Open Letter from North Carolina Scholars

December 14, 2013

To Governor McCrory and State Budget Director Art Pope,

As scholars from institutions of higher education throughout North Carolina and citizens committed to the constitutional right of free speech, we call on you to condemn the Civitas Institute’s demand for six weeks’ worth of personal email correspondence, phone logs, text messages, and calendar entries from Gene Nichol, Boyd Tinsley Distinguished Professor and Director of the Center on Poverty, Work and Opportunity at the UNC School of Law.

This request is clearly in retribution for Professor Nichol’s public commentary critical of your administration. We write to both of you because it is public knowledge that, in the words of the Institute for Southern Studies, “Civitas gets over 90 percent of its funding from the Pope family foundation -- so much so that the IRS classifies it as a ‘private foundation,’ a designation reserved for nonprofits that depend on a single benefactor.” Thus, citizens may reasonably infer that a sitting administration is using a private tax-exempt nonprofit organization funded by one of its leading officials to retaliate for criticism of its policies and intimidate future dissent. To our knowledge this action is unprecedented in our state’s political history.

Such an attempt at punishing speech ill befits an organization that purports in its mission statement to advance “liberty” and to “empower citizens to become better civic leaders.” Imagine if a nonprofit institution affiliated with an administration of the other party demanded the email of a conservative faculty critic. The Civitas Institute would be outraged; so would we.

Mr. Pope’s foundations are well aware that Professor Nichol is one of many North Carolina scholars who have begun publicly expressing concern about the direction of state policy since your administration took office. We believe the purpose of this action is not simply to retaliate against Professor Nichol but also to discourage future dissent from faculty in higher education. Such abuse of power to suppress critics should be condemned by all people of good will.

Scholars are citizens. Like all Americans, we have the right of free speech, freedom of assembly, and indeed the positive obligation to participate in public life “to form a more perfect Union.” Sometimes, our research expertise also bears directly on policy matters. To support smart policy and draw attention to misconceived or destructive policy is part of our responsibility as trained researchers and writers in a democratic nation.

We, the undersigned, from 61 departments and 24 institutions of higher education, call you to speak out publicly on this matter and to meet with a small delegation of faculty concerned about the future of free speech for employees of our public institutions.

Sincerely,

Nancy MacLean, William H. Chafe Professor of History and Public Policy, Duke University;* Co-Chair, Scholars for North Carolina’s Future (SNCF), and primary contact: (919) 995-2432
NOTE: because of the climate of intimidation that many public employees currently experience in the state, more than 40 other faculty members at state universities and community colleges asked that their support be tallied as “anonymous.”

* Names of institutions of signers listed for identification purposes only

David Abernathy, Professor of Global Studies, Warren Wilson College

Aaron S. Allen, Associate Professor of Musicology, School of Music, Theatre & Dance, UNC Greensboro

Anne Allison, Professor of Cultural Anthropology, Duke University

Barbara Ambros, Associate Professor, Department of Religious Studies, UNC Chapel Hill

Aaron Ambroso, Graduate Student, Duke University

David R. Ambaras, Associate Professor and Director of the Honors Program, Department of History, North Carolina State University

Jennifer Scism Ash, History Instructor, Bennett College

David Auerbach, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, NCSU

David F. Ayers, Associate Professor of Education, Policy, and Cultural Studies, UNC Greensboro, and President, North Carolina Conference of the AAUP

Edward Balleisen, Associate Professor of History and Public Policy, Duke University

Matthew Barr, Professor, Department of Media Studies, UNC-Greensboro

Frank R. Baumgartner, Distinguished Professor of Political Science, UNC-CH

Donna M. Bickford, Ph.D., Associate Director, Office for Undergraduate Research, UNC-CH

Susan Bickford, Associate Professor, Political Science, UNC-CH

Anna Bigelow, Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy & Religious Studies, NCSU

Jason C. Bivins, Professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies, North Carolina State University

Judith Blau, Professor of Sociology, Emeritus, UNC-Chapel Hill

Stephen Boyd, John Allen Easley Professor of Religion, Wake Forest University

Luke Bretherton, Associate Professor of Theological Ethics, Duke Divinity School
Jennifer Brewer, Assistant Professor of Geography, East Carolina University

