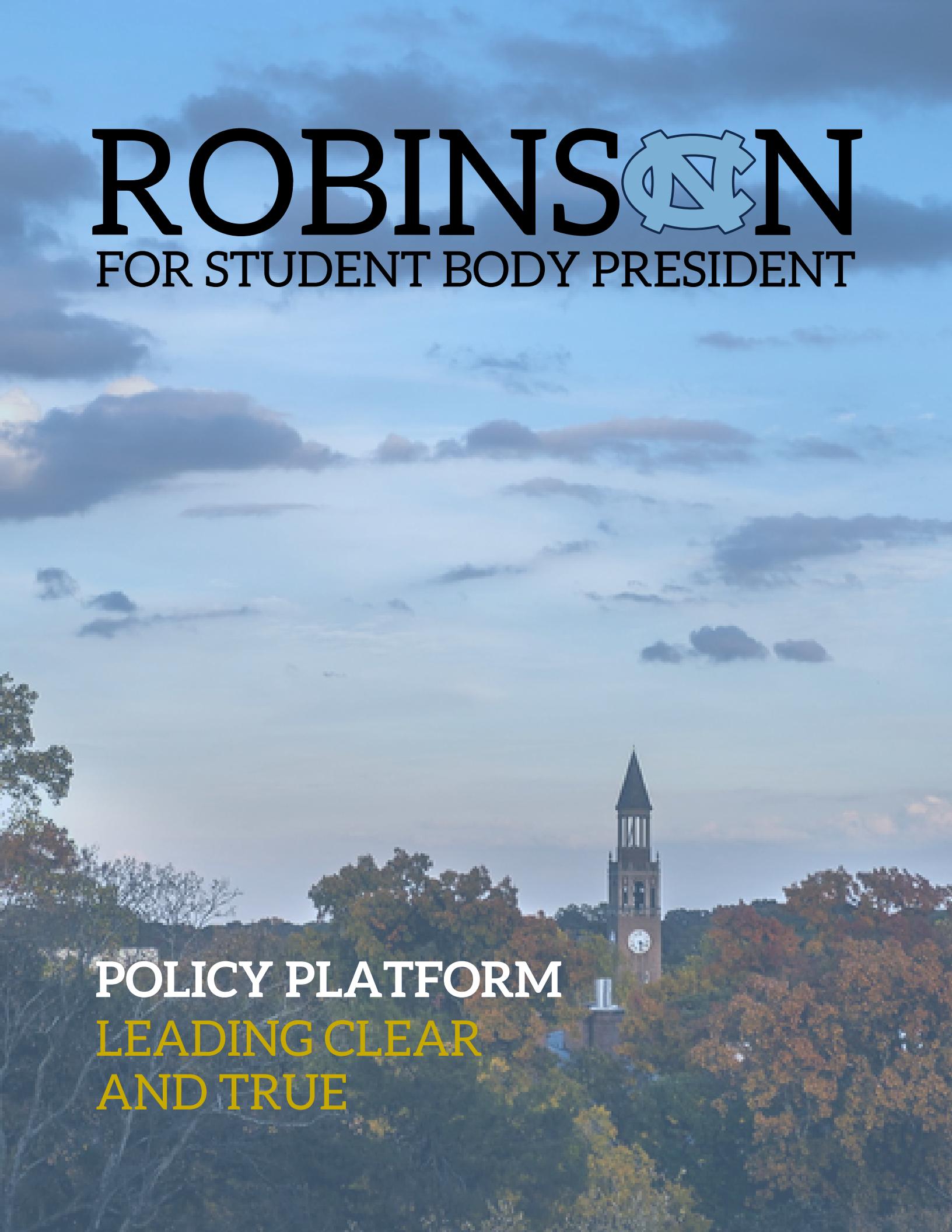


ROBINS



FOR STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT



POLICY PLATFORM
LEADING CLEAR
AND TRUE

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Letter from the Candidate

Dear Carolina Community,

My name is Sam Robinson. I am so proud to be a candidate for Student Body President here at the nation's finest and oldest public university! I'm from Monroe, North Carolina, and graduated from Parkwood High School. When I first got my acceptance letter in January of 2020, a dream came true for me. Becoming a Tar Heel was everything to me then, and it means even more now. I have come to understand what Charles Kuralt meant when he said "Our love for this place is based on the fact that it is, as it was meant to be, the University of the people."

In the last year, this community has faced historic challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic, a mental health crisis, ongoing institutional racism, and ineffective leadership have shaken this university to its core. Our administration hasn't risen to the challenges we've faced. President Lamar Richards has been an outstanding advocate for student voices, but many of the systems surrounding his administration have unfortunately been ineffective.



Despite the extremely challenging state of our university, I have hope. I see the members of the Carolina Community rise and flourish despite immense challenges both internal and external. My belief in the future of Carolina is rooted in my belief in you, my fellow students.

I would be honored if you would choose me to represent your interests to the Board of Trustees and the broader Carolina Community. My team and I have been listening to what you want and what you think Carolina should be. We recognize that Carolina needs empathy and experience. My promise to you is to be a mouthpiece for your vision of a more equitable and more transparent Carolina; to bring your ideas behind the closed doors where, unfortunately, most decisions are made. After all, we are not responsible for the problems of today, but we are responsible for the solutions of tomorrow.

My team and I have created a platform that will create sweeping reforms to the way student government operates in its own right and interacts with the community. Our platform pillars of Accessibility, Transparency, and Equity are our foundation for a better future. In the following pages, you will see my team's plans to combat issues from Mental Health to Accessibility and dozens of others in between. In the spirit of our pillars, we encourage you to reach out to our team on social media or through our website to share your feedback on our platform. Everyone has a story, and we want to hear yours. After all, how could I promise to embody these pillars while governing if I don't live them out while campaigning?

My time here at Carolina has solidified two things for me: I love this University, and I can't stand to watch this place fail its most important asset: you. I look forward to meeting you in the coming days.

Let's Lead Clear and True! Together, we can build a future for all Tar Heels.

Sincerely,


Samuel C. Robinson



Empathy meets Action

Our Campaign Vision

Those who know Sam understand that his experience in the Senate has prepared him with the perspective and work ethic necessary to get things done. His time in the Undergraduate Senate and beyond has more than prepared him for the brass tacks of making policy and delivering for our student body. With experience to light the way, Sam envisions a Carolina where empathy can meet action. It is no secret that this University is flawed; it can sometimes feel like a cold and lonely place. Sam believes that it can also be a place capable of immense empathy and love. When Sam envisions Carolina, he doesn't see the pits of failures; he sees us rising to our successes. He imagines the Dean Smith Center erupting in cheers after a game winning shot. He sees a researcher making a stunning breakthrough on vaccine technology. He sees friends coming together when times are dark and carrying each other through it. Sam sees a Carolina of boundless possibility for doing good and bettering itself. This is the vision in which our campaign is rooted, and this is the vision that inspires this platform.

