Introduction

The University of New Hampshire (UNH) exists primarily because of one constituency the University was developed to service; students. The primary contingent of that population is the undergraduate student population. That contingent spends on average four years of their lives invested full time in UNH. The ways the journey and experiences go have changed drastically over the years. So has the student population. There have always been some constants though. There is a need to supply academic programs of the highest quality, provide services that make it possible for students to develop as professionals, and overall services that make the college experience for every student “complete”. In this day and age, it means providing services for living, food, an infrastructure that is up to date, a culture that is conducive to living and opportunities for students to develop practical and intangible skills for services. There also is the lingering goal of every student to enjoy their time at UNH and get the most of their time.

In January 2015, Student Body President Candidate Cameron Cook and Vice President Candidate, Ryan Grogan, entered their campaign asking how students could feel their voice was being heard. It is not just about having a voice through the current student government, but through the years to come and having a voice in way that can be measured. They decided one manner of effectively doing this was to create a standing document that could be the measurement of student opinion. The hope is to see this document become the “baseline” of student opinion. This document is designed with the intention of it being fluid, ever-changing, and housed and managed by students. The place that President Candidate Cook proposed was the Office of the Student Body President. Grogan agreed and the plan to develop this document went into action in April 2015.

After being elected into office in March 2015, Cook and Grogan set off on their mission to develop this document. Since nothing of this nature existed, they had to build it from the ground-up. They asked themselves and others how to best go about starting the process up. Their answer was a trick question and response, start with the students. So, prior to taking office, Vice President Grogan set out to start this by creating and releasing a survey in April 2015 to the student population that had ten categories that Cook and Grogan felt it best encompassed all things relating to students at UNH. These categories were:

1. Academic Life
2. Greek Life
3. Health and the Environment
4. Student Engagement
5. Infrastructure
6. Finances
7. Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Life
8. Athletics
9. Admissions and Campus Culture
10. Residential Life

That survey closed after two months of gathering approximately 500 student responses that varied immensely. The goal of Part two of this document is to summarize those responses in a concise manner that gives the Student Body one voice. Before that, this document attempts to bring these ideas and values all together into a singular vision; organized in a series of larger, long term goals. The final section is proposed action steps and areas of focus UNH ought to take for its push into the future with students at the center.

Part 1: Vision and Overall Goals

Vision Statement

The student body at the University of New Hampshire in Durham speaks in an effort to have their voices heard. They speak primarily through the voices of their elected representatives in student governance. The student body is a unique and diverse group of students that inherently have the same goal; to graduate with an undergraduate degree from the institution. But, the following pillars are paramount to the services of each student.

Pillars of Student Success

1. A strong and enriching academic experience
2. Student services that help students support their overall well-being
3. An infrastructure that is safe, useful, accessible and well-maintained
4. Accommodations that are updated and convenient for resident and non-resident students alike
5. Organizations and opportunities for student collaboration and enriching
6. A culture that is healthy and conducive for all students

Goals

The student body has many goals. There are many initiatives that may not be focused on one aspect of student life. There tends to be disagreement on implementation of goals, specifically the “details”. But, there are inherent goals the UNH student body have identified below that are listed below:

1. Continuing to have a world-class academic program that is designed for student success and student individuality in moving towards the degree they need for success.
2. Providing resources for students to develop the skills and have the necessary knowledge needed to succeed in the world beyond UNH.
3. Be a campus that is technologically state of the art in the classroom, in our academic technology infrastructure, and in other non-academic manners.
4. Have an overall campus culture that safe, conducive for all to learn, and is accepting of all students, regardless of background, values, or appearance.
5. Continue to support contingents on campus that bring good to UNH (Athletics, Greek Life, etc.)

6. Have student services like housing, dining, counseling, health services, and others supported in order to maintain the health and well-being of every UNH student.

7. Push fiscal efficiency and responsibility in the finances of UNH since the resources available to UNH, financially speaking, are less than the average public state institution.

