



The Black Graduate and Professional Student Association openly protests against the recent Board of Governors' Committee vote on University Governance to reverse and replace Sections 300.8.5 of the UNC Policy Manual, Policy on Diversity and Inclusion within UNC, and 300.8.5[R] of the UNC Policy Manual, Regulation on the Diversity and Inclusion within the UNC system, affecting all UNC system institutions, including UNC-Chapel Hill. The quick and deliberate committee vote stands in direct contradiction to the university's stated mission: "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" and the goals of the Carolina Next Plan: "to build our community together, strengthen student success, enable career development, discover, promote democracy, serve to benefit society, globalize, and optimize operations." The committee's vote ensures that all UNC institutions will lose their ability to attract and retain the world's best and brightest and its global impact on research and leadership.

We reject the notion that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) have no place in academia. DEI works to support and improve the experiences of all community campus members. The policies and practices in place have increased UNC's ability to create mentoring, research, and community-building opportunities that span campuses and cultures. DEI sustains the initiatives

of student groups who seek a greater, more inclusive, and safe campus. An attack on DEI is a commitment to retaining oppressive structures that exclude and minimize the immense value of minoritized voices. Therefore, removing DEI creates a space wherein students are underdeveloped in thought and unable to critically examine society and find their place within it, lowering the value of a UNC education. The committee vote is evident that they are ignorant of substantial research supporting the necessity for policies and practices that further diversity, equity, and inclusion in academia as a benefit to all members of the campus community and beyond.

BGPSA will continue to work to create a community and provide a safe space for Black graduate and professional students at UNC. We stand in solidarity with DEI staff and leaders who provide invaluable and immeasurable contributions to the UNC system. UNC DEI staff and leaders are advocates for Black, Native, and other students of color as we continue to face systematic violence at this institution throughout its history. We believe that without DEI, UNC would no longer be a place where minoritized scholars could thrive. We urge the BOG to rethink the detrimental impacts of these changes on this institution and its reputation as a world leader in education. We call for solidarity across members of the UNC community and beyond to advocate for the protection of DEI structures that promote the well-being of all students, faculty, and staff who simply want to leave their mark on the world.

With Peace, Justice, and Love,

The UNC-Chapel Hill Black Graduate and Professional Student Association