

POLI 203
Race, Innocence, and the End of the Death Penalty
Mondays, Wednesdays, 11:15am–12:05 pm
Hamilton (Pauli Murray) Hall, Room 100
Spring 2025

Prof. Frank R. Baumgartner

Office: 313 Hamilton Hall

Email: Frankb@unc.edu

Office hours: Tu 2:30-3:30, W 12:05-1:25

Web site: <http://fbaum.unc.edu/>

(Additional office hours by appointment)

Course website: https://fbaum.unc.edu/teaching/POLI203_Sp25/poli203-sp25-home.htm

This class is about a surprising political development that is happening right around us: The death penalty seems to be disappearing. A large majority of Americans has traditionally supported the death penalty in the abstract. But across the country since the mid-1990s, the numbers of death sentences and executions have been declining. Rates of death sentencing per 100 homicides have been reduced to a trickle, even in states (such as North Carolina) that have traditionally used the death penalty the most. North Carolina has sentenced no more than 3 individuals to death in any single year since 2010 and has not carried out an execution since 2006. Several states have recently abolished the death penalty, including long-time users Virginia and Illinois. These are the trends we'll explore this semester.

This class will be accompanied by a distinguished speaker series, and attendance at these events is mandatory. In fact, this may be where you learn the most. The list of speakers includes several individuals who have served time in prison or on death row for crimes of which they were later found to be innocent; their attorneys and advocates; and family members of those killed but where the state arrested and convicted the wrong person, leaving the guilty one free. These speakers will offer harrowing personal tales of injustice but also stories of strength and courage. We may have various guest speakers in class as well, and I expect a number of phone calls from individuals living on death row. These speakers and guests have real-world experience and can speak to the issues in ways that no professor can match. So you will learn a lot from them.

This class is full of emotionally wrenching content that could have a big effect on you if you let it. Please don't treat it like just another class; it's literally about life and death. Also, note that much of the material is upsetting and can be triggering. There is no way around that, given the subject matter. So, protect yourself, skip some passages in the readings if they might upset you, and take a break once in a while; the material is tough. Many descriptions of the legal cases start out with descriptions of the underlying crime; you can skip those if you want. Trust me, they are all terrible. There is no such thing as a "garden-variety" homicide; never fall for that lie.

One thing this class is specifically not about is whether any of us personally support or oppose the death penalty. Our task this semester is not to reach an individual decision about what we believe—that is a personal matter. Rather, I want us to analyze a true puzzle, which is how we got here and where we may be going. I also want you to engage with an important

matter of public policy, analyzing it not as it should be or as you assume that it must be, but as it really works in practice. Theory and reality are sometimes not the same. And, we want to treat those who disagree with us with respect and dignity, and to learn to discuss heated matters with civility. That's a good lesson for all of us.

This is a political science class, so we'll be taking a step back from the real world events we'll be reading about and asking some more basic questions.

- What is the role of public opinion? What should it be?
- How do we gauge public opinion on a topic like capital punishment: In response to general questions, or only in the jury box with respect to a particular individual and after learning the facts in the case?
- How much discretion should police officers, district attorneys, judges, juries, or the families or survivors of crime have in deciding how to punish the guilty? How does such discretion comport with the Supreme Court's motto of "equal justice under law"?
- How much do we owe to defendants who cannot afford an attorney? Do they deserve "gold plated" legal aid, or just something "good enough?" How good is good enough?
- How does one mount a political movement in favor of a group of individuals who may be despised by the vast majority in society?
- How much variability in public policy outcomes is acceptable from state to state, and from city to city within a state before we violate the "equal protection of the laws" clause of the 14th Amendment?
- How do we square "original intent" with "evolving standards of decency"?
- What if something is cruel, but not unusual?
- What is torture? Is it ok?
- What is a reasonable standard to evaluate adverse racial intent, if no one admits to it?
- Why is there so much violence and homicide in our country? What to do about it?

So there are some big and interesting questions here related to the very functioning of a democratic system. We should not shy away from discussing what this particular debate means about the functioning of our political system. But our debates should not be about whether this or that religious, ideological, or cultural perspective on the issue is correct or incorrect, and we should conduct our discussions with civility and respect.