8. Explore options for student engagement and giving students a platform to vocalize their opinion.

9. Support the commuter and non-traditional student population in any way possible since it is impossible to support having 13,000 students living in UNH Housing currently.

10. Maintaining an infrastructure that is complex by focusing on buildings, parking and routes and roads. The hope is to create a friendly campus for students and non-students alike to navigate.

These goals are reflected on in the focused results of the survey below.

**Part 2: Survey Results Consolidated**

**Academic Life**

The primary reason students attend any University is to acquire a degree that validates their learning and work they put in during their time at the institution. This inherent goal is no different for UNH students. The manner in which that degree is acquired is unique to each student. Students have certain needs the University ought to address or continue to address for academic integrity and success. Some of the focal issues that students see as relevant to them include the following:

Classroom capabilities and infrastructure- Students have an interest in seeing the continued push to keep classroom space up to date, state of the art, and conducive to learning. This includes maintaining appropriate class sizes, furniture comfortable for learning, classrooms that have technological capabilities, and varietized types of spaces.

Technology used for academic purposes (IE- Blackboard or canvas) - Students are very excited to see the transition to Canvas and having a more fluid and user-friendly system. They are interested in seeing more faculty use the technology to make student engagement easier; professors posting grades on the site, posting syllabi, and making it easier for students to reach out to faculty for needed assistance.

General education requirements- The UNH Discovery program is a central discussion point for students. The general sentiment is to shrink the program from its current structure. The reasons for that vary. Some often have to do with interest. Some of them surround the need to have more time to acquire minors; which are seen as essential to students. There also is a desire to see more focused learning to be prepared for post-graduation life.
UNH’s career preparation and advising system- Students have an interest in seeing more interaction between students and their advisors; the understanding that it needs to be an equal effort system with minimum requirements so no one “falls through the cracks”. Students in general have confusion on the resources that exist currently and want more clarification and a more fluid system developed for Career services to make utilization more possible.

Fraternity and Sorority Life

Fraternity and Sorority Life and primarily the existence of social fraternities and sororities on college campuses are a “hot-button” issue. At UNH, the theme is progressive expansion. In the last five years, Fraternity and Sorority Life have gone from approximately 1000 students to close to 1400 students ending the 2014/15 academic year. Those numbers appear to be growing. As a result, there is a lot of discussion on the future and how to manage this. Here are some of those thoughts:

- Members of Fraternity and Sorority Life are split on hazing policy. Regardless of the policy they respect it and follow it. But, there are those who believe the policy and the state statutes surrounding it are too tough. Others believe it is a policy that is safeguarding its members properly or even could be stricter.
- In general, there is an interest to see more sororities arrive at UNH since there are currently only seven sororities and eleven fraternities.
- All members of the Fraternity and Sorority community are very passionate of having the University join them in fighting the “Greek Stigma” and focus on the positive implications of having chapters at UNH.
- In some manner, Fraternities and Sororities are very passionate on seeing the creation of more opportunities for Greek chapters to acquire properties for residence in the coming years, especially with the continued growth.
- Members and non-members alike wish to see more outreach done by the chapters to kill the stigma and de-sensitize incoming students to Fraternity and Sorority Life.
- There is a mix of opinions regarding Social policy, some want to see policy reform, some want the focus to shift away from Fraternities and Sororities’ and see themselves as “moving targets”, and others seek general education about how to be social without violating University policy.

Health and the Environment

No student in this world can survive if their basic necessities and needs cannot be met. This includes eating, sleeping, maintaining physical health, mental health and feeling secure. UNH, like most modern day universities, has a series of services and departments that work to support students with those needed necessities in order to function and be a successful college student and successful human being. Students had many suggestions surrounding departments that are central to this effort, those include:
Health Services- Students really only want to see the hours of the services expand so students can continue to use them potentially a 24 hour service center.