When you have a worker like Sam, all you really need is a vision to pair empathy with action.

Accessibility

A professor barred from their classroom by steep stairs. A first-year student forced to trade time spent with friends or in an organization with the time to search for each meal they eat. A grad student struggling with mental health, feeling like every resource on the books just isn't designed for them. Our campaign believes Carolina should be a home; no Tar Heel should ever feel alone, from Chapel Hill to around the globe.

To all that have ever felt that the full experience of Carolina is not accessible to you, this is your campaign.

Equity

The historic relationship between Carolina and its marginalized communities is dark and shameful. There's a lot of work to be done, from sweeping reforms of the student body's relationship with the UNC Police Department to combatting housing policy that explicitly excludes and dehumanizes transgender people. Change can only be accomplished when our community comes together with shared commitment, focus, and fixity of purpose.

For all those who wish to see a fairer Carolina, this is your campaign.

Transparency

Student government should connect students and organizations with opportunities and information to improve their Carolina experience. Far too often, though, these resources meant to serve the student body feel distant, unnecessary, or malicious. Transparency is not an action but a mindset—a way of understanding systems and people. By prioritizing the needs and experiences of students, the interpersonal connections which drive open dialogue can thrive.

For all those who have felt held back by Carolina's opaqueness, this is your campaign.





Diversity Equity & Inclusion

Gender & Sexuality

LGBTQ+ students at Carolina have always been trailblazers: Carolina was the home of the first LGBTQ+ student publication in the United States, the Lambda, and activists like Minnie Bruce Pratt and Joe Herzenberg have fought for rights at Carolina, in Chapel Hill, at the state legislature, and on the national stage. The Robinson Administration pledges to unequivocally support the heirs of this proud tradition of activism and community-building.

1) Require student organizations and student government to use gender-neutral language in their governing documents

2) Create a best practices guide for instructors, administrators, and students on gender-inclusivity

The Robinson Administration will create a working group of LGBTQ+ student leaders from across campus to create a best practices guide to help navigate how to structure classes, meetings, and organizations to be deliberately inclusive to LGBTQ+ students.

3) Support the funding and expansion of the LGBTQ Center

The Robinson Administration will support fundraising for the LGBTQ Center and partner regularly with the Center on advocacy, outreach, and service projects.

4) Call on the University to install and renovate facilities for more single stall and gender-neutral bathrooms

5) Call on the Board of Governors to reverse its policies on transgender and gender-neutral housing

The University currently requires students to register for housing based on their sex at birth as a result of UNC System Policy 700.8.1. This policy is deliberately constructed to discriminate against transgender students and is, in fact, the only policy regarding campus housing the Board of Governors has adopted. The Robinson Administration pledges to call attention to and push to end this policy, which exists for the sole purpose of discriminating against transgender students.



Racial Justice

Students of color have lower graduation rates than the Carolina student body at large. This issue is exaggerated in STEM fields. The Robinson Administration will support and create programming to improve graduation rates for students of color, particularly within STEM majors.

1) Develop targeted peer mentorship programs for groups underrepresented in academic settings

We will encourage all Departments to model such programs after the UNC Chemistry Department's. Mentorship programs have proven successful in increasing retention and creating feelings of belonging. Students who have already faced and beaten these challenges will ideally help guide other students through difficult introductory STEM classes.

We recognize the intersectional nature of equity and justice. It is our responsibility to make a conscious consideration of inequity in all policy areas—a commitment we hold fast to through this Platform on all issues. You will see these themes present in our Environmental Justice and Student Organization Support approaches discussed further below.

2) Support programs to foster community for BIPOC students and affinity organizations for underrepresented students

The Robinson Administration will pledge to support student organizations focused on empowering, guiding, and creating community for underrepresented students in STEM and other fields. These organizations play a vital role in creating community in STEM departments, and the support of student government will enable these organizations to improve their publicity, attract more prominent speakers, and widen the reach of their fundraising.

As internal and external appointments are being filled, we will continue to prioritize the outreach to affinity groups started with this campaign, recognizing the importance of diversity at all levels of our administration.



Religion & Culture

Many cultural and religious organizations at Carolina already have dedicated spaces on campus which allow students and staff to meet, rest, pray, eat, and build community together. Places like Hillel, Newman, the Asian American Center, and the Sonja Haynes Stone Center have successfully strengthened their communities' internal ties and their ties to Carolina. Students of all backgrounds deserve support for and from their communities, and a space for Muslim students on or near campus will allow them to access the success of previous student centers.

1) Provide traditional food options during religious holidays

Capitalizing on the Executive Branch's existing relationship with Carolina Dining Services, particularly through appointees to the Student Dining Services Board of Directors, the Robinson Administration will advocate that traditional food options are provided during holidays, including Passover and Eid al-Fitr. Students staying in Chapel Hill during holidays will be able to enjoy traditional foods, and other students can gain exposure to the traditions of their peers. By working with religious and cultural student organizations, we will identify opportunities to better communicate to CDS the different traditions of Carolina students, faculty, and staff.

2) Assist Muslim students to explore establishing a space for Muslim students at Carolina

The Robinson Administration will assist Muslim students in connecting with administrators and donors to move towards establishing their own space on campus and commit to remaining involved throughout the entire planning and fundraising process.

3) Push UNC administration to establish reflection rooms across campus for students to pray, rest, and meditate in quiet, calm spaces

Modeled on spaces at our peer institutions, these offer a space for all students: religious, spiritual, and otherwise. In particular, Muslim students are provided with private spaces for prayer throughout the day. Having spaces where students can stop and rest is generally something Carolina needs to reduce burnout.

4) Require accessible translations of university communications with students and parents/guardians



Disability Advocacy

Carolina needs to reaffirm its commitment to creating an inclusive campus by fulfilling the needs of those with disabilities. In the words of UNC alum Nicholas Li-wen Hatcher, “inaccessibility thrives because it is invisible to the people who do not face it.” Many students of different abilities in the Carolina community struggle due to Carolina’s failure to properly provide resources and accommodations that these students deserve.