Reading Materials

You will read two books that are central to the topic being discussed. The first book is *Deadly Justice: A Statistical Portrait of the Death Penalty*. I wrote that with several former students from this class. (The royalties from the book, by the way, go to the Political Science Department and will be used for student-oriented activities, including the expenses associated with the speakers series for this class.) This book is designed as the on-going text for this class, so please read it carefully, and pay attention to the resources associated with the book website, available at my UNC web site: <http://fbaum.unc.edu/books/DeadlyJustice/index.html>. Become familiar with the resources and links available there.

The other book is called *Right Here, Right Now: Life Stories from America's Death Row*. It contains almost 100 short vignettes and stories from writers currently living on death row. Please

don't try to read too many of these stories in a short time. Read one or two and let them sink in. We will discuss them occasionally in class, but you will discuss them in greater detail in your recitation sections. I will not be lecturing on this material as it is self-explanatory. Engage with this material on your own outside of class. Share it with your friends and family. Surprise your room-mates with some of the stories. Ruin a party by reminding people of what you have learned. Thank your parents if you have had a better childhood than those you read about.

Assignments

You will write four short (300 words) response essays related to the stories told in *Right Here, Right Now*. These will be due through your section's Canvas site at 5pm on the Wednesday of weeks 4, 6, 8, and 10 as indicated in the weekly schedule below. These essays should engage with the material in Parts 1&2, 3&4, 5&6, and 7&8, respectively. (That is, the first essay, due on the Wednesday of week 4, engages with essays in the first two parts of the book; two weeks later you have to write on sections 3 and 4; and so on.) Because the stories you are reading are highly personal, your response can be personal as well. Write about what the stories tell you. There is no need to give academic sources in your response. Linking the stories to the broad themes discussed in lectures is a good idea, but not a requirement. Just engage deeply with the material.

You'll also write a more academic paper engaging with a narrowly focused theme relating to the material in the class; this is due at 5pm on the Wednesday of the 14th week of the semester. This is your opportunity to explore in more detail a particular aspect of the death penalty. You can choose any topic related to the materials discussed in class, with the approval of your TA. Please choose your topic and have it approved before the end of your recitation section in week 11. This paper should use academic and /or legal resources to go into detail on a topic such as cost, public opinion, deterrence, innocence, or whatever else interests you. You might explore a particular legal case in detail or use other methodologies. Your TA will help you choose a useful topic. Your TA's will not approve generic topics such as "does the death penalty deter" or "what is the moral justification for the death penalty" because these are invitations for plagiarism. Rather, they will encourage you to pick a very specific topic where you can explore the issue in detail. These papers should make use of at least 3 academic sources beyond the text for this course, not counting any journalistic sources that might also be helpful.

We will administer a number of short (10 question) multiple-choice quizzes throughout the term. These may be done during the main lecture or remotely through the Canvas site. These will focus on factual details from the readings and lectures. Doing well on these quizzes will be a good indicator of likely good performance on the final exam as well, which will consist of a larger number of similar questions.

Books for all students to purchase and read carefully:

1. Baumgartner, Frank R., Marty Davidson, Kaneesha R. Johnson, Arvind Krishnamurthy, and Colin P. Wilson. 2018. *Deadly Justice: A Statistical Portrait of the Death Penalty*. New York: Oxford University Press.
2. Harris, Lynden, ed. 2021. *Right Here, Right Now: Life Stories from America's Death Row*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

(These are available at the UNC student stores, and you can find them on-line.)

Grades will be calculated as follows:

Assignment	Percent
Attendance and active participation in your discussion sections	10
Four short (300 word) essays in response to the readings in <i>Right Here, Right Now</i>	20
Advanced approval by your TA of your term paper topic before week 11	5
A six-page (1800 word) paper focusing narrowly on a particular element of the death penalty, with approval of your TA	20
Occasional quizzes throughout the term	15
Attendance at the speakers events	10
Final exam	20
Total	100

Late assignments: Your TA will deduct 5 points from your grade for each 24-hour period that an assignment is late, starting with the beginning of the class period when it is due. These penalties can be waived by the TA if and only if the student arranges in advance an alternative due date or explains to our satisfaction why the assignment could not be handed in on time. “I was busy with another course” will not work.