Dining- There a lot of ideas that were proposed, some of those include
- More changes in the menu, if students could propose a meal to staff and see it happen, that could be an exciting opportunity for young students in the Thompson School.
- Seeking to see all dining halls keep producing food longer into the evening until closing.
- Mixing up the variety of food served.
- More gluten free and vegan options
- More fresh fruit
- More outdoor BBQ's hosted by Dining services
- More creativity in meal plan construction, a “personalized dinning plan system”

Campus Recreation- Students would like to see the rentals for skates expand to be a rental service for pond skating as well. Other than that, an application to see gym traffic and continued examination of how Campus Rec accommodates people of all conditions is what is of interest to students.

Connected to this is that living and attending an institution that is environmentally friendly has become central in today’s world and for the health and well-being of college students. Here are some things UNH students want to see be areas of focus for UNH in that effort:

There is strong interest to see more “hydration stations” installed in the buildings to meet demand and encourage the non-use of single use water bottles. There is an interest to see UNH become more energy efficient and exploring creative and potentially ground breaking options like putting more of campus on solar energy, using less fossil fuels and focusing on research on these alternatives in the classroom.

**Student Engagement**

The primary goal of this document is to create a standing document that allows students to feel they have a voice. But that is only a long term, written way of engaging students. It is a day to day mission for UNH and its departments to engage students. Many students feel disengaged or lost in a “sea of stuff” that they want to organize and hear. Here are a few suggestions on how student engagement could be increased at UNH:

1. There is a strong sentiment that a higher focus should be placed on helping “start-up student Organizations’’ and giving more organizations a chance to reach higher status levels. In general, the goal is to push student organizations to sustain themselves in the long term.
2. There is a general interest to see more programming, primarily student-run, in the Memorial Union Building, especially on the weekends.
3. Students are interested in seeing more days here they can be united and do things as a whole, including but not limited to, a “Wear your swag day” or on April 2 a “UNH supports Autism day” where everyone wears blue attire.

4. Students are interested in seeing more consolidated communication in the form of a monthly newsletter or a master “news bulletin board”, from an appropriate voice.

6. In general, the Cat Pack Captains have started a movement students want to see continue. Students are interested in more school spirit, more school gear, and maybe even an organized “Pep rally”. Having more organizations like the Cat Pack Captains that promote student life and get the campus excited about other University Affairs.

Infrastructure

The University of New Hampshire, like all major college campuses, has an infrastructure that is expansive, detailed, and requires much attention to maintain. One of the selling points of UNH; overall, is the facilities we have and that UNH can showcase to the community that our Durham campus is second to none. That does not mean that the campus does not need to be up kept or new ideas and renovations explored to keep up quality of life. Here are some items students brought up regarding the upkeep and maintenance of UNH’s infrastructure:

1. Seeing better quality lighting on the pathways between the MUB and Dimond Library
2. A general interest in seeing better lighting for safety reasons; while also bringing in lighting that is efficient and cost effective.
3. An interest in seeing a sidewalk coming up from Main Street to the MUB for safety concerns.
4. An interest in seeing better snow removal practices, including potentially employing students in work study programs to help with snow removal.
5. Potentially a bridge built across the Train tracks from the Gables to the Woodside Apartments.
6. A general push to see more accessibility for people with disabilities into campus buildings, especially as updates happen to Campus infrastructure.
7. A huge push to see a traffic circle between Main Street, Pettee Brook, and Quad Way.
8. A push to see a parking garage built on campus to accommodate the car traffic that visit campus on a daily basis and for big events, so this garage would be preferred in a central location.
9. A need to see the inside of the Paul Creative Arts Center renovated to be more modern.

