

UNH FACULTY SENATE
MOTION # XIII-M7

on the Blue Ribbon Panel Recommendations

1. Motion presenter: Kevin Gardner
2. Date of Faculty Senate discussion: 2/9/09
3. Rationale:

This motion expresses general concerns rather than commenting line by line on the report of the President's Blue Ribbon Panel on Research. The motion emphasizes that, in accordance with shared governance policy, the administration should bring any policy recommendations, which may result from the panel's report, to the Faculty Senate for input, prior to a decision.

4. Motion:

The UNH Faculty Senate applauds President Huddleston for opening a campus-wide discussion on research. The Faculty Senate affirms the university's commitment to research and thanks the Blue Ribbon Panel for their thorough report. The Faculty senate does have a number of concerns about this report. Since some of the report's recommendations carry significant financial and structural implications over academic matters for which the faculty has primary responsibility, the Faculty Senate urges and expects the President to implement policy recommendations in a manner consistent with the principles and practices of shared governance when balancing priorities for scarce resources.

5. Senate action: passed with thirty-three ayes, no nays, and two abstentions

6. Senate chair's signature:



Forwarded to: President Mark Huddleston, on February 17, 2009

Forwarded to: Provost Bruce Mallory, on February 17, 2009

1-26-09 Faculty Senate minutes

V. Blue Ribbon Panel on Research – The chair of the senate's Research and Public Service Committee said that the report of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Research is advisory to the president and has many detailed recommendations. In addition, one of the working groups for the strategic plan will review that report. The RPSC chair presented to the senate the draft of a motion which would express general concerns rather than comment line by line on the report. The draft is as follows:

The UNH Faculty Senate applauds President Huddleston for opening a campus-wide discussion on research and values the discourse that has resulted. The senate affirms the university's commitment to research and thanks the Blue Ribbon Panel for their thorough report. The Faculty Senate has a number of concerns about this report, however. First, many aspects of this report have clear implications for a multiplicity of academic programs for which faculty have primary responsibility; we believe a continued process of shared governance is necessary for further consideration of policy change recommendations. Second, there are recommendations that have significant financial implications: the faculty senate is confident that the President will implement policy recommendations in a manner consistent with the procedures and practices of shared governance when balancing priorities for scarce resources.

A discussion ensued as to whether to include examples of specific concerns about the panel's recommendations. A professor said that the senate minutes will form a record and should be attached to the motion when it is sent to the president. A senator proposed a friendly amendment which was accepted, to substitute "principles" for "procedures" in the last sentence. Other senators said that the final sentence is not sufficient. Suggestions were made to change "is confident" to "expects" or "is concerned" or "urges", but other senators wanted a stronger sentence indicating more explicit expectations.

A former senate chair said that this motion means that faculty expect that the administration will bring any particular proposals for implementation or policy change to the Faculty Senate for discussion and review. When the president considers implementation of recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Panel's report, the administration should bring concrete and detailed proposals to the Faculty Senate for vetting. In regard to the panel's report, a senator asked why the university should damage undergraduate education providing a primary source of income, by taking funds from undergraduate education in order to give them to graduate education which is losing money. Also, how will the current economic conditions and the strategic planning process affect possible implementation of the panel's recommendations? Two senators tried to make and second a motion that, with regard to the Blue Ribbon Panel report, whenever the president should seek to implement the panel's recommendations, the Faculty Senate expects that he will follow the procedures and practices of shared governance and that, in particular, the president will deal with the following faculty concerns. However, since the senators were not ready with a list of concerns, the motion was ruled out of order at this time. Gaining consensus on a list of specifics might not be the best use of senate time. Some senators said that, as a matter of shared governance, the Faculty Senate has an obligation to respond to the panel's report, because it is an integral part of academic policy and deals with issues that are very important for both research and undergraduate teaching. Such a senate response could form a part of the strategic planning process.