Attendance at the speakers events is mandatory and we’ll take attendance at the beginning. You can miss one lecture with no penalty, but two absences will lead to a loss of 5 points in your final grade for the semester, and three absences or more will cause a deduction of a full 10 points (that is, a full letter grade). Note that if you are sick or have a university-approved absence then you may have your absence changed to present if you write a short essay and your TA approves it. There is no need to do this for the first absence as there is no grade penalty for a single absence.

Grade complaints: If you have any concerns with grading and/or feel you have been awarded an incorrect grade, please discuss it with your TA as soon as possible. If you cannot resolve the issue, have the TA bring it to my attention. If together we cannot resolve the issue, you may talk to our director of undergraduate studies or department chair.

Visit this site often: <http://fbaum.unc.edu/teaching.htm>, then look for our class. Some speakers may make things available to you and I will post them there as soon as I have them. I’ll also add material to this site whenever it is appropriate, and post the class slides. So get used to the site. You can also see earlier times I have taught the course, and materials there. If we have confidential materials, I will make those available through the class Canvas site as well, and your TA may correspond with you through Canvas, so monitor that as well.

Caveat: I consider the syllabus in a class to be a contract. However, I do reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus, including project due dates and test dates (excluding the officially scheduled final examination), when unforeseen circumstances occur. Of course, I’ll announce any such changes as early as possible.

Disabilities: Please let me and/or your TA know in the first two weeks of class if you need any accommodation for a disability. No problem. But don’t delay in letting one of us know.

Academic Honesty: Study together but make sure the work you hand in is your own. Familiarize yourselves with the UNC Honor Code here: studentconduct.unc.edu. You should also familiarize yourself with the concept and practice of plagiarism in order to make sure that you avoid it. Take the library's tutorial at <http://www.lib.unc.edu/plagiarism/> and ask your TA or me if you have any questions. The best outcome of a plagiarism accusation is to appear stupid and lazy; the other is that you appear unethical. In other words, there are no good outcomes.

AI: I can see no value in using AI in any aspect of this course other than possibly for data collection for a research project, or writing computer code for the presentation or analysis of data, which I do not expect you to be doing in this class. Therefore, I discourage you from any use of AI. If you think I am wrong and there is a place for AI in your research, then by all means bring it to my attention or to that of your TA, ahead of time. With advanced and specific approval, it's fine. Without that, it is not acceptable.

Effort: Come to class prepared to participate even if this is by asking questions. Do the readings ahead of time, and then do them again after. Review the slides. Stay up to date.

Trigger Alert: We will discuss sexual assault, human mutilation, desecration of corpses, official misconduct, racism, sexism, mass violence, homicide, torture, and miscarriages of justice. If this does not trigger you, you are not paying attention. This class can get heavy and depressing at times, so pace yourself and take a break sometimes. Skip the hard or upsetting parts if you must. Remember, we cannot improve justice in our country by focusing on unicorns and rainbows; we have to confront the ugly parts in order to understand and fix them. Some parts of the class can be upsetting, and some of the readings can be hard. But I hope you will find it to be worth it. Still, protect yourself and take a break when you need.

(See also the last pages of this syllabus for various university policies.)

The teaching team:

Winston Ardoin: jwardoin@unc.edu
 Megan Blackwood: Megan.Blackwood@unc.edu
 Ryan Brooks: rmb@unc.edu
 Gavin Buehring: buehring@unc.edu
 Bryce Hecht: bwhecht@unc.edu
 Grace Killian: gkillian@unc.edu
 Alex Love: ajlove@live.unc.edu
 Katherine McCormick: kgmc21@unc.edu
 Aleksandra (Sasha) Rumiantseva: rumiants@unc.edu

Please see your TA for their office hours.

List of sections, locations, and instructors.

