

# James Moeser: The M

## UNC's Next Leader Unplugged: Moeser Takes Stances, Shares 9-Year Vision for University

By ROB NELSON  
Editor

**DTH:** Your election probably was the cap in a historic year at this University for a number of reasons. It's just been a tumultuous year, and I wanted to get your opinion on some of the larger events of this year.

Obviously the tuition increase was a major issue in terms of balancing out faculty salaries with the tuition priorities and capital improvements. What is your philosophy in terms of when and when not to raise tuition?

Moeser: Well, I think there's a fundamental issue that is really critical and that is that public universities serve a public mission, and we must never price ourselves to the point that there really is an economic barrier to access. What we're really talking about is access to a full life in America. A college education really is the entry point.

If we put a barrier there, then we're saying to a certain sector of society "You don't have that opportunity."

Having said that, I favor and I supported what this University has embarked on because I think that as long as we are very careful to keep in place sufficient financial aid and need-based scholarships so that we can honestly be able to say that no student who is qualified to be admitted to this campus and who we think is academically likely to succeed ... those students should never be denied an opportunity on the basis of financial aid.

So I think if we can satisfy that concern, then I think it is appropriate for students who are able to pay a larger portion of the cost of their education to do that. This state historically has subsidized the cost of education to a much larger extent than most of the states.

So I think it's not unreasonable that students who are able should, in fact, pay a larger portion of the burden but still relying on the state to provide the major subsidies.

**DTH:** Another issue was the Clayton bequest in September that allowed for the construction of a free-standing Black Cultural Center on campus. As incoming chancellor, how do you foresee handling diversity issues on campus?

Moeser: Clearly diversity has been a major issue for me on the Nebraska campus and, in fact, it's a big issue in America. There's no institution that shouldn't be involved and immensely concerned about it.

We've made enormous changes, but we have many changes yet to be made. I am convinced that is part of the goal of being a great university. If the university is not committed to real diversity, then it won't realize its greatest goals for itself, because it's part of the educational experience. This has been a particularly acute

issue in Nebraska which is a far less diverse state than North Carolina. There are not many people of color historically in that state, although increasingly the demography even in Nebraska is changing rapidly.

Diversity, I think, needs to be discussed in two parameters. One, quantitative, in terms of the numbers of individuals, both faculty and staff and students. But then, more importantly, qualitative. How well do we embrace people who are different from us? How much time do we spend getting to know people who have different religious, cultural views, national origins or ethnicities? How much interaction is there and mutual respect and even friendship? So that people who have greatly different political views can sit down and have civil discourse with each other.

**DTH:** With what mechanisms do you handle the quantitative part of it?

Moeser: Well, in terms of quantity, we've been quite deliberate. We've established scholarships, as I think you have in North Carolina, which really target, and so far we've been able to do that without any court challenges. One always worries about that. And in terms of faculty, we set aside \$400,000 just to create a target of opportunity fund that is a temporary fund to increase the number of minority faculty.

For example, of the new faculty hires this next year, 76 percent of them are either women or minorities.

**DTH:** How do you see your role in pushing the bond package through the legislature this summer?

Moeser: It's absolutely critical. I will take that as a special priority because I think we have about a two-month period in which to work. I'll lobby individual legislators, I'll make speeches, and I think it's also a matter of generating public support for that issue.

**DTH:** In terms of the bond package, how do you build the kind of rapport with the state that at this point you're going to need as someone coming from Nebraska to North Carolina?

Moeser: Well, it's a matter of building one relationship at a time. In a way it's like working with the press. I will be straight with you. I might not answer all your questions, but I'll never tell you a lie. I think working with legislators is the same way. It's building personal credibility. Personally getting to know people and establishing a comfort level and a level of trust - credibility that when I take something to them and tell them that we need something that they believe that I don't ask for something that we don't need. Recognizing that they have a tough job, too, because they've got lots of good requests and a limited amount of funds. So that's always a tough call as to what their priorities are.

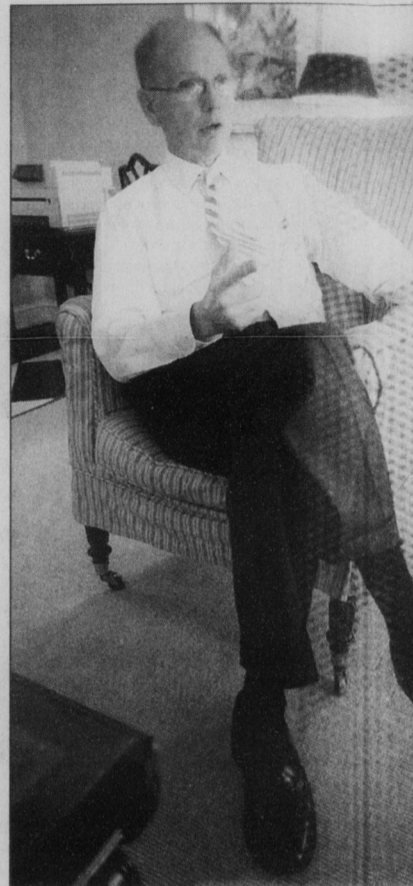
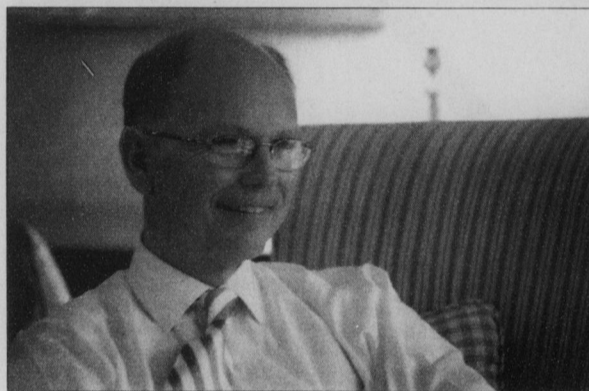
**DTH:** I've heard that fund raising is your forte.