Jane D. Brown, Professor Emerita of Journalism and Mass Communication, UNC-CH

Lew G. Brown, Associate Professor of Marketing, Entrepreneurship, Hospitality, and Tourism, UNC Greensboro

Professor Frances P. Bynum, School of Law, NCCU

Kathryn Burns, Professor, Dept of History, UNC-CH

Jeffrey A. Butts, Professor of Biology, Appalachian State University

Chris Cain, Associate Professor of Education, Mars Hill University

Gordon Campbell, Operations Director, Duke University

W.J. Casstevens, Associate Professor, North Carolina State University

Erin G. Carlston, Professor of English and Comparative Literature, UNC-Chapel Hill

James V. Carmichael, Jr., Professor of Library and Information Studies, UNC-Greensboro

Dan Carter, Education Foundation University Professor Emeritus, University of South Carolina, and Brevard resident

J. Kameron Carter, Associate Professor of Theology and Black Church Studies, Duke University Divinity School

Deborah J. Cassidy, Professor of Human Development and Family Studies, UNC Greensboro

William H. Chafe, Alice Mary Baldwin Professor of History (Emeritus), Duke University

Crystal Chambers, Associate Professor, Higher, Adult & Counselor Education, East Carolina University

Mimi Chapman, associate professor, UNC Chapel Hill. School of Social Work

Katherine Charron, Associate Professor of History, North Carolina State University

Jacalyn Claes, Associate Professor of Social Work, University of North Carolina Greensboro

David Coates, Worrell Professor of Anglo-American Studies, Wake Forest University

Patrick Conway, Professor of Economics, UNC-Chapel Hill
Christina Cowger, Associate Professor of Plant Pathology, North Carolina State University

Altha Cravey, Associate Professor of Geography, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Michael Curtis, Judge Donald Smith Professor of Constitutional and Public Law, Wake Forest University

Keith Cushman, Professor of English, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Joshua Clark Davis, Thompson Postdoctoral Fellow, Duke University

Elizabeth Davison, Professor of Sociology, Appalachian State University

April G. Dawson, Associate Professor of Law, North Carolina Central University School of Law

Allison De Marco, MSW PhD, Investigator, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill

Molly De Marco, PHD MPH Project Director and Research Fellow Center for Health Promotion & Disease Prevention University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Susan Dennison, MSW, LCSW (FL), ACSW, Associate Professor, Department of Social Work, UNCG

Andrew Denson, Associate Professor of History, Western Carolina University

George Dimock, Associate Professor of Art History, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Patricia Dixon, Sr. Lecturer in Music, Wake Forest University

Cynthia Edwards, Professor of Psychology, Meredith College

Laura F. Edwards, Professor of History, Duke University

Maxine Eichner, Reef Ivey II Professor of Law, UNC-Chapel Hill

A. Asa Eger, Assistant Professor of History, UNC Greensboro

Arturo Escobar, Kenan Distinguished Professor of Anthropology, UNC-CH

Carl W. Ernst, William R. Kenan, Jr., Distinguished Professor of Religious Studies, UNC-CH

Sara M. Evans, Regents Professor Emerita, University of Minnesota; PhD UNC-Chapel Hill

Barbara Fedders, School of Law, UNC-Chapel Hill
Robert Hunt Ferguson, Visiting Assistant Professor of History, Western Carolina University

Benjamin Filene, Director of Public History, Associate Professor of History, UNC Greensboro

Eric M. Fink, Associate Professor of Law, Elon University School of Law

Joey Fink, Ph.D. Candidate, History Department, UNC Chapel Hill

Edwin B. Fisher, Professor of Health Behavior, Gillings School of Global Public Health, UNC-CH

Rebecka Rutledge Fisher, Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature, UNC-Chapel Hill

Dr. Michael Frierson, Professor, Media Studies, University of North Carolina Greensboro

Collie Fulford, Assistant Professor of English Rhetoric and Composition, North Carolina Central University

