. Shanahan, a journalism professor at the University of Connecticut, has articulated the framework of this research:

Young people are unlikely to learn how to engage in civil public discourse from their social media interactions. If civility requires emotional security, then students have to practice. And college educators like me need to do a better job embracing the critical role of debate facilitator and debate moderator.

Lectures by professors and campus protests rightly focus attention on important topics but both are inherently one-sided. College students also need thoughtful opportunities to participate in structured debates outside their filter bubbles, so they practice listening to and arguing dissenting points of view.⁴⁸

In a debate or forum with divergent views, it is likely that the multiple speakers will be familiar with the other participants' positions and will have the data and skills to expose weaknesses and contradictions in them. The student audiences in such settings also are more likely to be ideologically diverse and the result less likely to be simple confirmation bias.

A debate between well-prepared participants will not only permit an audience to examine the facts and theories that underlie different policy positions, but also the unintended consequences, implementation problems, and costs and benefits of them. It should lead the audience to expect and respect the concept that opposing policy positions are normal in a democracy. Ad hominem arguments, guilt-by-association aspersions, and snarky attacks that treat difficult policy questions as occasions for comedy or ridicule will be more easily recognized and discredited. For students, especially, it should sharpen intelligent listening and questioning skills, thus improving classroom and single-presenter lectures where policy issues are presented. Debates should also teach college students about the complexity of solving the nation's and the world's problems, while recognizing the students' immediate role as voters and their future role as leaders. Description of these events is a first step toward developing reform efforts to increase a tolerance of diverse ideas in academia.

This research examined public policy events in 2018 and 2019 before COVID-19 shut down many campus activities, but it was conducted during April-November 2020, which made communication with campus officials sometimes more difficult.

A data worksheet focusing on 24 policy areas was compiled for each campus. For each sampled institution, the topic, date, campus sponsor, and speaker affiliations was recorded for the calendar years 2018 and 2019. A copy of the worksheets for each campus can be obtained from the author.

⁴⁸ Marie K. Shanahan, "Yes Campuses Should be Safe Spaces—for Debate," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 5, 2016. p. A48.

VI. Calendar Analysis Research Results

This section reports the results for specific campuses so that faculty, administrators, and governing boards can examine data for their particular institutions to see if changes in the sponsorship of public policy discourse are warranted. Of course, campus comparisons should be made carefully and fairly in interpreting institutional effort. One of the valuable characteristics of North Carolina higher education is the great variety among its campuses. North Carolina State University enrolls about 35,000 students and is located in Raleigh, the state capital. Warren Wilson College has 650 students and is located in Swannanoa, a town of 4,100 near Asheville. Four North Carolina universities have endowments considerably over a billion dollars and Davidson College is a near-member of that club, while about 14 campuses have less than \$60 million in endowments. The enrollment and endowment of each campus analyzed are listed in the next section.

Campus calendars for North Carolina campuses for 2018 and 2019, as is true elsewhere, present very different degrees of comprehensiveness and detail. Some campuses have easy-to-navigate calendars that are publicly accessible. Others were incomplete or, in a few cases, not accessible at all. Our research approach was to use the internet to examine a campus calendar and then to contact the campus reference librarian or archivist or other academic officials, if there were any difficulties. Perhaps because of the stresses caused by managing campuses during a pandemic, those emails were frequently not answered. Still, we can record more detailed information from each campus calendar.

Research 1 Campuses

Research institutions are a subset of doctoral degree-granting institutions that conduct a “very high” level of academic research, according to the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.⁴⁹

Duke University (15,892 students, \$8.9 billion endowment)

Duke’s calendars are easily accessible and contain dozens of events. We had to use a “Conference/ Symposium” and “Panel/ Seminar/ Colloquium” filter to manage the information available and to focus on the most relevant activities.

The 2018 Duke University calendar features several important policy forums. What looks to be an annual event of policy forums, the provost’s office this year sponsored a

⁴⁹ "Doctoral Universities: Highest Research Activity." The Carnegie Classification of Institutions. Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. 2019. Retrieved 10 Sep 2019.

series of three panels on “Testing the University: Speech, Freedom and Civility on College Campuses.” There were 13 speakers comprising Duke faculty and professors from other campuses. There must have been many differing views, but the only advocacy organization to appear was the ACLU of North Carolina. No politicians spoke.

In November, there were three panels on climate and environment focusing on both local and national issues sponsored by the Law School and the Nicholas School for the Environment. Also in November, several Duke Centers sponsored a discussion, “NAFTA 2.0: the Future of U.S.-Canada-Mexico Trade Relationships” with officials representing each country. The Duke Council on Race and Ethnicity and the African and African-American Studies Program sponsored “A Conversation on the State of Voting Rights in North Carolina” with eight speakers and, later, a forum on “Gerrymandering.” Several departments joined to sponsor a six-person panel of speakers from federal and state organizations on “Health Equity Matters: What has Worked.” The Center for Political Leadership, Innovation, and Service held a discussion with Congressman David Price (D-NC) and former Congressman David Drier (R-CA) on “Bipartisan Collaboration in Congress.”

In 2019, Duke held a panel on “From Cure to Care-In Pursuit of Population Health” with state officials from Tennessee, California, Washington state, and also Taiwan. The Asian/Pacific Institute held a discussion titled “Getting China Right: Perspectives on China in the World.” The Duke Center for International and Global Studies held an 11-speaker panel on “Realism and Liberal Internationalism after Trump: The Future of U.S Foreign Policy in Transatlantic Perspective,” and a more general National Security Symposium was also held. With a more local focus, the Sanford School of Public Policy, the History Department, and the Hart Leadership Program sponsored “Remembering White Supremacy: Reflections from the Durham City-County Committee and Confederate Monuments and Memorials.” The only two events that looked like debates were sponsored by the American Constitution Society and the Federalist Society which represent the left and right, respectively, at the Duke Law School. The topics were “Supreme Court Wrap-Up and Preview” and “High Crimes and Misdemeanors: What Constitutes an Impeachable Offense.” Another event on “Impeachment” at the Sanford School was called a faculty-led discussion.

Probably the most sustained and best developed public policy event at any campus was sponsored by the provost’s office over two days in October 2019. The subject was “Immigration in a Divided World.” The tone of the event was set by the statement that American colleges and universities:

Today receive research funding, tax privileges, and other benefits from federal and state governments. At the same time, higher education institutions are committed to a mobile world of people and ideas and compete in a global brain

race. Tensions between these two poles emerge on a range of issues including security clearances and travel restrictions, provisions for undocumented students, growing financial dependency on international students, and joint ventures in Asia and the Middle East.