1) Work with Transportation and Parking to ensure disabled students maintain access to personal transportation

Disabled students are currently expected to pay extra for insufficient parking, which includes an already onerous process. We will advocate that Transportation and Parking accept North Carolina-issued disability parking placards as *prima facie* evidence that a student is entitled to disability parking at Carolina, instead of requiring unnecessary additional documentation. We will ask Transportation and Parking to reduce costs for disability parking permits: **disabled students should not be asked to pay extra for their parking.**

2) Work with the Administration to incorporate perspectives of disabled people in accessibility planning and intervention

Disabled students are placed in impossible positions at Carolina every day. From insufficient fire safety plans to unexpected construction and inaccessible buildings, disabled students face barriers that would never be expected of, or considered acceptable by, able-bodied students.

Disabled students should never be expected to live in a building with an insufficient plan for evacuation in the event of a fire. We will work to identify where disabled students are placed at greater risk and mitigate that risk to the greatest extent possible. We will lobby the University to consider evacuation plans for disabled students in new and renovated buildings and to work to make more first floors into accessible floors so disabled students are able to evacuate safely.

Further, we will work with disabled students to identify buildings which are theoretically accessible but have insufficient signage for disabled students to navigate. This is a low-cost, highly-effective intervention that the University can implement quickly.



Disability Advocacy

3) Establish a Disability Liaison Office within the Department of Student Organization Outreach to coordinate with disabled students and their organizations

Disabled students consistently express that they are ignored by Carolina administrators and their experiences are constantly invalidated. The Disability Liaison Office will coordinate a group of disabled students and ARS staff to create two resources: a guide to Accessibility Resources and Service for disabled students, and a best practices guide for instructors and administrators. The ARS guide will help disabled students navigate the often-confusing road to getting accommodations, while the best practices guide will help instructors and administrators understand the needs of disabled students.

The Disability Liaison Office will also engage in awareness activities in coordination with disabled students and student organizations in order to help the broader Carolina community better understand and support disabled students. Carolina students understand that they have a duty to help one another, and it's time we listen on how to do that best. Finally, the Disability Liaison Office will have a direct line to Sam to call on his assistance in advocating for policy and programs which serve disabled students, amplifying their platform and voices.

4) Construct a permanent ramp at the Old Well

Carolina cannot be inclusive until the symbol of our University is inclusive. The Robinson Administration will advocate strongly for the construction of a permanent ramp on the Old Well so that students with physical disabilities can partake in FDOC traditions and enjoyment of the Well.

5) Expand ARS testing accessibility

Students should not have to always trek down to South Campus for testing accommodations. There are plenty of spaces on North Campus, including the Student Union, which could be more accessible to all students. Especially for students with disabilities, making students choose between a day-altering trek away from any other classes and testing accommodations is not acceptable.

The Robinson Administration will find a permanent space for ARS testing spaces on North Campus, and pledges to reserve rooms in the Union for this purpose until a more permanent location is found.



Geography

"From Carolina, For Carolina"

The nation's finest public university should be accessible to every student in the state of North Carolina. Many students at public schools in low-income counties have less access to schools like UNC Chapel-Hill due to a lack of resources and funding.

The "From Carolina, For Carolina" plan is born from the UNC-sponsored Carolina Across 100 program. According to the program's website, "Carolina Across 100 will exemplify the University's mission to "enhance the quality of life for all people in the State" by creating meaningful partnerships with communities across North Carolina to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges facing communities."

Our target is to have students from all 100 counties in North Carolina enrolled by the fall 2024 semester. To make this goal a reality, the Robinson Administration will:

- Hold at least one information session per month in low-income/marginalized counties around the state where students have had less success achieving entry to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
- Recruit a diverse profile of Student Government officials and members of different Registered Student Organizations to attend these trips, free of charge.
- Attempt to Partner with the Carolina Across 100 program and the Undergraduate Admissions office to create a curriculum.
- Attempt to Partner with the Carolina Across 100 program and the Undergraduate Admissions office to identify counties and locations to visit, especially integrating community colleges and alternative education programs.



Veterans' Issues

Despite hefty rhetoric from the University in support of veterans, little substantive action is taken, particularly by student leaders. The Robinson Administration intends to not continue overlooking this valued facet of the campus community.

- 1) Lobby the University to expand the reach of the Veteran Center so that it can provide support to the veteran students on campus**
- 2) Cooperate with the Veterans Affairs Department to eliminate barriers to veterans receiving tuition support**
- 3) Require all Executive Branch staff to complete the Dean of Student's Green Zone Training to actively include and better support veteran students**



- 4) Support the creation and funding of a Veterans' Treatment Court internship program**

Through our Department of RSO Outreach, we will work with student leaders to support Veterans' Treatment Courts statewide. These courts provide an alternative rehabilitation program for veterans that struggle with mental illness, drug abuse, or other issues. Instead of going to jail, paying fines, and being crushed by the system, this gives those who have served us a chance to be served and receive a second chance.

Working with the Undergraduate Senate and Department of RSO Outreach, we will support student leaders in reaching their goal of raising \$15,000 to supply UNC School of Social Work students with paid internships to help social services for the Veterans' Treatment Courts.



Immigrant Protections

1) Tirelessly advocate in-state tuition rates for undocumented DACA recipients

The North Carolina General Assembly has narrowly-defined "in-state student" to exclude undocumented immigrants in every instance, without regard for their residency and irresponsible to legal protections such as DACA.

The politically-charged exclusion of Dreamers who've lived nearly their whole lives in North Carolina, went to high school in North Carolina, and chose to continue their education in North Carolina is simply xenophobic.

By classifying Dreamers as international students, UNC prohibits them from receiving state financial aid, which when compounded with federal prohibitions on student aid, severely undermines efforts towards affordability and accessibility.

The Robinson Administration will show unwavering support for undocumented DACA recipients who richly contribute to the Carolina community. Engaging the Office of State and External Affairs, our Administration will actively lobby in support of SB 672 once introduced in the 2023-2024 GA Session, granting in-state status to all qualifying Dreamers.

2) Streamline support pathways for "Documented Dreamers"

More than 200,00 young people in the United States are children of documented immigrants but not US citizens, leaving them in a legal limbo through their college years as the legal protections afforded to the children of immigrants begin to expire.

Upon turning 21, Documented Dreamers must receive an F-1 visa to continue their education, otherwise they are required to self-deport. A similar dilemma arises at graduation, when they must acquire work visas or leave the country they call home. Birthdays and graduation—a time for celebration—are overshadowed by an exclusionary, fearmongering, antiquated immigration system.

America's CHILDREN Act would eliminate the "age-out" deadline for long-term visa holders, and the Robinson Administration will proudly invest the resources of student government's lobbying division, the Office of State and External Affairs, to join the chorus of voices supporting immediate action. Meanwhile, working with University administrators, we will enhance informational resources and professional support options to help visa-seeking students navigate the broken immigration system.