Mary McClintock Fulkerson, Professor of Theology, Duke Divinity School

Paul H. Gates, Jr., Professor of Communication, Appalachian State University

Dr. David Gilbert, Multicultural Scholar in Residence, Lenoir-Rhyne University

John Given, Associate Professor of Classical Studies, East Carolina University

Louis Goldstein, Professor of Music, Wake Forest University

Ann González, Professor of Spanish and Latin American Studies, UNC-Charlotte

Gael Graham, Professor, Western Carolina University

Virginia Gray, Distinguished Professor of Political Science, UNC-Chapel Hill

Robert J. Griffiths, Associate Professor of Political Science, UNC Greensboro

Michael B. Gross, Associate Professor of History, East Carolina University

Lawrence Grossberg, Morris Davis Distinguished Professor of Communications, UNC

Minrose Gwin, Kenan Eminent Professor, UNC-Chapel Hill

Karen Hagemann, James G. Kenan Distinguished Professor of History and Adjunct Professor of the Curriculum in Peace, War and Defense, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Amy Halberstadt, Professor of Psychology, NCSU

Amy Laura Hall, Associate Professor of Christian Ethics, Duke University Divinity School

Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, Julia Cherry Spruill Professor of History, UNC-CH

Jarvis A. Hall, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Political Science, North Carolina Central University

Albert Harris, Professor of Biology, UNC-Chapel Hill

Antony H. Harrison, Distinguished Professor, Department of English, North Carolina State University

William David Hart, Professor and Department Head of Religious Studies, UNC-Greensboro

Joanne M. Hessmiller, Associate Professor, Department of Social Work, UNC-Pembroke

Reginald F. Hildebrand, Associate Professor of Afro-American Studies & History, UNC-CH

Glenn Hinson, Associate Professor of Anthropology, UNC-CH

Jennifer Ho, Associate Professor of English & Comparative Literature, UNC-Chapel Hill

Dorothea A.L. Hoffman, Emerita Professor of Asian History, Appalachian State University

David B. Holian, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, UNC-Greensboro

Sharon P. Holland, Associate Professor of English and African and African American Studies, Duke University

Stephen Holland, Associate Professor, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

R. Ros Holloway, Elisha Benjamin Prof. Emeritus, Brown University, Visiting Scholar, UNC Chapel Hill

Lian-Marie Holmes, Assistant Professor of Theatre and Speech, Bennett College

Fred L. Horton, Professor Emeritus of Religion, Wake Forest University

Gordon Hull, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Public Policy, UNC-Charlotte

Phyllis Whitman Hunter, Associate Professor, History Department, University of North Carolina Greensboro

Reeve Huston, Associate Professor of History, Duke University

Douglas James, Professor of Guitar, Hayes School of Music, Appalachian State University
Willie Jennings, Associate Professor of Theology and Black Church Studies, Duke Divinity School

Phillip E. Johnson, Professor of Mathematics, Appalachian State University

Valerie Ann Johnson, Mott Distinguished Professor of Women's Studies, Bennett College

David H. Jolly, Associate Professor, Department of Public Health Education, North Carolina Central University

Eric C. Jones, Department of Anthropology, UNC Greensboro

Jeff Jones, Associate Professor of History, UNC Greensboro

Mary Alice Jost, Professor of Biology, Sandhills Community College

Irv Joyner, Professor of Law, North Carolina Central University School of Law

Spoma Jovanovic, Professor of Communication Studies, UNC Greensboro

Arne L. Kalleberg, Kenan Distinguished Professor of Sociology, UNC-Chapel Hill

Elizabeth L. Keathley, Associate Professor, Historical Musicology and Women's and Gender Studies, Lloyd International Honors College Faculty Fellow, UNCG

Caitlin Margaret Kelly, MFA Candidate, Experimental and Documentary Arts, Duke University

Joseph E. Kennedy, Professor of Law, University of North Carolina School of Law

Keval Kaur Khalsa, Associate Professor of the Practice of Dance & Theater Studies and Director of the Dance Program, Duke University

Scott Kirsch, Associate Professor of Geography, UNC-Chapel Hill

Greg Knehans, Lecturer, UNC-Greensboro

Richard H. Kohn, Professor Emeritus of History and Peace, War, and Defense, UNC-CH

Claudia Koonz, Peabody Family Professor Emeritus, History Department, Duke University

Robert Korstad, Professor of Public Policy and History, Duke University

Jonathan B. Kotch, MD, MPH, FAAP, Research Professor, UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health
Arielle Kuperberg, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, UNCG

Pedro Lasch, Associate Research Professor, Department of Art, Art History & Visual Studies, Duke University

Jeff Lawson, Professor of Mathematics & Computer Science, Western Carolina University

