

# Governance

HIGHER EDUCATION NEWS FOR UNIVERSITY GOVERNORS AND TRUSTEES

## Ideas for the Board of Governors

The Pope Center proposes these steps for the UNC Board of Governors:

### 1. Change the funding formula to focus on success rather than enrollment growth.

The Board of Governors should make sure that students are learning and graduating.

### 2. Raise minimum admissions standards.

To enter any UNC school, a student's SAT score must be 800 (total verbal and math). That should be raised to at least 900 (the College Board says that college is difficult for those with scores below 1030).

### 3. End tuition increases and cut costs.

Consider centralizing functions, rethink faculty teaching loads, and trim the costs of on-campus centers.

### 4. Review general education.

Should students be allowed to choose their "core curriculum"? No. The board should insist on rigor and depth.

### 5. Hire help.

The board should hire an executive director or secretary to help it manage information.

*(Originally published in the Raleigh News & Observer on August 31, 2014)* ■

Jenna A. Robinson and Jane S. Shaw



## High-Profile Searches: Continual Controversy

Jane S. Shaw

Several university systems around the country are searching for new leaders for flagship campuses. Their experience shows that politics—both campus and state politics—can deeply affect such choices. Furthermore, each search reflects a campus's unique history, and there is no consensus on how a search should be conducted.

Earlier this year, thanks to a change in state law, the **University of Oregon** became largely autonomous. It now has its own board of trustees and freedom to hire and fire its chief executive. Chuck Lillis, chairman of the board, announced that the search process for its president will be "different" from the past.

The search is to replace Michael Gottfredson, who resigned unexpectedly, apparently because the new board wanted someone new. (Ironically, Gottfredson had helped lobby for the university's independence.)

Lillis has appointed a relatively small (14-member) search committee weighted with trustees and administrators. A larger advisory committee includes representatives from "constituent" groups such as faculty unions.

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According to news reports, Lillis will be the true searcher; the committee will simply “assist.” He will present the final candidates (or candidate) to the trustees for their approval.

He has set no date for ending the search (implying that one of the past problems was an arbitrary deadline) and he will be the only person to speak publicly about the search’s progress.

The Oregon *Statesman Journal* editorial board wrote that the search “disregards transparency, limits communication and ultimately smacks of arrogance.”

## LABORS OF LOVE

A North Carolina state project, [NCTower.com](#), now provides information about UNC and community college majors. After five years of work, 2007-2008 graduates in these fields made less than \$30,000 per year. These are “labors of love” (not money). We welcome the transparency that NC Tower provides.

African-American/Black Studies:	\$24,479
Art History, Criticism, and Conservation:	\$24,919
Drama & Dramatics/Theatre Arts:	\$19,966
English Language & Literature:	\$25,511
Environmental Studies:	\$23,853
Fine/Studio Arts:	\$24,150
Music Performance:	\$21,467
Philosophy & Religious Studies:	\$28,062
Sociology:	\$27,216
Women’s Studies:	\$14,949
Compare those salaries to the mean for all bachelor’s degrees:	\$37,318

Source: [NCTower.com](#)

The search at **Florida State University** took the opposite tack. It was open, it had many people involved (including two search firms), and it resulted in four finalists.

But the choice of John Thrasher has led to faculty and student protests.

(The selection is still subject to state board approval.)

From the start there was enormous pressure to hire Thrasher, an FSU alumnus and an important Republican politician. William Funk, a well-known university headhunter who started the search, quit in June. Because key people on the board wanted Thrasher, Funk had recommended that Thrasher be voted on first. Only if he lost the vote would it be appropriate to search further, he said.

Instead, a completely new, public search, was undertaken.

Opponents argue that Thrasher lacks an academic background and his views on evolution and global warming are suspect; but Republican vs. Democratic politics were perhaps more important factors.

The first steps are being taken in the search for a new president of the **University of Texas at Austin**—a large committee of 22 people has been chosen, representing different facets of the university and the surrounding community, and a search firm hired. The committee will recommend names to the Board of Regents, who will make the final decision.

Texas has been mired in conflicts over the past few years. President Bill Powers, who will step down next June, has been part of them.

His regime was stormy in part because the Board of Regents and Texas governor Rick Perry wanted more accountability, while Powers’ allies in the state legislature accused the board of micromanaging.