A large basketball arena is shown from a high vantage point, looking down onto the court. The arena is packed with spectators, mostly wearing blue. In the foreground, several people are holding up large blue flags. The basketball court is visible below, with a hoop and a backboard. A large scoreboard is visible in the background, displaying a game with players on the court. The lighting is bright, coming from the arena's overhead lights.

Student Wellness

Food Security

Currently, Carolina students go hungry because our only food pantry on campus is open for a few hours each week and requires students to submit themselves to a humiliating process, outlining the extent to which they are desperate for food. All of which gleans students only unprepared foods. Carolina Cupboard cannot even receive funding from Student Government because they are no longer a registered student organization.

The issue is exacerbated further when we compare Carolina with our Peer Institutions. Most of our peers have world-class food pantries. The University of California at Berkeley and the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor in particular have large and well-organized food pantries for their students. Carolina students deserve comparable resources with institutional support. No student should go hungry on our campus.



1) Establish a Student Government Food Pantry

In response to the woefully inadequate resources available to students, the Administration will coordinate with extant Registered Student Organizations to support a fully-fledged, centrally-located food pantry providing ready-to-eat food, prepared meals, and cooking and nutrition resources. This project will be modeled towards permanence using Student Legal Services as a guide. Through a combination of donations, pre-existing allotments to food insecurity, and reallocation of Executive Branch funds, the Robinson Administration has a plan to fund a high-quality food bank without taking money away from funds intended for student organizations.

2) Advocate for increased dining options on South Campus near Ram Village



Affordability

1) Reform the Dean of Students Emergency Fund

The Dean of Students Emergency Fund is intended to serve students in the most desperate of situations. However, the Fund is currently structured in a way that actively prevents students from getting access to the support they need. The Fund states “Currently enrolled students may apply for funds when they have exhausted all other resources (credit card, payment plans, additional student aid, assistance from family/friends, other personal resources).” The University should not be pushing students to go into debt in order to ensure they can continue to be enrolled at Carolina. The Robinson Administration will lobby the Dean of Students to overhaul the Fund. These overhauls must include greater transparency in how funds are awarded, a revision of the standards for funding this resource, and a restructuring of the application to avoid forcing students to disclose private information.

2) Homelessness Prevention Emergency Fund

The Robinson Administration commits to fund in full an emergency fund for members of the Carolina Community to avoid housing instability and homelessness, modeled on the work done by the Carolina Homelessness Prevention Initiative and principles set forth by the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

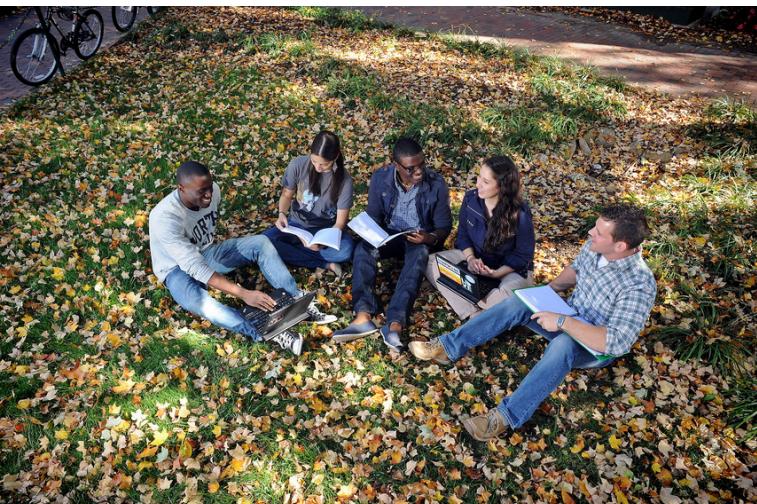


Mental Health

1) Accepting alumni help: partnering with Learn to Win for mental health accessibility

Student Government plans to partner with all alumni that want to help our student body with our most pressing needs. Our mental health crisis is certainly one of these needs.

Learn to Win is a successful company, started by Carolina alumni, that has recently attempted to work with Student Government, but was denied funding by the Department of Student Wellness and Safety. The Robinson Administration commits to allocating the proper funds to establish a learning program for first-year and transfer orientation that will educate students about mental health resources and their limitations at Carolina.



2) Include a professional mental health representative to sit on the Curricula Committee to ensure UNC students' mental health is considered in the formulation of classes

3) Require all Executive Branch staff to complete the UNC School of Social Work's Mental Health First Aid Training to better respond to the peers they serve

4) Eliminating University Prohibitions on Student Mental Health Funding

North Carolina requires that University services worth at least \$25 that support students individually must be deducted from their financial aid packages. As a result, UNC chooses to offer severely limited funding for off-campus counseling services. However, the Dean of Students unilaterally decides what is reported under this standard. Other UNC System schools, such as NC State, choose not to report counseling services; the Robinson Administration will work with the Dean of Students to ensure students can access University funds for these essential services.



Mental Health

5) Make CAPS "By Carolina, For Carolina"

Establish a CAPS Oversight Council to address the numerous problems with Carolina's approach to their students' mental health. This Council will consist of 3 undergraduate students, 3 graduate students, and 4 mental health professionals. Students appointed under the Robinson Administration will prioritize the following issues:

- CAPS is understaffed and unable to handle the number of students that need mental health care. To help ameliorate the stress students feel when given lists of out-of-network therapists, the oversight council will vet off-campus therapists. The body will provide information about what forms of insurance these therapists take, if scholarships like Carolina Covenant can cover these costs, and therapist availability.
- CAPS has deadlines for entry into grief groups. Simply put, if tragedy strikes a student at the wrong time of year, they are excluded from the essential support grief groups can provide. The oversight council will work to eliminate these deadlines and ensure students have access to grief groups when they need them.

- Students studying abroad or at field sites are unable to access CAPS resources, and are excluded from these opportunities if they have ever needed University-affiliated mental health care. The oversight council will ensure that all Carolina students, regardless of their location, have access to the services promised to them by the University, and are not precluded from opportunities for seeking help.
- Private donors are currently forbidden from donating to CAPS. The oversight council will work with the Office of State and External Affairs to clarify the regulations regarding this type of funding

6) Hiring committee intervention

Student representatives on hiring committees will be equipped and enabled to ask for direct answers on whether candidates can justify their six-figure salaries in light of chronic underfunding and debilitating understaffing in CAPS.