Recitation	Day	Time	Room	TA
600	F	9:05-9:55A	GM 38	Megan
601	W	2:30-3:20P	DE 210	Bryce
602	R	2:00-2:50P	PE 2080	Grace
603	R	3:30-4:20P	MU 220	Megan
604	W	1:25-2:15P	TT 113	Frank
605	R	12:30-1:20P	MU 111	Alex
606	W	3:35-4:25P	GL 107	Bryce
607	W	4:40-5:30P	TT 114	Bryce
608	R	11:00-11:50A	CH 213	Gavin
609	R	9:30-10:20A	MU 111	Ryan
610	F	9:05-9:55A	GS 1377	Ryan
611	W	3:35-4:25P	DE 210	Alex
612	R	3:30-4:20P	GS 1370	Ryan
613	R	5:00-5:50P	GL 104	Sasha
614	F	10:10-11:00A	PE 2094	Megan
615	W	4:40-5:30P	DE 210	Katherine
616	R	2:00-2:50P	AR 118	Alex
617	R	3:30-4:20P	GL 107	Sasha
618	W	1:25-2:15P	PH 212	Winston

Weekly schedule

Note: I'll post my slides on the course website before class, so you can download them, follow along, and take notes. Please do the readings before lecture. Then review the slides and the readings again before your recitation section. The more you put into the course, the more you will get back.

Inevitably, real-world developments will occur during the semester that may be appropriate for class discussion. Our various guest speakers may provide readings as well. I'll regularly add recommended readings, news items, and videos as hyper-links to the class website, and you should review that before each class session. I expect you to keep up with all that material as well as what is listed here.

Week 1. Jan 8, Course Introduction

No readings

Week 2. Jan 13, 15. *Furman* (1972) and *Gregg* (1976): The End of the Old System, and the Creation of the "Modern" Death Penalty System.

Monday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 1

Wednesday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 2

Week 3. Jan 20, 22. Understanding Homicide.

Monday: No class Jan 20, Happy MLK Day!

Wednesday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 3

Week 4. Jan 27, 29. Which Homicides Lead to Death Sentences?

(Jan 27 Evening Speaker: Kristine Bunche)

Monday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 4

Wednesday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 5

***Right Here, Right Now*, Parts 1, 2 assignment due on Wednesday at 5pm.**

Week 5. Feb 3, 5. Geography, Reversals.

(Feb 3 Evening Speaker: Chris Ochoa)

Monday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 6

Wednesday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 7

Week 6. Feb 10, 12. Is it Torture to Live on Death Row for 30 Years?

Monday: (No class on Feb 10, Happy "wellness day")

Wednesday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 8

***Right Here, Right Now*, Parts 3, 4 assignment due on Wednesday at 5pm.**

Week 7. Feb 17, 19. Innocence; Methods of Execution

(Feb 17 Evening Speaker: Chris Turner)

Monday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 9

Wednesday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 10

Week 8. Feb 24, 26. The Work of an Innocence Project; Death Warrants and How Often they are Cancelled**(Feb 24 Evening Speaker: Ken Nixon)**

Monday: Special Guest: Chris Mumma, Director, Executive Director, NC Center on Actual Innocence. Readings tba, see course website.

Wednesday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 11***Right Here, Right Now*, Parts 5, 6 assignment due on Wednesday at 5pm.****Week 9. Mar 3, 5. Mental Health; Public Opinion****(Mar 3 Evening Speaker: Betty Anne Waters)**Monday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 12Wednesday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 13**(Spring Break, March 8-16)****Week 10. Mar 17, 19. Work of the Duke Innocence Clinic; Cost****(Mar 17 Evening Speaker: Leon Benson and Kolleen Bunch)**

Monday: Special Guest, Jamie Lau, Supervising Attorney, Wrongful Convictions Clinic, Duke University Law School. Readings tba, see course website.

