



THE UNIVERSITY  
of NORTH CAROLINA  
at CHAPEL HILL

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UNIVERSITY COUNSEL

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May 11, 2023

Harrison M. Rosenthal, Legal Fellow  
Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression  
510 Walnut Street, Suite 1250  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Dear Mr. Rosenthal:

I am writing in furtherance of our discussion last week concerning proposed recommendations from the UNC Chapel Hill School of Medicine, Department of Health Sciences, Task Force to Integrate Social Justice into the Department of Health Sciences Curricula (“Task Force”). At the outset, I would like to thank you for sharing the concerns in your April 7 letter. The University takes its responsibilities under the First Amendment seriously and values its “Green” rating from your organization. We hope to continue to work collaboratively to address and maintain our shared goals of protecting individual free expression and academic freedom.

By way of background, the Task Force was initiated as a means to emphasize compliance with the School of Medicine’s and the Department of Health Sciences’ shared mission of improving the health and wellbeing of North Carolinians. While we remain committed to these important missions, the recommendations have not been operationalized and the Task Force has concluded its work. There is no plan to implement the Task Force’s recommendations now or in the future. Even if the recommendations were revisited in the future, further review and revision would be required. A particular area of concern would be compliance with the recent amendments to the UNC systemwide policy on Political Activities of Employees (UNC Policy Manual 300.5.1). The policy now prohibits the University from requiring an employee or applicant for academic admission or employment from having to “affirmatively ascribe to or opine about beliefs, affiliations, ideals, or principles regarding matters of contemporary political debate or social action as a condition to admission, employment, or professional advancement.”

Thank you again for raising these concerns, and please rest assured that the University remains fully committed to compliance with the First Amendment and principles of academic freedom and free expression for faculty, staff, and students within the School of Medicine, the Department of Health Sciences, and the University as whole.

Sincerely,

*Kirsten C. Stevenson*

Kirsten C. Stevenson  
Senior University Counsel  
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