Finances

Modern day universities and many of the decisions that are made at them are made on one driving factor; finances. The decision to attend a college in today’s economy is centered on financial risk and weighing the opportunity cost of getting a degree versus spending a large fortune of money. It is difficult for modern colleges to manage all the financial priorities
they have and to pay for all the expenditures they have. UNH is no different, but is a school that tackles these financial issues in a deliberate manner. Not to say UNH is broke, but any issue financially the institution has is heightened by a variety of factors. Students recognize this and have a voice they want to share on finances for the institution:

1. Push hard for controlled tuition costs. Students understand it is an issue at the state and Board of Trustees level. It does not mean that students are not vocal about seeing their costs stay down and those expenses they pay be used wisely.
2. A potential consolidation of lab fees into tuition because it is deceiving when students budget for their upcoming semester and find hidden lab costs, a push for a “Single Price Pricing”.
3. Better education on where the money students spend goes
4. Making fiscal responsibility and good spending of mandatory fees a priority and continue to ask students for what those priorities should be
5. Continued examination of the costs of employees. It is a touchy subject, but many students are wary of the rising cost to pay every employee and questions of the value and workload equaling the pay have been raised.
6. Student Activity fee money being more efficiently used and putting more money into the ORO fund to give other non-SAFO organizations a chance to succeed.

**Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Life**

UNH is an institution that is large, public, and in a high density population part of the New England region. So, for around 5000 students attending the university, the status of commuter and non-traditional student affairs is central. It is probably the second easiest way to identify a student other than their degree program. Commuters compromise around half of the UNH student body. Here are some thoughts commuters and non-traditional students brought up:

- An examination of the winter parking ban is being cried for, shortening it to March 1 or eliminating it during stretches like mid-terms as well.
- There is an interest in seeing an expansion in metered parking spots and drop-off parking so more people can use short term parking closer to their desired destinations.
- A push to be more creative with the Wildcat Transit routes, maybe even inversing the routes from time to time to give students a chance to go back and forth efficiently.
- An expansion in Campus Connectors and weekend busing routes in the Town of Durham and in local areas to later hours to encourage less driving for students whom “party” along with a higher volume of transportation from these results.
- Students want to see on the UNH Transportation website. More obvious and clearer parking rules and regulations. These changes would educate and furthermore prevent accidental motor vehicle and parking infractions.

**Athletics**
A central and publicly noticeable part of large college campuses is the school’s intercollegiate athletic program. The UNH Wildcats are no different. Athletics at UNH has its peaks and valleys, like most big schools. Men’s Hockey has always been the dominant sport in terms of interest. The rise of Men’s Football, Women’s Hockey and Women’s Volleyball has made Athletics very interesting for many UNH students. There are diverse opinions on many aspects on UNH Athletics. There are some of the ideas brought forward by students regarding Athletics:

- Students want to see Student Athletes distribute tickets in the Memorial Union Building through tabling and walking around to students throughout the building. By many it is seen as inconvenient to go to the Fieldhouse or Whittemore Center.
- The ticket service in general is a talking point for many students. Many are interested in seeing a streamline; online system for students to order tickets and have them is scanned like electronic movie tickets are at many movie theaters today.
- Students want to see Athletics having a “GPEP” system for athletes and outreach and community service. Similar to the one in Fraternity and Sorority Life. The goal is to use it to measure our success, show it with tangible figures, and use it as an incentive system to drive the rewards for student-athletes whom are exceptional.
- There is huge interest to capitalize on the rise of the “Cat-Pack Captains” and use this group to change some trends. Some of those include not filing seats for women’s sports games, promoting teams when they are playing well; like Men’s Football.
- General communication to the student body on the timing of games is a pressure that has risen. Many feel as if they do not learn of the games until it is too late.