Moeser: I'd like to think it is.

**DTH:** How's that cultivated?

Moeser: Same way. It's the same technique really. First you've got to establish your own credibility. Secondly, you have to believe in what you're talking about. And that'll be the easy part. I won't have any difficulty talking about the quality of the programs.

Third, the person you're talking to has to have some connection to the institution and believe in it and be motivated. And that's again going to be, not easy, but certainly assisted by the fact that this University has



maybe the most loyal alumni base of any public university in the nation. And fourth, there's an enormous amount of wealth turning over in there, and the tax laws actually favor this. It almost forces people of wealth to give away some of that money or pay it in taxes. So it's a good environment in which to raise significant amounts of money.

**DTH:** One of the key issues Chancellor Bill McCoy's had to deal with has been UNC's role in labor licensing, whether to stay in the Worker Rights Consortium or the Fair Labor Association. Where do you sit on that issue in terms of what UNC's role should be?

Moeser: It is a pertinent issue, and I understand that Chancellor McCoy now has made a decision now to join both organizations. I would certainly be opposed to withdrawal from the FLA for a variety of reasons. Membership in the FLA is the only way you're going to sit at the same table with manufacturers and have real leverage. And when neutral parties will serve as monitors. It is an issue, and I think that's the right course.

**DTH:** Carolina Computing Initiative in the fall - one of Chancellor Michael Hooker's more tangible legacies. How ready is UNC for that initiative, and how do you see its implementation being played out?

Moeser: I only know about CCI in the broad sort of outline. I know what it does. Only a few public universities have taken this step. It puts Carolina at the cutting edge. I think it's the right thing to do. The advantage to requiring it is that it allows students to put it on their financial aid.

My concern is and the question I would ask is has the University done its part to make sure the infrastructure is in place to support all these laptops. I don't know the answer to that question. I assume it has. I hope it has.

**DTH:** Another concern this year has been the corporate links the University has, particularly with Nike and Wachovia. Do you understand the argument of people who see that as selling out?

Moeser: Sure. I understand that. But you're talking to somebody who's done some of those same deals. We did a \$24 million Pepsi deal in Nebraska. Our alumni association has had similar deals with bank cards and so forth.

Are there potential dangers? Yes. But I think the question is, are there safeguards in place and do the advantages outweigh any potential disadvantages? In the case of our Pepsi deal, for example, it helped fund undergraduate research projects, need-based scholarships, and it basically created a permanent \$11 million

endowment, which primarily supports student services and the quality of life on the campus.

So I'm in favor of those kinds of relationships, but I recognize that they've got to be structured carefully so we don't sell our birthright. The University is not for sale, and we must never let it be for sale. But partnerships with the private sector, on the other hand, are entirely appropriate.

**DTH:** You walk into next year already faced with the task of having to fill the top academic position at the school. Do you see it as the chance to build your own team or is it somewhat daunting?

Moeser: Actually, I relish the opportunity of building my own team. I look at it as more of an opportunity than a threat, by far. So I'm not at all concerned about that.

**DTH:** What qualities do you want to see in the next provost?

Moeser: Good question. One, a person who has the absolute respect and confidence of the faculty. Someone who comes out of a solid academic background. All things being equal, I would prefer someone who is a scientist since I am an artist. I think someone who can clearly understand the hard sciences or the physical sciences or social sciences or health sciences. I think that would clearly be my preference. I don't want to rule out a humanist, but I want someone who complements my perspective.

**DTH:** Compare yourself to Chancellor Hooker's vision for the University.

Moeser: In many ways, it's a continuation of his vision. It was his vision that a public university in the state of North Carolina should commit to embrace those concepts.

**DTH:** What new initiatives of that vision must you bring to the table?

Moeser: The tweakings of more strategic plans to define clearly what the University are so that as we move forward we know where we want to put it.

**DTH:** One criticism of UNC has been the lack of interaction with students and the fact that many students will not interact with students.

Moeser: I have a strong vision of this campus, and I think it's important to have a strong vision with the need for the University to be so that as we move forward we know where we want to put it.

**DTH:** What is your biggest challenge?

Moeser: I'm a terrible details person. I would be a terrible details person. I would be a terrible details person.

**DTH:** What part don't you like?

Moeser: I just don't like it. I just don't like it. I just don't like it.



### James C. Moeser

Born: April 3, 1939, in Lubbock, Texas

- Education —** University of Texas-Austin, bachelor of music with honors (1961), master's in musicology (1964). Studied in Berlin and Paris as a Fulbright Scholar.  
University of Michigan, doctorate in musical arts (1967).
- Career —** University of Kansas, concert organist, assistant professor and organ division chairman (1966), dean of the School of Fine Arts (1975).  
Pennsylvania State University, dean of the College of Arts and Architecture, executive director of University Arts Services.  
University of South Carolina, vice president for academic affairs and provost (1992).  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln, chancellor (1996).  
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, chancellor, effective Aug. 15, 2000.
- Professional —** Director, National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges. Member, Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities. Former president, American Guild of Organists.
- Family —** Wife: Susan Dickerson Moeser, concert organist, faculty member of University of Nebraska School of Music.  
Son: Chris, a reporter for the Arizona Republic newspaper.  
Daughter: Carter, a doctoral candidate in physical therapy at Arizona School of Health Services.