The Forum contained three moderated conversations, featuring a panoply of Duke star faculty joined by professors from the University of London, UC-Berkeley, and Stanford. The keynote address was by Nicholas Kristof of *The New York Times*. The focus of the discussions appeared to be mostly about values. No politicians, government administrators, or advocacy group representatives were speakers at this event.

Clearly, Duke's very detailed accessible calendar for 2018 and 2019 shows that it had the commitment, the prestige, and the budget to bring in single speakers or panelists from across the nation and some from other countries to discuss important public policy issues. It is likely that undergraduates were welcome to attend these events, though it is unclear how many did. So many events were multi-speaker that there had to be diverse views expressed. What is striking, however, is that, with exceptions of two law school debates, the events are labeled as conversations or discussions, which may mean that the participant's divergent views are muted. Also, active political office holders who have to confront complex policy issues on their immediate agendas every week were almost never invited, in favor of speakers who could take more abstract stances and never had to cast votes.

North Carolina State University (35,500 students, \$1.4B endowment)

NC State keeps calendar data on a website for at least 20 years.

In 2018, the School of Social Work and the College of Education sponsored an all-day event titled "Strengthening Families, Communities and Schools That Serve Them: An Interdisciplinary Summit." The keynote was given by Josh Stein, attorney general of North Carolina, and the morning panel was composed of four outside speakers. The six afternoon breakout sessions combined faculty and off-campus speakers. It was not clear what student participation there was in this event. Several policy-related speakers also gave lectures on campus, but the "Strengthening Families" event appeared to be the only multi-speaker event and it is not clear if the participants were invited because of their diverse viewpoints.

In 2019, NC State had policy-related events with former Governor Jim Hunt and Congresswoman Donna Shalala speaking separately, as well as several off-campus events. On campus, the NC State School of Education sponsored an evening

to engage in discussions about contemporary issues facing the American public. Participants will be guided through facilitated, roundtable activities that will allow them to do something fairly rare in today's political culture: engage in an open discussion about our differences.

In addition to the NC State University community, we are inviting area middle and high school students, teachers, parents and community members. All are welcome.

Surely this was a well-intended event, but it is not clear what specific policy issues were discussed or, given the potentially wide range of participants, what the level of discussion was.

Given NC State's location in Raleigh and the size of its student body, the campus did not seem to sponsor many multi-speaker policy events for its undergraduates. No coordinated public policy programming was evident.

UNC-Chapel Hill (29,847 students, \$3.67B endowment)

UNC's mission statement declares:

Our mission is to serve as a center for research, scholarship and creativity and to teach a diverse community of undergraduate, graduate and professional students to become the next generation of leaders...With lux, libertas—light and liberty—as its founding principles, the University has charted a bold course of leading change to improve society and to help solve the world's greatest problems.

One would expect, consequently, that the University would sponsor a robust variety of public policy related events with diverse viewpoints open to the whole campus. They may occur. But in contrast to Duke's calendar, unfortunately UNC-CH's basic calendar is not at all comprehensive. The Office of University Communications explained to us that events were recorded only for the last 90-day period to "avoid confusion."⁵⁰ That policy, of course, precludes the possibility of examining in any comprehensive way what policy-related events occurred in 2018 and 2019. No other UNC campus follows that policy. Nor is that policy followed by UNC-CH athletics, which lists news for a

⁵⁰ Email from Betsy Greer to Adam Schulman, 11/9/2020. A follow up email was sent to the Provost's office to determine whether there was any other feasible way to discover 2018 and 2019 campus policy events and why UNC-CH had the 90 day calendar limit in the first place. The email was answered suggesting that the problem was caused by the way the company responsible for the calendar created it. We were invited to search for single subject categories or to use the University library collection to search for special events. That would be enormously labor intensive and inconsistent with the methodology used for other campuses.

decade or more for each team online. For example, the Tar Heels men's lacrosse team has information on the outcome of games, recruiting events, and individual awards for each year going back to 2010.

It was possible to locate a few events, however, on other websites. One of the more promising campus wide public programs in North Carolina is UNC-CH's "Program in Public Discourse," Created in 2019, funded by the provost's office, and located in the College of Arts & Sciences but involving faculty across the campus, the purpose of the Program "is to seek to support a culture of debate and deliberation through curricular and extracurricular programs, enabling our students to better citizens, leaders and stewards for our democracy."⁵¹ That suggest that similar programs of "debate and deliberation" to create "better citizens" did not previously exist. In addition to campus-wide events, the Program also sponsors a Public Discourse Fellows Program for eight undergraduates who are paid \$500 a year and have the obligation to write a short essay every month on public policy. The Fellows Program "welcomes applications from students of all worldviews who are committed to the spirit of polite dialogue and inquiry with openness to change that that the program hopes to encourage at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill."

In 2019, the Program sponsored a panel discussion looking at heterodoxy within political movements titled "Thinking for Yourself: When Values Diverge From Politics" with two speakers Justin Giboney (left) and Jonathan V. Last (right). Also in 2019 was a Public Discourse panel discussing historical perspectives on the subject "Impeachment: Then and Now." Just before COVID-19 ended campus events, the Program hosted a forum on "Meritocracy in Higher Education," which was reviewed by the Martin Center.⁵² The forum was well-attended, including the chancellor in the audience. Rather than discussing anything related to admission criteria at UNC campuses (three of the four panelists were from New York City and played no role in actual admissions decisions anywhere), the speakers evaluated the concept of "meritocracy" in general. Thomas Chatterton Williams pointed out that, as an African American, the only way he could convince Georgetown University and later New York University that his public high school GPA reflected his ability was to do well on the SAT. Professor Caitlin Zaloom, however, decried measuring people "on a scale of human values." Editor Anastasia Berg worried about the huge correlation between student's economic status and test scores. Ross Douthat, who passes as *The New York Times'* conservative columnist, proclaimed "I think the inner logic of meritocracy is vicious and terrible, careerist and horrifying." Perhaps this panel produced some lively discussions among the audience that heard it, but that it would lead to any practical solutions to the problem of competition for admission to selective universities is doubtful.

