

We write to express our support for Mary Willingham, who has bravely spoken to the press about her recent experiences in the Academic Support Program for Student Athletes. As a Learning Specialist who worked with the athletes most challenged to meet UNC's academic demands, Willingham showed her dedication to athletes' well-being day in and day out for seven years. In her time at the ASPSA, she also saw the effects of a competitive environment that encourages universities to focus on "processing" at-risk students instead of providing them with educational experiences comparable to those of other students. As a distinguished institution of higher learning, UNC has a responsibility to provide a meaningful education to every single student it admits, even when that responsibility conflicts with sport schedules or the expectations of the NCAA, or when it is complicated by the deficient high-school preparation of its recruits. Like any University, UNC also has an obligation to be completely honest about what it does and how it does it. We faculty of the Athletics Reform Group hail Mary Willingham's principled commitment to honest and open discussion and salute her as an example of what is best in UNC's educational traditions. We also call on others in the campus community to voice their support for her.

E. W. Brooks (History)

Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld (Anthropology)

W. Miles Fletcher (History)

Kenneth R. Janken (African and Afro-American Studies)

Wayne E. Lee (History and Peace, War, and Defense)

Lewis Margolis (Maternal and Child Health, Gillings School of Public Health)

Andrew J. Perrin (Sociology)

Jay M. Smith (History)

Silvia Tomášková (Anthropology and Women's Studies)

Jonathan Weiler (Global Studies)