Stephen Layson, Associate Professor of Economics, UNCG

R. E. Lentz II, Lecturer, History Dept., Appalachian State University

Adriane Lentz-Smith, Associate Professor of History, Duke University

Lisa Levenstein, Associate Professor of History, UNC Greensboro

Lisa A. Lindsay, Associate Professor of History, UNC-Chapel Hill

Linda R. Lisowski, Associate Professor of Education, Elizabeth City State University

Nichola Lowe, Associate Professor, City and Regional Planning, UNC-Chapel Hill

Margaret (Maggie) McFadden, Professor Emerita of Women's Studies, Appalachian State University

Elizabeth Gillespie McRae, Associate Professor, History Department, WCU

Veronique Machelidon, Associate Professor of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Meredith College

Jodi Magness, Kenan Distinguished Professor, Department of Religious Studies, UNC-CH

Gordon K. Mantler, Ph.D., Lecturing Fellow Thompson Writing Program, Duke University

William P. Marshall, School of Law, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Anna Marshall-Baker, Professor of Interior Architecture, UNC-Greensboro

James D. Martin, Professor of Chemistry, North Carolina State University

Darlene May, Senior Lecturer of Religion, Wake Forest University

Gregory E. McAvoy, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, UNC-Greensboro

Martha McCaughey, Professor of Sociology, Appalachian State University

Dennis W. McCracken, Biology Instructor, University of North Carolina at Pembroke
Hannah Rose Mendoza, MFA, Assistant Professor, Interior Architecture, UNC-Greensboro

Levi McLaughlin, Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, North Carolina State University

Jenna Meints, Assistant Professor of Accounting, UNC Greensboro

Hassan Melehy, Professor of French and Francophone Studies, UNC-Chapel Hill

Andrea Mensch, Senior Lecturer, North Carolina State University

Donald H. Mershon, Professor Emeritus, Department of Psychology, North Carolina State University

John Mertz, Associate Professor of Japanese, North Carolina State University

Eric Meyers, Religion Department, Duke University

George F. Michel, Professor of Psychology, University of North Carolina Greensboro

Roslyn Arlin Mickelson, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology, Public Policy, & Women and Gender Studies, Department of Sociology, UNC-Charlotte

Marianne Montgomery, Associate Professor of English, East Carolina University

Michael J. Moore, Professor of History Emeritus, Appalachian State University

Perri Morgan, Associate Professor, Department of Community and Family Medicine, Duke University Medical Center

Claire Morse, Professor of Psychology, Guilford College

Duncan Murrell, Writer in Residence, Center for Documentary Studies, Duke University

Lynn S. Neal, Associate Professor of Religion, Wake Forest University

Diane M. Nelson, Professor of Cultural Anthropology, Duke University

Rebecca New, Associate Professor of Education, UNC-Chapel Hill

Adam J. Newmark, Associate Professor of Political Science, Department of Government and Justice Studies, Appalachian State University

Steve O'Boyle, Sociology Department, UNC-Greensboro
Akin Ogundiran, Professor of Africana Studies, Anthropology & History, UNC Charlotte

Jocelyn Olcott, Associate Professor of History, Duke University

Bruce Orenstein, Artist in Residence, Center for Documentary Studies, Duke University

Claudia M. Pagliaro, Professor, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Anthony S. Parent Jr., Professor of History and American Ethnic Studies & Director Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Program, Wake Forest University

Anne Parsons, Assistant Professor, Department of History, UNC-Greensboro

James Peacock, Kenan Professor of Anthropology, UNCCCH

Mary Pendergraft, Professor of Classical Languages, Wake Forest University

Elizabeth Perrill, Assistant Professor of Art History, Department of Art, UNC-Greensboro

Megan Perry, Associate Professor of Anthropology, East Carolina University

Elicka Peterson-Sparks, Associate Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice & Honors Program Director, Department of Government and Justice Studies

Sheila Phipps, Associate Professor of History, Appalachian State University

Della Pollock, Professor, UNC-CH

Leela Prasad, Associate Professor (Ethics & South Asian Studies), Departments of Religion & Asian & Middle Eastern Studies, Duke University

Jedediah Purdy, Robinson O. Everett Professor of Law, Duke University School of Law

Bonnie N. Raphael, Ph.D., Professor Emeritas, Department of Dramatic Arts, UNC Chapel Hill