⁵¹ Program in Public Discourse, <https://publicdiscourse.web.unc.edu/>.

⁵² Shannon Watkins, "Goodbye Meritocracy, Hello...What?" The James G. Martin Center, April 20, 2020.

Outside of our calendar time frame was a Public Discourse forum on “Free Speech on Campus” with Greg Lukianoff, FIRE’s president and CEO, Jacqueline Pfeffer Merrill, director of the Campus Free Expression Project at the Bipartisan Policy Center, and Sigal Ben-Porath, professor at the University of Pennsylvania. Commendably, this panel was recorded for YouTube.

Wake Forest University (8,495 students, \$1.4B endowment)

In 2018, several policy events were held by Wake Forest’s law school (“Isolated by the Law: Legal and Ethical Issues Surrounding Quarantine”) or its two law journals, the *Wake Forest Law Review* (“Rights and Resources: Using Human Rights to Protect Human Resources”) and the *Wake Forest Journal of Law and Public Policy* (“*Roe v. Wade*”). However, the only other multi-speaker event was sponsored by the Jewish Studies Program on “Anti-Semitism in the Age of Trump.”

In addition to several policy related lectures in 2019, Wake Forest held a multi-speaker program on “State and Federal Relationships in Environmental Protection,” featuring several officials from various governmental agencies. A panel of WFU faculty held a discussion on “Current Events in Context: Emergency Powers” and a discussion on “Impeachment.” Later, a conversation with United States Senators Richard Burr (R) and Mark Warner (D) was held, but the focus is unknown. There was also a dialogue between an “Israeli settler” and a “Palestinian activist” and, later, a panel discussion on “Indigenous Peoples Day.”

Thus WFU sponsored several interesting multi-speaker policy-relevant events in 2018 and 2019, though none appeared to be debates.

UNC Non-Flagship Campuses

UNC-Asheville (3,200 students, \$38M endowment)

Asheville’s calendar was not publicly accessible, but with the cooperation of the campus reference librarian, so some examination was possible.⁵³ It showed several policy-relevant speakers, but no debates or multi-speaker events, with the exception of a 2019 discussion about the future of the economy by two corporate officials.

⁵³ University of North Carolina Asheville News List, <https://www.unca.edu/events-and-news/news/list>.

UNC-Charlotte (29,710 students, \$203M endowment)

Charlotte's campus calendar was largely blank for 2018 and an inquiry to the campus research librarian was not answered. The Charlotte 2019 calendar was also incomplete, but did show a discussion by five Charlotte leaders about homelessness and an affordable housing panel discussion. The campus did create a link to a program sponsored by The National Committee on U.S.-China Relations and the Confucius Institute at UNC-Charlotte. The "China Town Hall" featured national spokespersons and was moderated by ABC's George Stephanopoulos. Whether the topics for discussion were limited by the controversial Confucius Institute,⁵⁴ or what the participation of UNC-Charlotte students was, is unclear.

UNC-Greensboro (20,100 students, \$307M endowment)

While there were no relevant multi-speaker policy events in 2018, the following year UNC-Greensboro had the most public policy activity of any campus in this category. There were no debates, however, and it is not clear whether there was an attempt to invite speakers with diverse viewpoints in the various panel discussions. In 2019, the campus held four events on the environment "Climate Change in our Backyard," "Sustainability—The Key to Future Growth," "From PCB to Coal Ash: Environmental Justice in North Carolina," and "Climates of Inequality: Stories of Environmental Justice," featuring 21 different participants. The campus also hosted a conference sponsored by the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro on "Building Healthy Communities through Better Housing." In an event directly relevant to this research, UNC-G's Department of Communication Studies and the National Communication Association held a conference on "Finding Expression in Campus Places." There were seven panels and numerous speakers, so some diverse viewpoints had to be expressed at that two-day conference. The keynote speech, "Tribalism, Voicelessness, and the Problem of Free Speech," was given by Eric King Watts, an associate professor at UNC-CH. According to him, "free speech is instrumental in the social construction of race." Free speech as a problem needing to be restricted, rather than an asset in America, was a common conference theme.⁵⁵

UNC-Pembroke (7,698 students, \$38M endowment)

In 2018, Pembroke held an event titled "Race in the Southeast," but there was no further information on its calendar. The campus also held its 11th Annual Social Justice

⁵⁴ Rachele Peterson, "Outsourced to China: Confucius Institutes and Soft Power in American Higher Education," New York: National Association of Scholars, 2017.

⁵⁵ Branson Inscore, "An Anti-Free Speech Conference in Greensboro" The James G. Martin Center, November 4, 2019.

Symposium, a “Dialogue about Dismantling Racism and Discrimination.” The keynote speaker, Karen Gaffney, a professor at Raritan Valley Community College in New Jersey, described herself as a “white anti-racist educator.” It is not clear what role other speakers played. There was also a “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion” conference held on campus and a feminism panel, but the calendar does not reveal what topics were discussed and who the participants were. In 2019, the only relevant event was a fair to introduce students to various campus organizations that deal with important policy issues.

UNC-Wilmington (16,747 students, \$105M endowment)

In 2018 at Wilmington, there were several speakers on the topic of free speech, including Greg Lukianoff, the head of FIRE, but the only multi-speaker event was on “Combating the School to Prison Pipeline,” featuring several local speakers from the campus and New Hanover County. The campus 2019 calendar showed an event, “The Abortion Debate: Is This Reproductive right or wrong?” The debaters were the late Professor Mike Adams and Dr. Willie Parker, OB-GYN, and sponsored by the College Republicans, College Democrats, and two religious groups. There was also a Social Justice Symposium and a panel on the “Fight to End Cash Bail.” Another group, the Racial Justice Leadership Alliance, held multiple events, and there were single lectures on “Homosexuality: Compassion and Clarity” and on the “Me Too” movement.

Regional Large State Campuses

These are all large Division I athletic institutions, but public policy debates or forums with diverse viewpoints were rare.

Appalachian State University (19,280 students, \$122M endowment)

In 2018, Appalachian State’s Student Government Association sponsored a forum “Examining Freedom of Speech at App State,” featuring a variety of mostly on-campus speakers. In 2019, the campus sponsored a symposium on the condition of the New River and a forum “Future Security in the N.C. election system.” Together with 25 colleges, government agencies, and energy companies, the Appalachian Energy Center held a very large “Energy Summit” on the campus. No policy debates were listed for either year.

