

Discovery Committee Minutes November 5th, 2025 (Teams)

Present: Nicoletta Gullace (Chair), Timothy Montminy, Gregory McMahon, Kathrine Aydelott, Forrest Schwartz, Alecia Magnifico, Qi Zhang, Laura Upham, Roger Grinde, Anna Wainwright, Grace Simmons, Maeve Dion, Sachiko Akiyama, Meaghan Dittrich, Kenneth Mitchell

Absent: Catherine Peebles, Matthew MacManes

- I. Welcome
- II. Action Items
 - a. Approval of the Minutes from the October 22nd meeting.
Vote: Yes: 7 No: 0 Abstain: 3. **Minutes Approved.**
 - b. Student Petitions.
 - i. Request to allow UNH course SF1172 "The United States-Mexican Border" to satisfy Discovery World Culture.
Vote: Yes:0 No:8 Abstain: 1 **Petition Denied.**
 - ii. Request to allow NHTI course IST 216 and IST 240 to satisfy Discovery Environmental, Technology, and Society (ETS)
Vote: Yes: 0 No: 9 Abstain: 0 **Petition Denied.**
 - iii. Request to allow UNH ARTS 455 course to satisfy Fine and Performance Arts Discovery requirements.
Vote: Yes: 9 No: 0 Abstain: 0 **Petition Approved.**
 - c. Course Approvals. No course approvals to discuss.
- III. Updates & Discussion
 - a. Syllabus Template
 - i. E3 has asked Discovery to review a syllabus template for faculty at UNH. The syllabus template will be discussed in more detail at the November 19th meeting to allow members more time to review and provide feedback.
 - ii. Some members of the Discovery Committee expressed concerns with “template” as the language as some faculty members may feel forced to use the format and not have academic freedom.
 - iii. Members of the committee expressed that if E3 were to proceed with the syllabus template, it would need to be brought to the senate and voted on.
 - b. Student Self-Assessment Evaluations
 - i. While the chairperson and Admin met with E3, the discussion led to assessment challenges, especially general education programs, since accreditors require measurable outcomes. One proposed solution was adding questions related to student learning outcomes (SLOs) to course evaluation forms to collect data, though concerns were raised about timing given upcoming changes to the Discovery program. The urgency stems

from accreditation requirements, prompting consideration of interim measures despite uncertainty about future reforms.

Thoughts from committee members:

- ii. Adding Discovery outcomes to course evaluations could help align teaching with stated objectives, but faculty would need guidance to incorporate this language into their classes.
 - iii. Using the same language from evaluations during instruction may influence student perceptions, though it raises questions about whether this truly measures learning.
 - iv. Including outcomes in evaluations might encourage faculty to be more intentional about delivering SLOs, even if it doesn't necessarily improve course quality.
 - v. Many faculty lack experience writing clear, accessible objectives, so professional development or training would likely be necessary.
 - vi. Past workshops have shown that examples of SLOs and related deliverables are helpful for faculty understanding.
 - vii. Any changes to the Student Evaluation of Learning (SEL) form would require Faculty Senate approval, which is unlikely given current priorities and resistance.
 - viii. Adding questions to SEL forms could reopen contentious debates about evaluations, making this approach politically and logistically challenging.
 - ix. Previous accreditation efforts required measurable outcomes, but current systems for collecting and analyzing assessment data are fragmented and under-resourced.
 - x. Technical limitations exist: SEL data is restricted and difficult to extract, and past attempts to gather additional evaluation data faced significant hurdles.
 - xi. Overall, there are numerous obstacles—political, technical, and practical—that make implementing these changes difficult and potentially not worth pursuing.
- c. House Bill 112
 - i. **Discussion Moved to November 19th meeting.**
 - d. Update on Study Abroad Fees
 - i. The chair shared an update on the course fees for studying abroad. The removal of the course fees from October 22nd course reviews was to remove the travel insurance fee.
 - e. Petition review process for WI and ENG 401
 - i. **Discussion Moved to November 19th meeting.**

Meeting Adjourned at 2:05pm.

Next Committee meeting is November 19, 2025.