Sexual Assault Prevention, Awareness, and Response

The 2015 documentary The Hunting Ground exposed what students at Carolina already know: UNC has a serious sexual assault problem, and the administration doesn't consider this crisis worth the implementation of serious interventions

1) Signing the EDActNow pledge

As Student Body President, Sam will sign the EDActNow Pledge, affirming his commitment to roll back Betsy DeVos's regressive Title IX changes which shield abusers from the consequences of their actions.

2) Meaningful communication

Coordinate with representatives from high-risk areas such as bars, fraternities, and residence halls to ensure students have protections that work for them.

3) Reforming CAPS sexual assault groups

Ensure that CAPS sexual assault groups are open to all genders rather than the current policy, which often excludes non-female survivors from essential mental health care.



Academic Policy

1) MFIT general education referendum

We will support efforts to develop a comprehensive mental wellness, or MFIT, course, like the current IDST 290 course.

We believe that efforts should be taken to reduce competition in courses for student wellness. An MFIT course that is successful should be pass/fail and a one credit-hour opportunity to reduce toxic competition and allow students to focus on themselves and their learning.

Since this course is intended to serve students and not hinder them, the Robinson Administration believes that before becoming a part of the General Education Curriculum, a student body referendum on the subject is necessary.

2) Grade forgiveness taskforce

Carolina is notoriously harsh on grade inflation, which is a position with good intentions, but causes our campus to fall behind our peer institutions in forgiveness for isolated academic shortcomings. The Robinson Administration will establish a task force for grade forgiveness, which will pressure the administration to allow students to retake courses they have previously failed to replace or mitigate their previous grade in the course with a more accurate representation of their academic progress.



Student Rights

Student protesting has a long and storied past at Carolina. The right of students to protest is enshrined in the Constitution and the Robinson Administration will actively work to protect this right. The Robinson Administration also commits to support UE Local 150 at UNC's priorities and initiatives and pledges to work to advance worker's interests at Carolina and across the state.

1) A living wage

78% of graduate workers at Carolina do not earn a living wage. This situation is unacceptable: graduate students should not be asked to take on more loans or live in poverty while simultaneously creating immense value for Carolina through research and instruction. The University cannot exist without graduate workers: they deserve to be paid what they are worth.

2) Pay-to-work

Workers on campus are expected to pay ever-increasing parking fees to park on and around campus, fees which come out of their already-meager pay, while administrators like the Chancellor have free reserved spaces on campus. Carolina is not a company town and nobody should have to pay to work, especially with dramatically-reduced public transit availability.



Coronavirus Pandemic

COVID-19 is an issue that continues to impact nearly every decision that is made on our campus. It's impossible to know what tomorrow will look like, let alone several months down the road. Sensible action items for today may prove irrelevant or irresponsible as the state of the pandemic continues to evolve. As such, our policy will be guided by a few determining approaches:

1) Believe the science

The Robinson Administration will first and foremost be guided by science and listen to expert opinions when making any decision. Our Gillings School distinguishes itself as the best public health institution in the country, and their expertise is central to any decision-making. The Administration will also push for greater transparency in University decision-making with regards to COVID-19 policy.



2) Guarantee virtual class options

For many students, an in-person learning experience will positively shape their time at UNC. However, students have a right to feel safe in their own classes. Because the pandemic can affect everyone differently and unique circumstances dictate adaptation over rigid commitment to politically-charged policies, the Robinson Administration will advocate for all courses to have an online option available to all students, no questions asked.

3) Protect testing access

Testing sites must remain fully operational to provide COVID-19 tests to students when and where they need one. In the time when the world changes faster than we can follow, gathering more information about the health and safety of our student body is an ultimate priority.

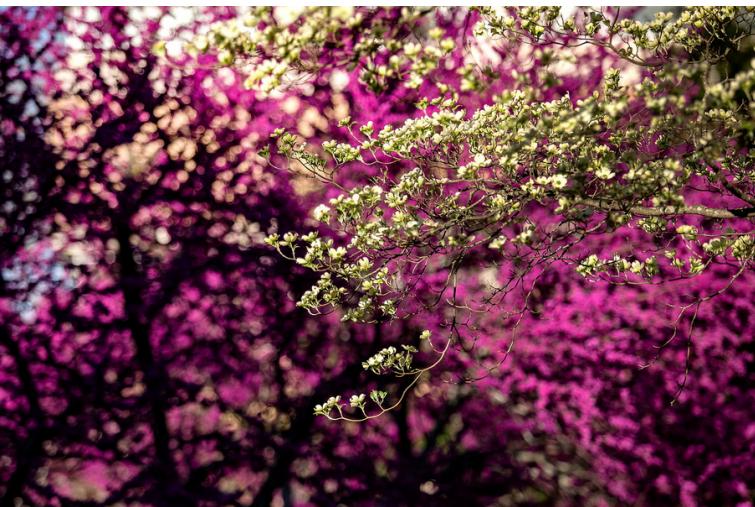


An aerial photograph of a small town or city during autumn. The town is built on a hillside, with buildings of various sizes and colors, including red brick, white, and grey. A prominent white church steeple rises on the left side of the frame. The surrounding area is filled with trees, many of which have turned shades of orange, yellow, and red. The overall scene is a mix of urban architecture and natural beauty.

Carolina in the Community

Environmental Affairs

UNC Student Government has long treated environmental issues as a problem for external advocacy rather than acknowledging the real, internal disruptions caused by climate change and its cascade of effects. These issues can not be adequately addressed by a few scattered positions. The Robinson Administration will send a clear message: fighting the Climate Crisis is of the utmost importance.



1) Form a Department of Environmental Affairs to coordinate messaging and policy

The Department will designate staff to coordinate environmental communications, advocate for renewable and efficient energy, organize sustainability projects, address environmental injustices, and connect with relevant student organizations.

2) Prepare to move UNC past the coal-fired cogeneration plant

We acknowledge that the best solution for a clean energy future is moving away from fossil fuel generation altogether. However, currently there is not a renewable energy generation source that can generate the necessary electricity and steam output required to maintain our world-class hospitals, research facilities, and residence halls.

A first step toward accountability is requesting Energy Services and the Climate Action Plan display information about the exact inputs of the plant. Tracking progress of the “reductions in coal use” is highly advertised, but impossible to measure without knowing the exact input percentages. The Administration will also work with the UNC Sustainability Council to explore opportunities to purchase clean power from Duke Energy in a special agreement, which is a more attainable pathway for Carolina to use clean energy.



Environmental Affairs

3) Immediately begin the process of divesting the endowment from fossil fuels

The UNC Management Company is a private entity that manages and gatekeeps information about Carolina's endowment. Even with limited information, student activists have identified hundreds of millions of dollars that are not labeled as "sustainable" investments, but fall under Energy and Natural Resources.