East Carolina University (29,131 students, \$219M endowment)

At ECU in 2018, the College of Education and the Office for Equity and Diversity sponsored an event titled “The School to Prison Pipeline and its Impact on Communities” with two off-campus speakers. In 2019, ECU sponsored a multi-speaker three-part panel event titled “Economic Analysis, Environmental Uncertainties and Policy Implications.” A “conversation” by natural and social scientists was held on conducting research on North Carolina’s coast and coastal plain. No public policy debates were listed on either the 2018 or 2019 ECU calendars.

Western Carolina University (10,469 students, \$66M endowment)

At Western Carolina in 2018, the campus Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Program sponsored a “Panel Discussion on Nonviolence.” Two members of the WCU faculty discussed “Childcare in Appalachia” and the John Locke Foundation and the WCU Center for the Study of Free Enterprise sponsored a discussion on the efficacy of “sin taxes.” In 2019, campus faculty held a panel on the impact of climate change.

Among the three regional large state campuses enrolling about 60,000 students, in each of the two years studied, there were about 10 policy panels held.

During its research and scholarship celebration, five panels of faculty discussed migration and immigration; climate and the environment; health care; education and social justice; and technology, economics, and business innovation. These topics are certainly relevant to public policy, but whether the panelists represented diverse viewpoints is unknown. Again at WCU, there did not appear to be any policy debates scheduled.

Consequently, among the three regional large state campuses enrolling about 60,000 students, in each of the two years studied, there were about 10 policy panels held. It was not obvious that any of them intentionally included speakers with diverse viewpoints and none of the campuses scheduled events that were clearly public policy debates.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Elizabeth City State University (1,357 students, \$110M endowment)

Elizabeth City State sponsored a panel on teacher shortages in 2019 and candidate forums in 2018 and 2019. No debates were listed.

Fayetteville State University (6,020 students, \$19M endowment)

Fayetteville State's 2018 and 2019 calendars list no forums or debates.

North Carolina Central University (8,200 students, \$54M endowment)

Similarly, no policy forums or debates were listed on NC Central's 2018 and 2019 calendars.

North Carolina A&T University (12,000 students, \$57M endowment)

NC A&T's 2018 and 2019 calendars showed no relevant policy events. Email inquiries were sent to its reference librarian and its head of archives, which were not answered.

Winston-Salem State University (5,100 students, \$42M endowment)

Winston-Salem State's 2018 calendar showed no policy events for 2018, but in 2019, WSSU sponsored a panel on "The Psychology and Economics of Poverty: New Micro and Macro Approaches to Economic Mobility" with two WSSU professors and keynoted by the campus chancellor. Also, the WSSU Department of History, Politics and Social Justice held panels where three former Black Panthers who served significant prison time told their stories. No policy debates were scheduled on the WSSU calendars.

The five public HCBUs in North Carolina are the most numerous of any state and enroll more than 32,000 students, though they have very low endowments. Overall, their calendar events—except in athletics—are sparse and, although some lectures about racially related subjects were scheduled, there did not appear to be any coordinated effort to expose students to diverse policy viewpoints related to any policy issues in either forums or debates.

Johnson C. Smith University (1,624 students, \$51M endowment)

Johnson C. Smith, with an enrollment of 1,624, was one of the two private HBCUs that met the enrollment threshold to be included in this study. The University's calendar is password protected, but its archivist sent a copy of the calendar. Information was limited, but in 2018 an event titled "Poverty, Privilege and Patriotism" was held, and the Carolinas Alliance for Success in Education met to discuss access to broadband in HBCUs. In 2019, the campus hosted two meetings on policing and there was a "Women's Equality Day" panel discussion. As part of the inauguration of its new president, the campus hosted speakers on homelessness, supporting youth and education reform, and later a forum asking "What does new investment in Charlotte's low income areas look like?" with participation of the Federal Reserve Bank, the City of Charlotte, and the Knight Foundation. It is not clear what student participation in these events was.

Shaw University (1,660 students, \$11M endowment)

Shaw's event calendar was blank and an email to the university's archivist produced no further information.

Private Liberal Arts/Professional Campuses

In this category are campuses that foster the liberal arts tradition, but host professional schools as well.

Campbell University (7,121 students, \$124M endowment)

Campbell showed no public policy events on its 2018 and 2019 campus calendars.

Elon University (6,791 students, \$273M endowment)

Elon's 2018 calendar was difficult to access, but with the assistance of the coordinator of the university archives, we found one panel, "Face of homelessness," and several policy related lectures, including one by Harvard Professor Alan Dershowitz on "Global Perspectives on Justice and Civil Liberties."

In 2019, Elon held an extensive event titled "Climate Change and Human Rights" with panels consisting of Elon professors and community members. After each session, there was an opportunity for students to sign up for service-learning opportunities to become active with related organizations. Another panel was titled "A State of

Emergency: A Community Response,” which featured immigration lawyers and community activists opposed to Immigration Control Enforcement actions in North Carolina. Several Elon faculty also participated in a panel titled “America First: Ambassador Nikki Haley, the United Nations, and Political Leadership in Turbulent Times.” It is not clear whether diverse viewpoints were presented in any of those events. The Elon Political Forum, however, did host debates between Republican and Democratic student leaders on presidential impeachment and later on civil discourse. The college also hosted several events sponsored by Alamance County.

Gardner-Webb University (3,600 students, \$71M endowment)

Gardner-Webb’s calendar showed only academic dates and stated that permission was needed to access other information. The campus archivist did not respond to a request for further information.

High Point University (5,200 students, \$65M endowment)

High Point’s 2018 and 2019 calendars contained only a small number of academic events. An email was sent to the Head of Reference and Instruction who kindly provided a list of events open to the public.⁵⁶ The listed events are focused on community outreach public service events and do not list debates or forums related to public policy.

Queens University of Charlotte (2,350 students, \$150M endowment)

Queens switched online calendar providers and no longer has records for public policy events in 2018 and 2019. For its more than 30-team intercollegiate athletic program, however, the University maintains extensive historical records of competition outcomes for some teams going back to 2000.