Wednesday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 14***Right Here, Right Now*, Parts 7, 8 assignment due on Wednesday at 5pm.****Week 11. Mar 24, 26. Deterrence, Declining Use****(Mar 24 Evening Speaker: David Boyce)**Monday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 15Wednesday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 16**Topic of your term paper assignment must be approved by recitation time this week.****Week 12. Mar 31, Apr 2., Summary and Conclusions; Music and Redemption****(Mar 31 Evening Speaker: Isaac Knapper and Amy Banks)**Monday: *Deadly Justice*, ch 17

Wednesday: Guest lecture, Mark Katz with call-in from Alim Braxton. Readings tba, see course website.

Week 13. Apr 7, 9. Some Troubling Studies about Race and the Death Penalty.

Monday:

1. Rattan A, Levine CS, Dweck CS, Eberhardt JL. 2012. Race and the Fragility of the Legal Distinction between Juveniles and Adults. *PLoS ONE* 7, 5: e36680.
2. Eberhardt, Jennifer L., Paul G. Davies, Valerie J. Purdie-Vaughns, and Sheri Lynn Johnson. 2005/06. Looking Deathworthy: Perceived Stereotypicality of Black Defendants Predicts Capital-Sentencing Outcomes. *Psychological Science* 17, 5: 383-6.

Wednesday:

1. Peffley, Mark, and Jon Hurwitz. 2007. Persuasion and Resistance: Race and the Death Penalty in America. *American Journal of Political Science* 51, 4: 996-1012.
2. Baumgartner, Frank R., Christian Caron, and Scott Duxbury. 2022. Racial Resentment and the Death Penalty. *Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics*. 8, 1: 42-60.

Week 14. Apr 14, 16. The Racial Justice Act and the Future of the Death Penalty in North Carolina; Its Replication and Extension in California

Monday: Background

1. O'Brien, Barbara, and Catherine M. Grosso. 2011. Confronting Race: How a Confluence of Social Movements Convinced North Carolina to Go where the *McCleskey* Court Wouldn't. *Michigan State Law Review* 2011: 463-504.
2. Kotch, Seth, and Robert P. Mosteller. 2010. The Racial Justice Act and the Long Struggle with Race and the Death Penalty in North Carolina. *UNC Law Review* 88: 2031-2132.

Wednesday: The NC and CA versions of the law.

1. NC Racial Justice Act of 2009:
<https://www.ncleg.gov/Sessions/2009/Bills/Senate/PDF/S461v7.pdf>
2. CA Racial Justice Act of 2020: <https://legiscan.com/CA/text/AB2542/id/2211006>

Term paper due at 5pm on Wednesday.

Week 15. Apr 21, 23. Litigating Race and the Death Penalty

Monday: Special Guest: Hon. Gregory Weeks, NC Superior Court Judge (ret.). Readings tba, see course website.

Wednesday: Special Guest: Cassandra Stubbs, Director, Capital Punishment Project, ACLU. Readings tba, see course website.

Week 16. Apr 28. Summary and Conclusions

Monday: Review and summary, no readings.

Final exam: Wed Apr 30, 4-7pm, in the regular lecture hall.

University Policy Statements

Academic Policies

University Class Attendance Policy

University Policy: As stated in the University's [Class Attendance Policy](#), no right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:

1. Authorized University activities: [University Approved Absence Office \(UAAO\)](#) website provides information and [FAQs for students](#) and [FAQs for faculty](#) related to University Approved Absences
2. Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC)
3. Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the [Office of the Dean of Students](#), [Gender Violence Service Coordinators](#), and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC).

Code of Conduct

All students are expected to adhere to University policy and follow the guidelines of the UNC Code of Conduct. Additional information can be found at <https://studentconduct.unc.edu/>.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

Use of generative AI tools of any kind is not permitted in this course. Any use of these tools will be considered an instance of academic dishonesty and will be referred to the Honor System.

Syllabus Changes

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus including project due dates and test dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.

Acceptable Use Policy

By attending the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, you agree to abide by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill policies related to the acceptable use of IT systems and services. The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) sets the expectation that you will use the University's technology resources responsibly, consistent with the University's mission. In the context of a class, it's quite likely you will participate in online activities that could include personal information about you or your peers, and the AUP addresses your obligations to protect the privacy of class participants. In addition, the AUP addresses matters of others' intellectual property, including copyright. These are only a couple of typical examples, so you should consult the full [Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy](#), which covers topics related to using digital resources, such as privacy, confidentiality and intellectual property. Additionally, consult the [Safe Computing at UNC](#) website for information about data security policies, updates, and tips on keeping your identity, information, and devices safe.