David C. Ribar, Professor of Economics, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Mark Rifkin, President-Elect Native American and Indigenous Studies Association and Associate Professor of English and Women's and Gender Studies, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Michele Rivkin-Fish, Associate Professor, Anthropology, UNC-Chapel Hill
David A. Roberts, Assistant Professor of English, Bennett College

Graeme B. Robertson, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Robert Roer, Professor of Biology and Marine Biology, UNC-Wilmington

Eugene F. Rogers, Jr., Professor of Religious Studies, UNC-Greensboro

Rachel L. Roper, Associate Professor of Microbiology & Immunology, Brody School of Medicine, East Carolina University

Maria Rosales, Associate Professor of Political Science, Guilford College

Richard Rosen, Professor Emeritus, UNC School of Law

Hephzibah Roskelly, Department of English, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Kathryn Sabbeth, Assistant Professor, School of Law, UNC-Chapel Hill

Rodney S. Sadler, Jr., Associate Professor of Bible, Union Presbyterian Seminary

Ruth Salvaggio, Professor of English and Comparative Literature, UNC-CH

Maria Savasta-Kennedy, Clinical Professor of Law, UNC-Chapel Hill

Patricia Sawin, Associate Professor of American Studies, UNC Chapel Hill

Renee Scherlen, Professor, Department of Government and Justice Studies, Appalachian State University

Lars Schoultz, William Rand Kenan, Jr., Professor of Political Science, UNC-CH

Mark Schulz, Associate Professor of Public Health Education, UNC-Greensboro

Michael Schwalbe, Professor of Sociology, North Carolina State University

Roy Schwartzman, Professor of Communication Studies, UNC-Greensboro

Rachel F. Seidman, Associate Director, Southern Oral History Program, UNC Chapel Hill

Martin Settle, Retired English Lecturer, UNC Charlotte

Svi Shapiro, Professor of Education and Cultural Studies, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Lee Shiflett, Professor, UNC-Greensboro
Elin o'Hara Slavick, Professor of Art, UNC, Chapel Hill
Carisa R. Showden, Associate Professor, Political Science, UNC-Greensboro
Irene Silverblatt, Professor, Cultural Anthropology, Duke University
Susan Sanford, Candidate, Master of Public Administration, UNC School of Government
Sally Clark Stearns, Professor, Department of Health Policy and Management, UNC-CH
John Steen, Visiting Assistant Professor of English, East Carolina University
Mariam Aziza Stephan, Associate Professor of Painting, UNC Greensboro
Edith Sylla, Professor Emerita of History, North Carolina State University
Barbara Campbell Thomas, Associate Professor of Art, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Art, UNCG
Susanne W. Thomas, Lecturer, Department of Art, UNC-Greensboro
Charles D. Thompson, Jr., Professor of the Practice of Cultural Anthropology, Duke University
Sarah Thuesen, Visiting Asst. Prof. of History, Guilford College
Susan Thorne, Associate Professor of History, Duke University
Hollie Tripp, Public Policy graduate student, UNC Charlotte
Jonathan Tudge, Professor of Human Development and Family Studies, UNC-Greensboro
Timothy B. Tyson, Senior Research Scholar, Center for Documentary Studies, Duke University
Isaac Unah, Associate Professor of Political Science, UNC-Chapel Hill
Mary A. Valante, Professor of History, Appalachian State University
Charles M. van der Horst, MD, FACP, Professor of Medicine, School of Medicine, UNC-CH
Steven M. Virgil, Professor, School of Law and Director, Institute for Public Engagement, Wake Forest University
Ana-Maria Gonzalez Wahl, Associate Professor of Sociology, Wake Forest University
Anne D. Wallace, Professor of English, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Cat Warren, Associate Professor, Department of English, North Carolina State University

Harry L. Watson, Atlanta Alumni Distinguished Professor, UNC-Chapel Hill

Deborah M. Weissman, Reef C. Ivey II Distinguished Professor of Law, UNC School of Law

Jesse L. White, Jr., Adjunct Professor, School of Government, UNC-Chapel Hill

Stephen Wing, Associate Professor of Epidemiology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

John Whitehouse, Adjunct Professor of Math and Science, Mars Hill University

Andrew Willis, Professor of Music, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Mary Wright, Professor of Law, NCCU

Barbara Zelter, Clinical Assistant Professor, NC State University

David Zonderman, Professor of History, North Carolina State University

Richard Zweigenhaft, Dana Professor of Psychology, Guilford College