Wingate University (3,684 students, \$90M endowment)

The Wingate 2018 calendar showed no relevant events and the 2019 calendar showed only one multi-speaker event. Representatives from the ACLU of North Carolina and the international and integration manager of the City of Charlotte spoke on “Understanding Immigration in America.” Wingate did have several single-speaker

⁵⁶ High Point University Upcoming Events Open to the Public, <http://highpoint.edu/community/events/category/all/open-to-the-public>.

events that focused on anti-racism, Islamic activism, and covered topics such as "400 years of slavery" and "What does Allyship look like?"

Private Liberal Arts Campuses

In this category are campuses that focus on liberal arts with a few professional programs as students have become more career oriented. With the exception of Davidson, these institutions have modest endowments.

Belmont Abbey College (1,400 students, \$8M endowment)

No multi-speaker policy events on Belmont Abbey's calendar for either 2018 or 2019.

Catawba College (1,306 students, \$55M endowment)

No multi-speaker policy events on Catawba's calendar for either 2018 or 2019.

Davidson College (1,803 students, \$920M endowment)

An examination of the Davidson campus calendars for 2018 and 2019 shows a program of potential promise, several policy forums, and a large number of invited lectures (many related to public policies), but nothing that took the debate format. In 2017, Davidson began a series, "Challenge the Policy: Political-Economic Analysis of the Trump Era Proposals." Its rationale was that "In a political era defined by echo chambers and fake news, Davidson professors joined forces to lend insight, lead discussion, and—maybe—restore a measure of civility to political discourse."⁵⁷

In 2018, the topics were "School Choice and Equity in Education," "Voting and Elections," "Elections & Data Science," and "Gun Rights and Rhetoric." In 2019, the topics were "#MeToo on the Campus" and "Housing and Equity." Most of the speakers were campus faculty joined by a few local officials. Different disciplines clearly participated, but were diverse policy viewpoints also present? An email asking about topic and speaker selection and viewpoint diversity to Adjunct Assistant Professor of Anthropology Rebecca Ruhlen, whose effort in a campus teach-in inspired the series, went unanswered.

Two other policy forums occurred at Davidson in 2019: "What Really Happened at the 9th District Election?" and "The Farmer that Feeds Us." Davidson also has an extensive

⁵⁷ Beyond the Noise: New Series Breaks Down Issues That Matter, <https://www.davidson.edu/news/2017/11/22/beyond-noise-new-series-breaks-down-issues-matter>.

lecture series featuring prominent outside speakers. Most of them appear to approach their subjects from the left, but Andrew Puzder, secretary of labor in the Trump administration, did speak on “Socialism’s Empty Promise: The Moral Case for Capitalism.”

Guilford College (2,137 students, \$88M endowment)

No multi-speaker policy events on Guilford’s calendar for either 2018 or 2019.

Lenoir-Rhyne University (2,700 students, \$113M endowment)

In 2018, Lenoir-Rhyne was the site of a discussion led by the Hickory Police Department on homelessness. Later that year, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences held a forum on gun violence, but neither the speakers nor the format were listed on the campus calendar. Also in that year, the University’s Reese Institute for Conservation of Natural Resources held an annual event, its Western North Carolina Air Quality and Water Quality Conference. In 2019, the school held “A Rational Conversation about Immigration in America” and the Reese Institute held another conference on Air and Water Quality.

Mars Hill University (1,410 students, \$50M endowment)

Mars Hill hosted student debates on gun policy in 2018 and on the American justice system in 2019. The campus also sponsored panel discussions about the “Housing crisis in Western Carolina” and “Diversity, Justice and Democracy” in 2018. In 2019, two campus professors debated on Constitution Day, “How Would Jesus Vote?” Also in 2019, the university hosted a discussion between two campus professors on “Gerrymandering and Voter Suppression in North Carolina.” It is not known if the faculty participants took different positions.

Methodist University (2,300 students, \$22M endowment)

The Methodist calendar was not publicly accessible, but the campus librarian sent a curated list of the events she thought were policy relevant. In 2018, there was a “#MeToo Conversation” led by three female professors. In 2019, Methodist hosted a discussion on “How a Jury Thinks: A Psychologist Perspective.”

North Carolina Wesleyan (2,100 students, \$11M endowment)

NC Wesleyan does not have an archive of past events, just a blank calendar.

Pfeiffer University (1,800 students, \$16M endowment)

Pfeiffer held a discussion in 2018 titled “Tough Talk: Can You Talk About Politics and Remain Friends?” with no subject mentioned. In 2019, the Tough Talk subject was “Abortion.” The goal was “to create a safe space for thoughtful, civil discourse and engage in conversation so that we can understand each other, and perhaps ourselves, a little better.” That is surely an admirable goal, but the Tough Talk events apparently occurred only once each year.

Salem College (950 students, \$61M endowment)

Salem did not permit access to its events calendar. Emails to its archivist produced no response.

University of Mount Olive (3,250 students, \$38M endowment)

Mount Olive’s 2018 calendar is blank, and its 2019 calendar covers only a few months with no relevant events. An email to the University’s reference librarian produced no additional information.

William Peace University (1,100 students, \$38M endowment)

William Peace’s director of Integrated Marketing and Communication responded that the University does not have a “public resource for past events.”

VII. Conclusions and Recommendations for the Future

Examining the paucity of campus public policy debates and forums with diverse viewpoints over two years—which were quite politically contentious in North Carolina and the nation—some might argue that there is no need for such events because students can learn what they need to know in specific courses. If a campus offers a course in health policy or environmental policy, that assumption might be true if the lectures, readings, and discussions were well-balanced and a student can fit it into his or her schedule. But that is impossible to measure from the outside.

What we can measure is what North Carolina campuses require in order to graduate. In 2019, the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) published a report titled “What Will They Learn?: A Survey of Core Requirements at Our Nation’s Colleges and Universities.” Looking at the general requirements of 49 North Carolina campuses, ACTA found that 94 percent required a science course, 89 percent required a composition course, 87 percent a mathematics course, 45 percent a literature course, but only 10 percent a government or history course, and 4 percent an economics course. In short, there is no guarantee that any students will take a course that might be policy-related or that would inform the votes they may now cast.

Small numbers, but influential activists, among students are willing to use illegal tactics to suppress speech.

The evidence from multiple national surveys (Brookings, Cato, FIRE, Gallup, and Pew) overwhelmingly shows that many students are uneasy or even frightened about expressing themselves about controversial issues. Small numbers, but influential activists, among

students are willing to use illegal tactics to suppress speech. The UNC-CH campus climate survey shows those trends are local problems as well. Higher education cannot ignore this reality.