Data Security & Privacy

UNC-Chapel Hill is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities of transparency as a state-sponsored institution of higher learning, protecting certain types of information, and using information Carolina collects only for appropriate purposes. Consult the [UNC-Chapel Hill Privacy Statement](#) for additional information.

Grade Appeal Process

If you have any concerns with grading and/or feel you have been awarded an incorrect grade, please discuss it with me as soon as possible. If we cannot resolve the issue, you may talk to our director of undergraduate studies or department chair.

Services & Student Support Policies

Equal Opportunity and Compliance - Accommodations

Equal Opportunity and Compliance Accommodations Team ([Accommodations - UNC Equal Opportunity and Compliance](#)) receives requests for accommodations for disability, pregnancy and related conditions, and sincerely held religious beliefs and practices through the University's Policy on Accommodations. EOC Accommodations team determines eligibility and reasonable accommodations consistent with state and federal laws.

Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS)

UNC-Chapel Hill is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body. The [Heels Care Network](#) website is a place to access the many mental health resources at Carolina. CAPS is the primary mental health provider for students, offering timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services. Go to the [CAPS website](#) or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health building for an initial evaluation to learn more. Students can also call CAPS 24/7 at 919-966-3658 for immediate assistance.

Title IX Resources

4. Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made [online to the EOC](#) or by contacting the [University's Title IX Coordinator](#), Elizabeth Hall, or the [Report and Response Coordinators](#) in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office. Please note that I am designated as a Responsible Employee, which means I must report to the EOC any information I receive about the forms of misconduct listed in this paragraph. If you'd like to speak with a confidential resource, those include Counseling and Psychological Services and the [Gender Violence Services Coordinators](#). Additional resources are available at [safe.unc.edu](#).

Policy on Non-Discrimination

The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and to ensuring that educational and employment decisions are based on individuals' abilities and qualifications. Consistent with this principle and applicable laws, the University's [Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination](#) offers access to its educational programs and activities as well as employment terms and conditions without respect to race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, genetic information, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Such a policy ensures that only relevant factors are considered, and that equitable and consistent standards of conduct and performance are applied.

If you are experiencing harassment or discrimination, you can seek assistance and file a report through the Report and Response Coordinators (email reportandresponse@unc.edu or see additional contact info at [safe.unc.edu](#)) or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#). Please note that I am designated as a Responsible Employee, which means that I must report to the EOC any information I receive about harassment or discrimination. If you'd like to speak with a confidential resource, those include Counseling and Psychological Services and the University's Ombuds Office.

Diversity Statement

I value the perspectives of individuals from all backgrounds reflecting the diversity of our students. I broadly define diversity to include race, gender identity, national origin, ethnicity, religion, social class, age, sexual orientation, political background, and physical and learning ability. I strive to make this classroom an inclusive space for all students. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to improve. I appreciate any suggestions.

Undergraduate Testing Center

The College of Arts and Sciences provides a secure, proctored environment in which exams can be taken. The [Undergraduate Testing Center](#) works with instructors to proctor exams for their undergraduate students who are not

registered with ARS and who do not need testing accommodations as provided by ARS. In other words, the Center provides a proctored testing environment for students who are unable to take an exam at the normally scheduled time (with pre-arrangement by your instructor).

Learning Center

Want to get the most out of this course or others this semester? Visit UNC's [Learning Center](#) to make an appointment or register for an event. Their free, popular programs will help you optimize your academic performance. Try academic coaching, peer tutoring, STEM support, ADHD/LD services, workshops and study camps, or review tips and tools available on the website.

Writing Center

For free feedback on any course writing projects, check out UNC's [Writing Center](#). Writing Center coaches can assist with any writing project, including multimedia projects and application essays, at any stage of the writing process. You don't even need a draft to come visit. To schedule a 45-minute appointment, review quick tips, or request written feedback online, visit the [Writing Center's website](#).