

UNH FACULTY SENATE  
MOTION # XII-M6

Deans Search

1. Motion presenter: David Richman
2. Date of Faculty Senate discussion: 11/5/07
3. Motion:

that the Faculty Senate chair, on behalf of the Faculty Senate, send the following letter to the provost with a copy to the president. This motion gives the Faculty Senate chair and the Faculty Senate coordinator full authority to edit the letter and to make any stylistic modifications they deem necessary.

4. Letter as edited and sent:

November 7, 2007

Provost Bruce Mallory  
University of New Hampshire  
Thompson Hall

Dear Provost Mallory:

The Faculty Senate has recently learned of your apparent choice of co-chairs for the dean of Liberal Arts search. We note with great discomfort that no one from the faculty of Liberal Arts who does not have a major administrative role appears to be chairing or co-chairing this search. It seems to us that a senior faculty member in the Liberal Arts, possessed of considerable institutional memory and a profound, nuanced understanding of the liberal arts and their associations with teaching and learning, would best meet the responsibilities of chair or co-chair. A Liberal Arts faculty member without major administrative responsibilities who serves as chair or co-chair carries the tacit imprimatur of the faculty as one who can speak for that faculty as well as the university.

Our concern is not with the individuals you chose as co-chairs. We are concerned with our reduced voice in the search committee and with the apparent lack of shared governance in the process. The Liberal Arts Faculty should, we think, play a decisive role in determining the leadership and composition of the search committee for dean of the college. We note that the search committee for the current Liberal Arts dean was chaired only by a senior teaching faculty member from Liberal Arts.

In many ways, the selection of a dean as a co-chair is predicated on the central administration's need on the search committee for perspective of administrative practices at UNH and is similar to the faculty's need to have someone with knowledge of how liberal arts are conceptualized and taught at UNH (i.e. someone whose primary responsibility is as a teaching faculty member and not an administrator). While a co-chairing dean or director looks to the fit of the candidate within the administration, a faculty member looks for fit with the college, its departments and programs.

The college faculty is closest to the action in the college and, therefore, should be closest to the action of selecting the new dean. This criterion should be used not only in the current search but also when selecting future chairs for search committees for deans in any college.

The Faculty Senate leadership is most willing to discuss this matter with you and to work with you in finding a solution in which the concerns of the parties are effectively addressed. We look forward to such a discussion before the membership of the Liberal Arts Dean's Search Committee achieves its final form.

Sincerely,

William W. Stine  
Chair of the Faculty Senate

Cc: President Mark Huddleston

5. Rationale:

The senate's Agenda Committee and many Liberal Arts faculty have expressed concern that the search committee for a new dean of the College of Liberal Arts should be chaired or co-chaired by a senior Liberal Arts faculty member who does not have a major administrative role. The motion gives freedom for the senate chair and senate coordinator to modify the language of the letter. Since it is important that the letter be sent soon, before an announcement about the search committee is made, the mover of the motion suggested that the senators should trust the senate chair to consider the senate's concerns and then edit the letter appropriately and send it promptly to the provost, with a copy to the senators.

6. Senate action: passed, with thirty-five ayes, no nays, and two abstentions

Senate chair's signature: 

Letter forwarded to: President Mark Huddleston, on November 7, 2007

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