Yet sponsoring on-campus public policy debates or forums with diverse viewpoints has become very difficult. Research on the presence of such events in 2014 and 2015 on 97 top colleges and 26 law schools in my previous book, *Silenced Stages: The Loss of Academic Freedom and Campus Policy Debates*, or on the 37 North Carolina campuses in 2018 and 2019 reported here, documents that they are a rarity in almost all higher education institutions. Almost nowhere was there any coordinated plan to expose students to a well-balanced program of policy events as is common for musical, theatrical, or athletic performances. Since developing critical thinking and effective citizens are among academia’s proclaimed goals, why has there been this public policy failure?

There are several hypotheses that might explain this problem. They can be divided into conceptual and procedural issues.

The debates most Americans see are high-stakes political debates and those spectacles recently have been neither enlightening nor reflective of our common values. After the first 2020 presidential debate, the press comment was virtually unanimous that it did not provide the policy substance citizens need. *The Baltimore Sun*’s headline was “Attacks, interruptions mark chaotic debate.” The *Times* of London described the event as an “ill-tempered and at times incomprehensible squabble.” *The New York Times* labeled it “a debate mess...last night’s debate was almost impossible

to watch and did little to shed light on the biggest issues facing the country or the substantive differences between the candidates.” *The Boston Globe* reported, “No one won this debate and the loser was clearly the United States of America.”

Those kinds of debates should not be the model for campus debates. Instead, higher education should provide formats for civil, well-informed debates where winning and losing is not the point. Rather, the debates should be considered a success only if the audience better understands the complexities of designing and implementing policies responsive to our most difficult problems. Debaters should begin by affirming the values and the data they share in common before explaining why they disagree about the choices our society has now or will have in the future. Such model debates are surely attainable if campuses select the topics and participants carefully.

So why don't such events occur routinely? The problem is not funding. Every campus has faculty and alumni who should be willing to expose students to public policy issues with little or no compensation. For every major policy issue, there are organizations which would be delighted to present their viewpoints, pro or con, to a college audience. It is not the actual cost of staging debates and forums that is the deterrence. Instead, it is the fact that few campuses have assigned that sponsorship responsibility to any administrative office or faculty committee. Nor are there budgets set aside for such events. How many cultural or athletic events would take place on a campus if no one had a responsibility or a budget for them?

So, given the myriad of other campus activities open to all students and the public, why the lack of public policy events? Campus administrators have become extremely brand-conscious. Controversy, which discussions of public policy usually entail, is not good for the “brand.” Any astute administrator knows that some segment of donors or alumni will be uncomfortable about the discussion of controversial issues, and surveys now show that some cohorts of activist students might actually seek to disrupt speakers that offend them.

There has also been a substantial growth of the student affairs bureaucracy, particularly “diversity and inclusion” specialists. The general orientation of student affairs is to keep the campus “fun” and “safe,” and the kind of diversity these specialists promote rarely includes political diversity. The rubric of “inclusion” may actually militate against debating some controversial public policies.

The logical source for promoting debate would be the faculty, and some do in their classes. The reward system on most campuses is focused on disciplinary expectations in research and teaching. Rewarding professors for campus or community service, as is common in many faculty evaluation processes, could certainly encompass sponsoring or participating in public policy debates or forums, but that does not seem to be occurring.

Faculty and administrators have not pushed back hard enough against the previously quoted thought/speak rule promulgated by some Duke law students that “When we ask a speaker to come to Duke, we are giving that person space and license to express their views on a particular subject—and by doing so we are implicitly signaling our willingness to tolerate or our approval of such ideas.” If the rule were adopted that campus permission to speak creates approval of the speaker’s message, that would eliminate almost all speeches by politicians, diplomats, lobbyists, or advocates for any cause.

The implication of this rule is not only that controversial speakers should be censored, but even more so that campus faculty or their student peers whose ideas could be thought to contravene some vague campus “inclusive” values should be silenced. If successful, this movement will permit only speech that is bland or banal, or meets some political test for acceptability by segments of activist students.

In short, the lack of public policy debates or forums is the inadvertent result of many existing campus dynamics and the situation is not likely to change without some outside intervention. Such requirements must respect the academic freedom of individual professors while being aware that many of the most politically relevant departments no longer house faculty that represent the diverse ideas that need discussion.

The key actor in mitigating this dilemma should be institutional governing boards,⁵⁸ backed up by state legislatures, in the case of public campuses. Private institutions granted substantial public funding, property tax exemptions, and donor tax advantages also have an obligation to prepare their students to be thoughtful citizens. There needs to be a balance between the public interest in having serious campus discourse about our most pressing policy problems and the institutional interests in status and branding and faculty interest in their own research agendas set in the context of increased political homogeneity. If a board seeks to protect this public interest for reasons that are not partisan or parochial, these are some policy changes boards should consider:

1. Campuses that affirm a commitment to diversity and inclusion should be required to define those terms and to report whether viewpoint or political diversity is a part of the definition and a diversity to be sought and measured.
2. Governing boards should establish a reporting requirement regarding the number and substance of the public policy debates and forums held on their campuses.

⁵⁸ Jay Schalin, “Bolstering the Board of Trustees Are Academia’s Best Hope for Reform,” The James G. Martin Center, July 14, 2020.

3. Boards should ask campuses to set policies about what events should be recorded on campus calendars and how these calendars should be publicly accessible.
4. Boards should encourage campuses to seek outside funding for public policy debates and forums⁵⁹ or provide for such events from institutional budgets.
5. Boards should encourage campuses to complete campus climate surveys regarding speech realities such as was done at UNC-CH and then ask administrators what can be done to remedy any problems discovered.
6. Access to public policy debates or forums held on one campus typically are not accessible to students at other campuses. In the internet era, it is quite easy to remedy that problem. Webinars and YouTube recordings of policy events should be made easily available. Campuses provide video recordings of athletic events all the time.

Almost no one in higher education would deny it has a responsibility to prepare students and help all citizens to be informed participants in our democracy. Voter registration drives are not enough. Uninformed voters may just cancel out the votes of informed voters, leading campaigns to focus on name recognition, empty slogans, and attacks on opponents' personal lives. Voters who do not understand the policy issues which undergird most elections may seek just to align themselves with the political tribe with which they feel most comfortable.

As this North Carolina research and the national data from *Silenced Stages* shows, higher education has failed in its responsibility on this matter. We cannot decry excessive political polarization if higher education does not provide informed models of policy discourse.