Even more concerning, this section of the endowment has recently returned large losses, and has a pattern of diminishing returns for the last four years. Administrators have acknowledged issues with fossil fuel investments -- mainly public health impacts and the need to reduce particulate matter, CO₂, and methane emissions in our energy sector. However, even a 2014 Board of Trustees resolution for green investments & a student referendum for coal divestment have had minimal impacts.

We can not allow this body of managers to ignore the will of our student body and University stakeholders. With 6.5 billion dollars at their grasp, UNCMC can inflict incredible damage against the efforts of our University's Climate Action Plan, student activists, and our Institute for the Environment.

Divestment is a nationwide movement that a majority of our top public peers have acted on. This fall, the Undergraduate Senate and UNC Student Government sent a memorandum and a resolution to University leaders and endowment managers. Their response has been a deafening silence.

The Robinson administration will not tolerate ignoring this issue any longer. If elected, on his first day in office, Sam Robinson will invoke his authority as a member of the Board of Trustees and call for a meeting to take action on this item. Doing so will force a vote on the record and ask Trustees to vocalize their positions for the first time.

4) Broaden Student Green Fee impact

The Student Green Fee currently only funds energy-related projects. Thousands upon thousands of dollars, meant to fund "green" projects are currently inaccessible to organizations like Edible Campus, Sustainable Business Club, and many students studying sustainability, unless their projects are specifically energy related. Energy alone does not encompass the full extent of the fund's purpose. "Green" does, and should, mean more.



Environmental Affairs

5) Curtail campus food waste

Carolina has made meaningful strides in reducing food waste around Chapel Hill. In the past year, 946,000 pounds of food waste was diverted from local landfills. However, many students live far from on-campus composting bins and gardens. For thousands of students, composting remains inaccessible.

CompostMates, a relatively new UNC organization, has worked admirably on this issue. They provide transportation and other services to ease the barriers students face. However, demand far outweighs their current operating abilities. Many students get on a waitlist for their services.

Student Government has the capacity to support CompostMates and increase composting access for large, off-campus housing.

This means executing a plan to supply necessary funding and volunteer resources to scale CompostMates' operations. Then, working with Brooks Contractors and large off-campus residences, we can establish a network that brings composting access to thousands of students.

Composting reduces food waste, decreases anaerobic methane generated from landfills, and improves Carolina's carbon footprint.

6) Advocate for a graduate student appointment to the Town of Chapel Hill Environmental Stewardship Advisory Board



Community Policing

For far too long, the UNC Police Department has been an occupying force rather than a community partner to many people on our campus. Incidents ranging from the assault of black student activists at a Board of Trustees meeting to frivolous spending on golf carts and computer monitors highlight the failures in leadership within UNC PD. The flippant response to armed Neo-Confederates on Polk Place during the Silent Sam controversy also highlights a prime example of why community members feel that the UNC PD often makes decisions that are out of step with community beliefs. No policing strategy can be successful until the community consents to how they wish to be policed. Anything short of a total transformation in the relationship between UNC Police and the Carolina Community will be viewed as an endorsement of the status quo that has harmed too many in years past.

1) Create a Student Advisory Committee to the Chief of Police

Existing infrastructure for communication between UNC PD and members of the Carolina Community has not been effective in creating a setting where conversations surrounding successful community policing have been possible.

The Robinson Administration will: Create a Student Advisory Committee to the Chief of Police to create a space for frank and honest dialogues between the leaders of UNC PD and the community.

The committee will include both undergraduate and graduate members from diverse backgrounds across the Carolina Community.

The committee will meet once a month and have a mechanism to call special meetings in the event of a major incident on campus.

2) Lobby UNC PD to implement the "8 Can't Wait" Reform Plan

8 Can't Wait is a campaign to bring immediate change to police departments. The 8 key planks of “banning chokeholds and strangleholds, requiring de-escalation, requiring warning before shooting, exhausting all alternatives before shooting, instituting a duty to intervene, banning shooting at moving vehicles, requiring use of force continuum, and requiring comprehensive reporting” are the bare minimum for reform at Carolina. This year, we will lobby the UNC PD to adopt the “8 Can't Wait” plan and invite RSOs and community members to join the effort. It should be underscored that these reforms are the bare minimum for what is expected from the Carolina Community.



Community Policing

3) Fill all existing seats on the Student Safety and Security Committee

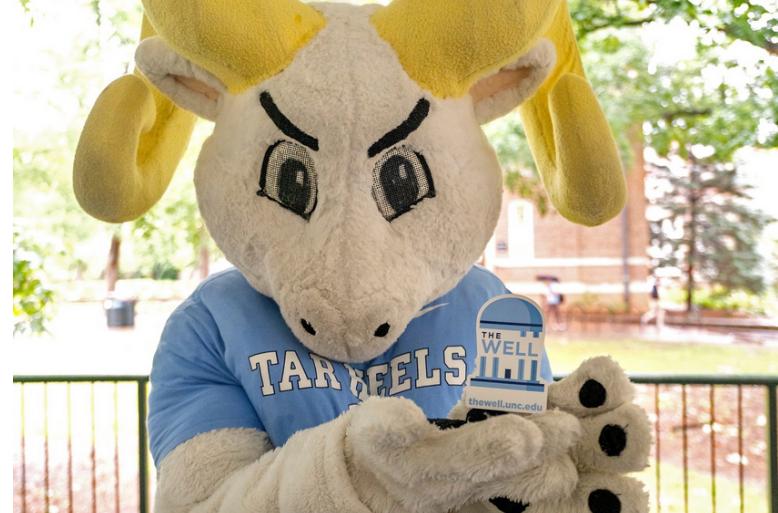
Currently, only three of the six seats on the Student Safety and Security Committee are filled. More concerning is the fact that the committee has not met in two years. By ensuring that all seats on the committee are filled, the Robinson Administration will work towards its larger goal of filling 85% of external appointments by the end of the spring semester. We will also see to it that the Student Safety and Security Committee meets for the first time in recent memory and meets monthly in perpetuity.

4) Lobby UNC PD to complete mental health training

The United States Bureau of Justice Administration (a subset of the United States Department of Justice) offers mental health training programs for police departments across the nation. It should be an expectation that the officers on our campus are trained to the highest possible professional standards.

5) Re-establish the Eve Carson Memorial Route

In years past, a nighttime policing route was funded by Greek Life to ensure the safe travel of students around North Campus and Franklin Street. This was phased out due to a lack of funding. We will work to re-establish the Eve Carson Memorial Route and Partner with the newly formed Student Advisory Committee to the Chief of Police and the Student Safety and Security Committee to determine to which locations this presence should be redirected.



