

UNH FACULTY SENATE
MOTION #XXIII-M1
on conditional admission of post-Gaokao students

1. Motion presenter: Scott Smith, Chair of Faculty Senate, on behalf of the Agenda Committee
2. Date: June 19, 2018
3. **Rationale:** The University of New Hampshire, under the direction of Vice-President for Enrollment Management, Victoria Dutcher, and Director of Undergraduate Admissions, Robert McGann, initiated a program to attract outstanding students from China who took the national Gaokao exam but failed to meet the standards for entrance into top-tier Chinese universities. This program was conceived, constructed, and readied for implementation without faculty input (beyond a brief meeting with ESL faculty) until the last minute (specifically, after the spring semester was over on May 31, 2018), when the Faculty Senate Chair was alerted to the program by the Admissions Director with a request to have the Agenda Committee waive the requirement of the SAT/ACT exam for admission. An emergency meeting with the Admissions Director was held on June 1, 2018, attended by Scott Smith, David Bachrach, and Jim Connell. The issue was informally discussed at the Faculty Senate planning meeting (June 4, 2018), which was followed by another meeting with the Admissions Director and the Vice-President of Enrollment Management (June 5, 2018, with the full Agenda Committee absent Lori Hopkins). During the latter, the Agenda Committee reiterated the point that it did not feel comfortable acting on behalf of the Senate, and it was agreed that the SAT and ACT would remain a requirement for admission until the full Faculty Senate could deliberate and act.

Since that last meeting conditions have changed dramatically, and these changes prompted the Agenda Committee to alter its view. It has chosen to take action to approve the following motion because it feels that it is in the best interest of the university to do so. We note here, however, that *we are acting under duress* because of the regrettable lack of faculty involvement at the beginning of this process. That said, we are separating our discomfort about the process from the initiative itself, which we think may be beneficial to the university, to its efforts toward internationalization, and to raising the academic profile of the student body.

Why are we acting? Although we had agreed that we would not change the SAT/ACT requirement, several news organizations picked up a story that contained quotes from UNH officials that *we would* accept the Gaokao exam as a substitute for the SAT/ACT. This story, which clearly had been prepared ahead of time, slipped through and was picked up by the *Union Leader* and *Reuters*. Despite a press release to correct this misinformation (detailing how the admissions process would be created with faculty input in the fall), the story has been picked up by several news organizations, of which some got it right (*New York Times*), while many others did not. In all cases UNH is poised at the leading edge of this initiative, and many other schools have either announced a similar program or have plans to do so. Thus, if we fail to act now, the university runs the risk of losing the market share of a market that it was to a large degree responsible for creating. Since the initial proposal, the VP for Enrollment Management and the Interim Provost, Wayne Jones, decided to *increase* the threshold on the Gaokao exam from top 40% to top 25% and have insisted on a robust admissions process. These students, then, would likely bolster the academic quality of UNH's student population.


We have also been encouraged by the Interim Provost's interest in receiving guidance from the faculty and willingness to meet with faculty at this stage to ensure that UNH is successful in this initiative. Thus, we feel it appropriate to support a limited pilot program for one year while the Faculty Senate collaborates with the administration to study the initiative more fully.

4. Motion: The Agenda Committee approves, under Article 6, Section A of the Faculty Senate Constitution, the following as a pilot program for one year (1) with additional guidance (2, 3, 4):

- 1) that the university admit conditionally up to twenty-five (25) students for Fall 2018 and up to twenty-five more for the Spring 2019 if the following criteria are met:
 - a) that students place in the top 25% of the Gaokao examination in province,
 - b) that they have acceptable English scores, and
 - c) pass a Skype (or other alternative face-to-face internet software) interview, with writing component, conducted and witnessed by a UNH faculty member;
- 2) furthermore, that the following support structures should be offered by UNH:
 - a) a detailed and tailored orientation to UNH academic support services
 - b) creation of a "buddy system" that employs native English-speaking students to help with academic and cultural issues
 - c) ESL support (we strongly suggest that each student take an ESL course at an appropriate level in the first semester)
 - d) 4/8/12 week check-in with instructors
 - e) a UNH point person (from OISS or another appropriate body) as the "go-to" contact for issues pertaining to academics, housing, and other student services—this in addition to any contact person provided by WholeRen;
- 3) that a student must maintain a 2.0 GPA to continue; and
- 4) that the administration agree to meet with the Agenda Committee over the summer to ensure proper implementation and to give an account at the Faculty Senate's first full session (August 27, 2018).

The Agenda Committee also suggests that the administration consider offering a limited palette of courses for the first semester so as to concentrate and effectively leverage academic support services in targeted classes.

5. Senate action: The motion passed, 4-0 with one abstention.

6. Senate chair's signature:  _____

Forwarded to the following on June 19, 2018

President Mark Huddleston

Wayne Jones, Interim Provost

P.T. Vasudevan, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Leila Paje-Manalo, Director, Office of International Students and Scholars

Victoria Dutcher, VP Enrollment Management

Rob McGann, Director of Admissions