⁵⁹ The UNC-CH Public Discourse Program states "Private philanthropy will be crucial to the success of this Program. A variety of private foundations and individuals have expressed interest in supporting it. To date we have received seed money to develop the program." This statement is followed by a strong affirmation of academic freedom in determining program content. For advice on how donors can support intellectual diversity on campuses see, American Council of Trustees and Alumni and Fund for Academic Renewal, "The Intelligent Donor's Guide to College Giving." Third Ed., 2020.

Appendix

Open Campus Debates or Forum Project Data Sheet 2018 and 2019

Campus name

Campus contact (s) name, position, email, phone

UMBC Researcher:

Topic	Date	Event Classification	Sponsor	Speakers	Comments
1 Income inequality					
2 Environmental climate change policy					
3 Abortion policy					
4 Same sex marriage/ GLBTQ issues					
5 Immigration, refugee policy					
6 Education financing, accountability and other issues					
7 Governmental, financing and debt					
8 Governmental regulatory procedures and policy					
9 Health care financing and other policies					

10 Constitutional government, federalism, separation of powers					
11 International trade policy					
12 U.S Role Middle East and Afghanistan					
13 U.S Role Russia and China					
14 Crime and Criminal Justice					
15 Civil Rights					
16 Civil Liberties and privacy					
17 Objectionable speech policies and practices					
18 Sexual assault policies and practices					
19 Affirmative action/diversity policies					
20 Housing and urban development					
21 Politics and Elections					
22 Gun policies					
23 Terrorism policies					
24 Other					

Bibliography

- Abrams, Samuel J., "The Blue Shift of the New England Professoriate," *The Heterodox Academy*, July 6, 2016.
- Abrams, Samuel J., "There are Conservative Professors, Just not in These States," *New York Times Sunday Review*, July 1, 2016.
- Abrams, Samuel J., "Many students embrace viewpoint diversity. Why Won't Colleges?" *Real Clear Education*, December 15, 2017.
- American Council on Education, "Statement of Academic Rights and Responsibilities," June, 2005.
- American Council of Trustees and Alumni, "Intellectual Diversity: Time for Action." December, 2005.
- American Council of Trustees and Alumni, "Protecting the Free Exchange of Ideas: How Trustees Can Advance Intellectual Diversity on Campus," 2009.
- American Council of Trustees and Alumni, "What Will They Learn?: A Survey of Core Requirements at Our Nation's Colleges and Universities." 2019.
- American Council of Trustees and Alumni and Fund for Academic Renewal, "The Intelligent Donors Guide to College Giving." Third Ed., 2020.
- Atkeson, Lonna Rae and Andrew J. Taylor. "Partisan Affiliation in Political Science: Insights from Florida and North Carolina," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, October 2019.
- Belkin, Douglas, "Study Finds Many Colleges Don't Require Core Subjects Like History Government," *Wall Street Journal*, October 15, 2014.
- Bowen, Howard R. and Jack H. Schuster, *American Professors: A Natural Resource Imperiled* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).
- Carey, John M., Katherine Clayton, and Yusaku Horiuchi, *Campus Diversity: The Hidden Consensus* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020).
- Carl, Noah, "New Report on the Political Views of the British Academics," *The Heterodox Academy* March 6, 2017.
- Charney, Evan, "The End of Being a Duke Professor and What It Means for the Future of Higher Education." The James G. Martin Center, April 22, 2019.

Connor, Thomas, "Did You Know? Democrats Dominate Professorships," The James G. Martin Center, August 15, 2019.

Durate Jose L. et.al. "Political Diversity Will Improve Social Psychological Science," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

Etchemendy, John, "The Threat from Within," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 17, 2017.

Ekins, Emily, "20% of College Students Say College Faculty Has Balanced Mix of Political Views," *Cato*, November 6, 2017.

FIRE, "2020 College Free Speech Rankings: What's the Climate for Free Speech on American Campuses?"

French, David, "A Federal Jury Speaks, and Academic Freedom Wins," *National Review*, March 21, 2014.

French, David, "A Eulogy for a Friend, a Lament for our Nation," *The Dispatch*, July 26, 2020.

Gallup, "The First Amendment on Campus 2020 Report: College Student's View of Free Expression."

Inscore, Branson, "An Anti-Free Speech Conference in Greensboro" The James G. Martin Center, November 4, 2019.

Jaschik, Scott, "Professors and Politics: What the Research Says," *Inside Higher Education*, February 27, 2017.

Korn, Melissa, "Few Top Schools Require History Majors to Broadly Study U.S.'s past," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 29, 2016.

Howard Kuntz, "College Faculties: A Most Liberal Lot, A Study Finds," *Federalist Society*, March 29, 2005.

Langbert, Mitchell, Anthony J. Quain, and Daniel B. Klein, "Faculty Voting Registration in Economics, History, Journalism, Law and Psychology," *Economic Journal Watch*, Vol.13. No.3.

Langbert, Mitchell, "Homogenous: The Political Affiliations of Elite Liberal Arts College Faculty," *Academic Questions*, Summer, 2018.

Langbert, Mitchell and Sean Stevens, "Partisan Registration and Contributions of Faculty in Flagship Colleges," *Academic Questions*, January 17, 2020.

La Noue, George R., "Diversity and Exclusion," *Academic Questions*, Fall 2018.

La Noue, George R., *Silenced Stages: The Loss of Academic Freedom and Campus Policy Debates* (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2019).

Larson, Jennifer, Mark McNeilly, and Timothy J Ryan, "Free Expression and Constructive Dialogue at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill," March 2, 2020.

Lindgren, James, "Measuring Diversity: Law Faculties in 1997 and 2013," *Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy*, Vol. 39, No.1, Winter 2016).

Majeed, Azhar, and Jenna Robinson, "Do North Carolina Students Have Freedom of Speech: A Review of Campus Speech Codes," The James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal and Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (F.I.R.E), September, 2018.

Mayer, Jeremy D., Bruce L.R. Smith and A. Lee Fritschler, *Closed Minds? Politics and Ideology in American Universities* (Washington, D.C. The Brookings Institution, 2008).

McGinnis, John O. et al., "The Patterns and implications of Political Contributions by Elite Law School Faculty," 93 *Geo L.J.* 1167, 1187 (2005).