Chapel Hill Community

1) Franklin Street development

The Robinson Administration will support the Town of Chapel Hill's effort to gain control of Franklin Street and advocate in the short term for the return of expanded pedestrian areas.

Over the medium-to-long term, the we will advocate to make Franklin Street a more people-oriented neighborhood main street.

The Town must explore more options for Franklin Street, including protected bike lanes, dedicated bus lanes, and potentially a pedestrian-only area.

The Administration will also advocate to convert the Porthole Alley Redevelopment Project into a mixed-use development to provide badly-needed housing in the most walkable area in Chapel Hill. For more information on that and other housing policy, please see our Housing Advocacy platform plank.

Franklin Street is the heart of Carolina, and making it a better place to walk, bike, and live should be a high priority for everyone in the UNC community. A more walkable Franklin Street will mean a safer and healthier community, with better outcomes for local businesses, and a happier, more social Carolina.

2) Support public transit infrastructure in Chapel Hill

Chapel Hill is served by three transport operators: Go Triangle, Piedmont Area Transit Authority, and Chapel Hill Transit (CHT). CHT is the only transportation operator with ties to the University. CHT receives a plurality of its funding from the University, with the remainder coming from the Town of Chapel Hill, Carrboro, state and federal grants, etc.

Since the start of the pandemic, CHT has experienced a driver shortage resulting in service reductions and delays on certain routes. This remains a preeminent issue for commuter students, as well as south campus residents.

As of January 10th, 2022 Chapel Hill transit will further reduce routes due to staffing shortages including nearly all services. The Administration will commit to advocating for increased funding for the CHT and for CHT to restore full service as soon as possible.



Chapel Hill Community

3) Pursue off-campus housing affordability in the increasingly exclusive housing market

UNC students hold a powerful platform to shape the built environment of Chapel Hill by organizing students to attend and comment during town meetings, particularly those related to zoning and development. Since students are seen by some members of the community as “transient” and therefore lacking the standing to have their voices heard, students must speak louder than most to be heard.

In addition, the Robinson Administration will lobby UNC-Chapel Hill and the UNC System to confront the housing crisis in Chapel Hill head-on. UNC is uniquely placed to make a huge difference: the University owns a huge proportion of the land in Chapel Hill and possesses both the capital and the know-how to develop it into responsible and affordable housing.

We will advocate to convert existing projects like the Porthole Alley Redevelopment Project to mixed-use development, as mentioned above, providing not only office and retail space, but also housing in the most walkable location in town.

We will also advocate for the University to contemplate new development to increase the housing stock, provide affordable housing for the community, and create a valuable revenue stream for the University. Too many University-owned properties go unused or underused, and the Robinson Administration will remind the University of these resources.

We all know it: Chapel Hill is an expensive place to live. Because of the low density of the area surrounding the University and its high desirability, the median home in Chapel Hill costs almost twice that in the rest of the state. Much of Chapel Hill’s existing housing stock is also old and poorly maintained, and developments which would improve housing stock, accessibility, environmental impact, and the cost of housing are often vehemently opposed by highly-motivated groups of homeowners in the Chapel Hill area.

The Robinson Administration plans to be a strong advocate for students in decision-making spaces throughout Chapel Hill, including town council meetings, committee meetings, and private discussions with stakeholders. In addition, the Robinson Administration will advocate for new affordable housing, particularly housing owned by the University.



Student Leadership



Continuing Leadership

1) Continue supporting and further build on the Richard Epps Emerging Leaders Program

President Richards' REEL program is a great opportunity to showcase and cultivate diverse leadership across our campus. The current administration has worked hard to lay a strong foundation for this program, and the Robinson Administration will preserve this for the next generation of Tar Heels, looking for methods to instill permanence.

2) Continue President Richards' legacy of confronting administration on issues of racial injustice and the rights of students

President Lamar Richards has been a relentless advocate for students across a variety of issues. President Richards' work with the administration and Board of Trustees, including a willingness to be assertive and confront the problems we are facing, will serve as a clear model for the Robinson Administration.

3) Further the mission of the Campus President's Council

President Richards has succeeded in bringing important stakeholders together via the Campus President's Council. The Robinson Administration would not only preserve this body but seek to actively expand its role and prominence as an advisory body. The Robinson Administration will commit to bringing more important voices to the table as part of this body.

4) Increase the reach and permanence of the Green Gears Environmental Training

The Richards Administration has succeeded in finally publishing a training focused on environmental ethics. The Robinson Administration will preserve this training and work to have it recognized as an official campus-wide training. The Robinson Administration will also expand partnerships with institutions like the Parr Center for Ethics in order to make administering this training a student service opportunity.



Good Governance

To help foster relationships between the campus community, student government, and university administration, open and transparent cooperation and communication will be absolutely essential tools for the Robinson Administration.

1) Hoofin' with the Heels

UNC Administration is often inaccessible to students who aren't from extremely specific backgrounds. Administrators consistently make decisions that are "out of touch" with the average student.

"Conversations with student leaders" are used as rhetorical tools by the administration, rather than as substantive discussions that lead to actionable change. Furthermore, most of these aforementioned conversations take place with very specific kinds of students and in staged settings. To help foster more organic conversations between the UNC Administration and the larger student body, Sam will invite Administrators including the Chancellor, Provost, Vice-Chancellors, Deans, Members of the Board of Trustees, and Members of the UNC Board of Governors to join members of the Robinson Administration in unrehearsed walks across campus to interact directly with the student body.

By encouraging administrators to shed their suit jackets and foster organic conversations with students, campus leadership will learn more about the everyday issues affecting university students.



Good Governance

2) Publicize external appointments to increase transparency

Student government is afforded many powerful positions across campus organizations, the Town of Chapel Hill, and beyond. These “external appointments” range from the Student Advisory Council to the Chancellor to the Student Fees Audit Committee. External appointments present a fantastic opportunity to uplift the student body. However, external appointments are notorious for their exclusivity. They are often filled privately by student government staffers. Previous administrations have been accused of nepotism and exclusion due to the opaqueness of their external appointments process.

The Robinson Administration will publicize a full list of external appointments and pledges to fill 85% of active appointments by the end of the calendar year. For comparison, at time of publication, the current administration has filled 61% of all external appointments. In addition to filling these appointments, the Robinson Administration will ensure committees meet regularly, including important committees such as the Student Safety and Security Committee, which, despite having three of six seats filled, has not met in two years.