In 2011, the law school dean was fired over secret forgivable loans from the law school’s foundation and there are charges of law school admissions favors for the children of politicians. The legislature supported Powers by attempting impeachment of a regent for intruding too much.

In April, UT system chancellor Francisco Cigarroa negotiated Powers’ departure. The search for the next president will be a lively one. ■

# North Carolina Education Schools: How Do They Rate?

Jane S. Shaw

In June, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) issued its second report on education schools around the country in cooperation with *U.S. News and World Report*. NCTQ, headed by Kate Walsh, is a private organization committed to elevating standards of teacher preparation.

North Carolina's education schools received mixed reviews in the "Teacher Prep Review." Three of its schools were listed among the nation's "top-ranked," but nearly half the programs scored so low that they weren't ranked at all.

The council reviews schools on the basis of 18 standards, ranging from selectivity of teacher candidates to content preparation. The reviews are based primarily on course materials supplied to NCTQ. They include: "admissions standards, course requirements, course syllabi, textbooks, capstone projects, student teaching manuals and graduate surveys," says NCTQ.

Thirteen private colleges in the state refused to cooperate, but all public education schools in the state cooperated by providing course materials.

Nationally, NCTQ evaluated 1,612 teacher preparation programs. Forty-seven programs at 22 schools in North Carolina were reviewed. (The programs were divided into elementary, secondary, and special education and separated into graduate and undergraduate.)

Three North Carolina schools—Elon, UNC-Chapel Hill, and UNC Wilmington—were included in the NCTQ list of the nation's 107 "top-ranked" institutions because of specific excellent programs. (For Elon those were its undergraduate elementary and special education programs; for Chapel Hill, its graduate secondary program; and for UNC Wilmington, its undergraduate secondary program).

But while those three schools were ranked highly, 23 or nearly half of the state's 47 programs fell into the lower half of the national evaluations and were therefore not even ranked.

Furthermore, only 26 percent of the elementary programs provided students with "effective, scientifically-based reading instruction," according to the report. Only 2 percent of the programs met the student teaching standard, which requires that teacher candidates be assigned to highly skilled teachers and obtain "frequent concrete feedback."

Just 24 percent of the programs were considered selective; that is, their teacher candidates come from above the 50th percentile of high school graduates who attend college. However, three North Carolina schools achieved "exceptional performance" in this area: Greensboro College, UNC Asheville, and UNC Charlotte.

NCTQ has been pushing for teacher education reform since it was created in 2000—sometimes with strong resistance from established institutions. Kate Walsh, its president, says that the "Teacher Prep Review" is designed to have an impact on education schools similar to the 1910 report on medical schools known as the Flexner Report, which led to the closure of low-performing schools.

Walsh is no stranger to controversy. In 2000, when she was with the Abell Foundation, she published a report, "Teacher Certification Reconsidered: Stumbling For Quality." It contended that scholarly research failed to show that certified teachers were more effective than non-certified teachers and spurred a national debate.

The NCTQ study, while published by *U.S. News and World Report*, is funded by 54 foundations. They include the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Searle Freedom Trust, the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, and 50 others.



(Note: Kate Walsh will speak on October 24 at a luncheon sponsored by the Pope Center in Chapel Hill.) ■

353 E. Six Forks Road  
Suite 200  
Raleigh, N.C. 27609

## Upcoming Event

October 24, 2014

*Kate Walsh, President,  
National Council on  
Teacher Quality, will speak  
at a luncheon sponsored  
by the Pope Center.*

*Carolina Inn, Chapel Hill,  
North Carolina*

*11:30 am to 1:00 pm*

*To register, email  
info@popecenter.org.*

*Register online at  
popecenter.org/events*

# Do You Agree?

On reviewing campus centers and institutes:

“The Board of Governors is edging here outside the bounds of its mission of supervising the system budget and setting overall policy.”

*The News & Observer (Raleigh)*

“The Board of Governors shall determine the functions, educational activities, and academic programs of the constituent institutions.”

The Code of the UNC Board of Governors



The goal of this letter is to help university trustees and governors to do a better job.

Jane S. Shaw, President  
Jenna A. Robinson, Director of Outreach  
John W. Pope Center for Higher Education Policy (popecenter.org)

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