Merrill, Jaqueline Pfeffer, "Free Expression at Duke: What do Freshman Blue Devils Think?" The James G. Martin Center, January 20, 2020.

O'Hara, Mary Emily, "Free Speech or Harassment," NBC News, November 30, 2016.

Orekes, Naomi and Charlie Tyson, "Is Academia Awash in Liberal Bias?" *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 14, 2020.

Peterson, Pete, "College Climate Surveys Needed to Understand Free Expression on Campus," The James G. Martin Center, February 20, 2020.

Peterson, Rachelle, "Outsourced to China: Confucius Institutes and Soft Power in American Higher Education," New York: National Association of Scholars, 2017.

Pew Research Center, "Sharp Partisan Divisions in Views of National Institutions," July 10, 2017.

Stanley Rothman, S. Robert Lichter, and Neil Nevitte, "Politics and Professional Advancement Among College Faculty," *The Forum*, vol.3. no1, article 2, (2005).

Schalin, Jay, "Bolstering the Board of Trustees Are Academia's Best Hope for Reform," The James G. Martin Center, July 14, 2020.

Schalin, Jay. "America Wants its Public Colleges Back and The Chronicle Isn't Happy About It." The James G. Martin Center, October 26, 2020.

Scherer, Jasper, "Most History Majors at Top US Schools Can Skip American History," *Fortune*, June 30, 2016.

Shanahan, Marie K., "Yes Campuses Should be Safe Spaces—for Debate," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 5, 2016.

Stevens, Sean, "The Campus Expression Survey, Summary of New Data."

Stevens Sean and Debra Mashek, "Non-Discrimination Statements at the Institutional Level & What to Do About It (Part 1), *The Heterodox Academy* website, November 29, 2017 and Debra Mashek and Sean Stevens, "Hiring in Higher Ed: Do Job Ads Signal a Desire for Viewpoint Diversity? (Part 2), *The Heterodox Academy* website, December 1, 2017.

Taffe, Michael and Kyle Ingram, "UNC System Board of Governors members' political contributions show conservative ties," *The Daily Tar Heel*, November 15, 2020.

Venor, Scott, "Idaho's Higher Education Earthquake," The James G. Martin Center, May 22, 2020.

Villasenor, John, "Views among colleges students regarding the First Amendment: Results from a new survey," Brookings, September 18, 2017.

Walmsley, Laurel "Judge Voids UNC's Controversial Settlement Over Confederate 'Silent Sam,'" NPR, February 12, 2020.

Watkins, Shannon, "Goodbye Meritocracy, Hello...What?" The James G. Martin Center, April 20, 2020.

Watkins, Shannon, "Where Did 'Cancel Culture' Come From?" The James G. Martin Center, November 2, 2020.

West, Chris, "How Colleges Get Rid of Conservative Admins: An Example from UNC." The James G. Martin Center, May 11, 2020.

Zinsmeister, Karl, "Case Closed," *The American Enterprise*, January February, 2005.

About the Author

George La Noue is Professor Emeritus of Political Science and Professor Emeritus of Public Policy at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. He served as Director of the Policy Sciences graduate program for eighteen years. Prior to coming to the University of Maryland, he was Director of the Teacher's College - Columbia University Graduate Program in Politics and Education. He has taught at American University, the University of Chicago, the University of Miami, and the University of Strasbourg (France).

He graduated *magna cum laude* from Hanover College in 1959 and received his M.A. in 1961 and Ph.D. in 1966 in Political Science from Yale University. He has been awarded three national fellowships - the Woodrow Wilson, Danforth, and Public Administration.

Dr. La Noue's research has focused on education law, civil rights law and public policy. He has published numerous articles and six books. His last book, *Silenced Stages: The Loss of Academic Freedom and Campus Policy Debates* (2019) documents the widespread failure in higher education to sponsor events where complex policy issues are discussed from a variety of viewpoints. He is the author of four encyclopedia entries: "School Decentralization," *Encyclopedia of Education*, "Political Science," *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, and "Affirmative Action," *World Book Encyclopedia* and the *Encyclopedia of Political Science*. He is the author of ten law review articles.

Professor La Noue has served as President of the Politics of Education Society, a member of the Editorial Board of *Education and Urban Society*, a member of the Maryland State Commission on Public School Athletics, the Maryland Department of Education's Commission on Charter schools, the Maryland State Commission on Equal Pay, the Faculty Advisory Committee of the Maryland State Board for Higher Education, the Truancy Reduction Project of the Administrative Office of the [Maryland] Courts and chaired the Task Force on Higher Education of the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. He was appointed by Mayor Kurt Schmoke to serve as a member of the Mayor's Task Force on School Choice. He was also the academic member of the National Institute for Government Purchaser's Universal Certification Committee which certifies procurement officers in the United States, Canada and Ireland. He has been Vice-Chairman of the Maryland Civil Rights Advisory Committee.

A frequent witness in Congressional testimony, Dr. La Noue is also a well-seasoned trial expert on civil rights cases in federal courts. He has been an Assistant to the Executive Director of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and has been the U.S. Department of Labor's principal trial expert in academic equal pay litigation. He has also served as consultant on a wide variety of educational and legal

problems to the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Alliance for Rights and Responsibilities, the Associated General Contractors of America, the Association of Governing Boards, the National Council of Churches, the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, and several state governments and universities.

Dr. La Noue is listed in *Who's Who in American Law*, *International Who's Who in Education*, and *American Men and Women of Science*. In 1992, Dr. La Noue was the American representative to the International Experts Conference on "Legal Measures Against Discrimination on Nationality, Ethnic, and Racial Grounds," sponsored by the Commission on Foreign Affairs of the Senate of Berlin, Federal Republic of Germany. Sponsored by the U.S. Information Agency, the Swedish government, the German government, the Fredrich Ebert Foundation and others, Dr. La Noue has had the opportunity to do research and lecture in fifteen countries.

About the Martin Center

The James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal is a private nonprofit institute dedicated to improving higher education policy. Our mission is to renew and fulfill the promise of higher education in North Carolina and across the country. We advocate responsible governance, viewpoint diversity, academic quality, cost-effective education solutions, and innovative market-based reform. We do that by studying and reporting on critical issues in higher education and recommending policies that can create change—especially at the state and local level.



353 E. Six Forks Road, Suite 200 | Raleigh, NC 27609
919.828.1400 | jamesgmartin.center