**Admissions and Enrollment**

The beginning of the UNH community starts in the Admissions office. They are the people who work with the Communications and Public Affairs Departments to reach as many potential high school students as possible to apply to UNH, creating a competitive application pool. The issue UNH has is the trends in this state and in the country being against the University. New Hampshire, demographically speaking, is graduating fewer students from high school. Furthermore, even less are choosing to stay in state or attend public institutions. With the rising cost of attendance, UNH selectively has decreased. Students have concerns with the rising admittance numbers and seeing more students enter UNH. UNH is a large state school. But, the student body seeks to see UNH plan out for the future and for our enrollment projections to take into factors including:

1. Residency of the student (in-state versus out, nationality, etc.)
2. Diversity of students (types of students, having diverse students from a demographic standpoint)
3. Matching our admittance figures to our resources available to provide a quality education (enough housing, classroom space, etc.)
Residential Life

Over half of UNH’s population lives in residence halls during the academic year. The dominant segment of that population is the freshmen class. UNH has currently over 20 residence halls and house students of many types. Some prefer to live in a setting with people in their class (freshmen only halls like Christensen, Alexander and Williamson). Some prefer to live with students of a similar academic path (Hubbard Hall being the “Honors dorm”) others prefer to go to an alternative housing situation that has no substances involved (Engelhardt Hall). Those residents and former always have opinions on their living experience and changes they would like to see. These are some of the common changes proposed by residents of UNH Housing or former residents:

1. Exploring identification systems that make it so students do not have to be so dependent on their ID cards to enter their individual dorms
2. Adding more card swipe slots on more doors of the the buildings in residence halls
3. There is an interest in seeing more students involved (if there any to begin with) in the R.A selection process.
4. Questions have been raised about the enforcement and the punishment for an R.A violating quiet hours and also if quiet hours at special times (holidays, finals) need to be edited.
5. General maintenance and quality of care taking for residence halls examined to make sure that it is being done effectively
6. A need to have stricter smoking rules, if not a ban, near residence halls because of the health risks
7. The examination of having a “pet-dorm”
8. Creating a new wrinkle in the room selection process, setting it up so incoming seniors have first preference, based only on that qualification, for residence hall and room selection first.
9. Inserting new technology into the halls (new combination locks, better Wi-Fi connection, etc.)

Part 3 Strategic Initiatives

Here is a short list of initiatives that the student body have expressed strong interest in seeing made a reality in the next five to ten years.

1. Seeing the renovation of classroom spaces with the goal of having a variety of classroom spaces from an infrastructure and technological perspective.
2. Having a campus where professors are required to post grades and syllabi for academic classes onto the Canvas platform.
3. Shrinking the discovery program to seven courses, counting the English Writing requirement.
4. The goal is to fight the Greek stigma in any tangible manner possible.
5. See UNH Dining mix up the variety of food served in dining halls: (IE.) More gluten and vegan options.
6. The creation of an avenue for the customization of Dining plans
7. The development of an application for use of facilities in Campus Recreation.
8. Seeing UNH pursuing more solar energy and energy alternatives in the classroom (IE.-less fossil fuel)
9. Seeking avenues to help Start-up student Organizations get on their feet and succeed in the short and long term.
10. Building a bridge between the Gables and the Woodside’s Apartments.
11. Seeing the construction of a traffic circle at the intersections of Main Street and Pettee Brook Lane
12. The construction of a parking garage and more parking spots that are metered or designated drop-off spots.
13. Pushing UNH to control Tuition costs, create more opportunities for scholarships at UNH students and focusing on a single price initiative that moves lab fees in tuition.
14. Seeking to shorten to Winter Parking Ban and working to make the Transportation website made more student reader friendly.
15. Aiming to develop more Wildcat transit routes and campus connector routes on the weekends
16. The development of an online student ticket purchasing project.
17. The goal of greater involvement in sports and general school spirit.
18. The development of a Pet dorm or a floor in a residence hall that is “pet-designated”.
19. Striving to have stricter smoking enforcement, potentially as strict as a smoking ban.
20. Having more students involved in the RA selection process.
21. Seeing better maintenance into the residence halls and Renovation of old housing buildings and more cards slot swipes into the residence halls.
23. Centering military services in campus into one location.
24. Banning plastic Water Bottle Bans at UNH.
25. Making campus safer by working to end sexual assault, harassment and stalking.
26. Working to make campus a stronger community by making all feel included and welcome.