3) Create a lasting platform for first-year students to become engaged with student government

Getting first-year students interested in student government creates a lasting, sustainable community of campus leaders. We will organize information sessions specifically targeted at first-year students, create a first-year district in the Undergraduate Senate, and match first-years with mentors in student government.

4) Communicate student government financial information

In the status quo, it is almost impossible to access information as fundamental as the Executive Branch’s operating budget. The Robinson Administration will commit to making all of this information fully available to all parts of student government and to the student body. This will help student government staffers understand their financial limitations, and clarify the financial impact that the Executive Branch can have on campus.



Good Governance

5) Open door policy

When appropriate with Covid-19 standards, the Robinson Administration commits to having at least one member of the executive board present every weekday in the Student Government Suite of the Carolina Union. This member of the branch will be present to educate students and listen to concerns. We welcome any questions students have about student government & how student government can help serve them. The Robinson Campaign commits to being a more visible & accessible part of campus.

6) Publishing statistics on representation in student government

The Robinson Administration wants to ensure that Student Government is representative of the student body. We commit to publishing an internal review of the branch's diversity statistics & efforts to improve - across ethnicity, race, gender identity, scholarship status, and class.

7) Publish the Student Body President's personal calendar

Following the example of most public executives, the Robinson Administration will ensure the daily schedule of the Student Body President is made regularly available to the public.

8) Kickstart a communal mentorship program within the Executive Branch

The Robinson Administration will function on a communal mentorship structure. This means that members of the branch will take on "peer mentors." These partnerships are designed to build community and ensure accountability, while creating essential institutional knowledge often absent when student government starts a new session.



Good Governance

9) Advance equity in appointments

The practice of limiting applications to serve in external appointments made by the Executive Branch has been unintentionally exclusionary and damaging to the operations of student government. A rolling application form will help traditionally-disenfranchised groups, particularly first-generation and transfer students, access the positions which largely shape the activities and advocacy of students at Carolina. Further, we will actively communicate and meet with underrepresented communities to help extend equity into all areas of our leadership.



10) Formalize alumni networks

Modeled on the Honors College, the administration will work to supply easier alumni connections for the student body through an Assistant Director for Alumni Outreach Development and a Student Alumni Connections Coach, which will work to provide opportunities to all students, not just those hand-picked by the Honors program.

11) Organize the Network of Fellowships

There are numerous academic and social fellowships across Carolina, such as the Parr Center for Ethics Undergraduate Fellowship and the NC Fellows program. Fellowships are incredible programs, but their application timetables are often short, making comparisons between programs difficult. The Robinson Administration will consolidate these resources into a single location.

After proper information collection, the Department of Student Organization Outreach will actively recruit and consult students to apply for programs that match their career and social goals. Many of these fellowships have early application due dates, which is a challenge for students to navigate as they adjust to the new year or semester. We will work tirelessly to connect students with the best programs that Carolina has to offer.

12) Secure the Graduate and Professional School Government President a voting seat on the Board of Trustees



Student Organization Support

Having extensive experience in leading student organizations and serving as a link between organizations and student government, the Robinson Administration plans to build on the synergy of student leaders across Carolina's campus. The relationships cultivated between Sam and UNC community leaders will lay the groundwork for success over the coming year. Through meaningful interactions, Tar Heels will create a mutual network of support and confidence, empowering our University to excel in all areas of student life and campus experience.

1) Organize the Department of Student Organization Outreach

The Department of Student Organization Outreach will provide services to student organizations, including helping them request Student Activities Fee funding, publicizing events, and finding opportunities for student organizations and Student Government to collaborate on projects. The Department will be run by a director-level member of the Executive Branch, giving them a direct line to the Student Body President's office, meaning that student organizations who contact Student Government will always be heard. This department will be responsible for implementing many of the proposals in this policy area.

2) Formalize a path to the Chancellor's Desk for every student organization and their advocacy

As part of its mission of supporting student organizations, the Robinson Administration will create a form for members of student organizations to submit feedback, thoughts, and material to the Chancellor and other members of the administration. These will be personally delivered to the Chancellor or appropriate administrative addressee by the Student Body President to ensure that student organizations have a line to get their ideas heard. Submissions will be vetted by the Department of Student Organization Outreach, but will welcome letters, videos, and invitations.



Student Organization Support

3) Fundraising guide for student organizations

The Robinson Administration will create an apparatus to help student organizations fundraise, complete with a database of resources and donors that student organizations can lean on. The Executive Branch communications network will be fully utilized to promote student organizations. Maintaining financially healthy organizations is key to ensuring extracurricular student success and opportunity.

4) Prepare a student-run business directory

While Heel Life exists as a directory for registered student organization, the Robinson Administration will seek to establish a registry of student-run and led business across campus, similarly for the purpose of supporting them through communication efforts to the student body.

5) Help student organizations publicize fundraising events

We will set up and share an email list and other notification methods to distribute information about RSO funding events.

6) Make information on student organization funding more readily available

The funding process for student organizations is complicated, and the Robinson Administration will ensure that access to the process is readily available to all organizations that want to apply. This will require cooperation between the Undergraduate Senate and Executive Branch, including holding funding town halls.

7) Bring campus leaders together through an RSO Catalyst Office

The Robinson Administration will include an RSO Catalyst Office within the Department of Student Organization Outreach that will be responsible for pairing student organizations that would traditionally not work together in order to inspire collective impact. This should allow service based organizations to access exciting new opportunities with other student organizations, allow for crossover funding strategies between organizations with shared principles, and increase the interconnectivity of our student life.



Administration Relations

1) Organize a student leaders watchdog campaign

The administration routinely states in emails to the student body that it has consulted with “student leaders.” When decisions run counter to large portions of the student body, the Robinson Administration will openly question these claims and ask the administration to disclose consulted students and topics discussed. If the administration will not state these publicly, the Robinson Administration reserves the right to take action with records requests and release warning statements to the student body. Blankly expressing that Administration has consulted students, but not providing any information about the consultation or consulted, is tokenization of our collective voice, which will not be tolerated. At the same time, the Robinson Administration will recognize the importance of having a constructive relationship with Chancellor Guskiewitz and his administration.

2) Emphasize the student role on administration hiring committees

University administration should not be an ominous, distant body, but a group of distinct individuals who hold personal relationships with campus leaders and recognize their responsibility to the students they work for. The Robinson Administration will provide resources for student members of hiring search committees to equip students with the relevant knowledge and encourage them to press on the issues which matter most to them and their communities. Hiring committees should not be regarded as a simple formality, but as a true opportunity to chart the course of the University.





Sponsored by the Samuel Robinson
for Student Body President Campaign

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