A senator said that some proposals in the panel's report could have very deleterious effects on some programs and that the senate's motion should say that faculty are very concerned about the implications of those recommendations and the ambiguity about their funding. Faculty are also concerned that recommendations in the panel's report could bring about an erosion of the governance of programs. Each recommendation would have financial implications, and funding is a very important issue. There are significant concerns about redistribution of funds. Also, faculty are worried that finances might drive academic matters instead of the reverse. The Faculty Senate passed a motion on 12/12/05 stating in part that "As we make and support choices among alternative uses of our limited resources, the Faculty Senate emphasizes that the standard by which fiscal decisions must be judged is their effect on academic goals of teaching, learning, research, artistry, and outreach, never vice versa. A good budget system serves academic priorities; it does not define them." A senator suggested that the motion should read:

The UNH Faculty Senate applauds President Huddleston for opening a campus-wide discussion on research and values the discourse that has resulted. The senate affirms the university's commitment to research and thanks the Blue Ribbon Panel for their thorough report. This report has significant implications for many programs. The whole university serves academic values and not the reverse. The standard by which fiscal decisions must be judged is their effect on academic goals of teaching, learning, research, artistry, and outreach, never vice versa. The Faculty Senate stands ready to assist the president in decisions on any implementation of the panel's report.

Another senator suggested that the senate motion might include wording to say that the Faculty Senate is concerned that implementation of the panel's report might result in an evisceration of undergraduate education. Other senators agreed, saying that the panel's report, if implemented, would signal a significant shift in what the university does. Faculty should discuss this aspect more widely and specify that there are more concerns than just financial ones about the panel's report. A professor suggested that the senate motion should just remind the president that all matters that touch on academics must go through the shared governance procedures when specific changes are proposed. A professor said that research dollars could be brought to those parts of the university which do not have such funds and that the university needs expanded opportunity for undergraduates to participate in research. The chair of the senate's Research and Public Service Committee suggested that he could withdraw the motion and, after considering the above discussion, bring a revised motion to the senate at its next meeting. The senate chair asked that senators send their suggestions via email to Kevin Gardner. The senate unanimously agreed to table the motion until that time.

2-9-09 Faculty Senate minutes

V. Blue Ribbon Panel on Research – The chair of the senate's Research and Public Service Committee presented to the senate a revised motion expressing general concerns rather than commenting line by line on the report. The motion, which was seconded by Barbara White, is as follows:

The UNH Faculty Senate applauds President Huddleston for opening a campus-wide discussion on research. The Faculty Senate affirms the university's commitment to research and thanks the Blue Ribbon Panel for their thorough report. The Faculty senate does have a number of concerns about this report. Since some of the report's recommendations carry significant financial and structural implications over academic matters for which the faculty has primary responsibility, the Faculty Senate urges and expects the President to implement policy recommendations in a manner consistent with the principles and practices of shared governance when balancing priorities for scarce resources.

Anita Klein made and Don Chandler seconded an amendment to add, after the second sentence of the motion, "The Blue Ribbon Report on Research is also to be commended for recognizing the need for improvement to graduate education, stipends and housing." A discussion ensued as to whether to include in the motion examples of specific concern or approbation about the panel's recommendations. A professor said that the minutes of today's senate meeting and the previous meeting will form a record and should be attached to the motion when it is sent to the president. A suggestion was made to remove "stipends and housing" from the amendment, because of concerns that increasing graduate stipends and housing might detract too much from undergraduate education. Anita Klein changed her amendment and Don Chandler seconded a change to instead revise the second sentence of the motion to say: "The Faculty Senate affirms the university's commitment to research and graduate education and thanks the Blue Ribbon Panel for their thorough report."

A suggestion was made to combine the second and third sentences to say: "Although the Faculty Senate affirms the university's commitment to research and graduate education and thanks the Blue Ribbon Panel for their thorough report, the Faculty senate does have a number of concerns about this report." Other senators suggested passing the motion as first presented today by the chair of the senate's Research and Public Service Committee and later passing another motion to provide the president and the strategic planning groups with a list of concerns and approbations. A professor said that each faculty member should send his or her own input and that this should be done soon. The amendment to revise the second sentence of the motion to say that "The Faculty Senate affirms the university's commitment to research and graduate education and thanks the Blue Ribbon Panel for their thorough report" failed, with six ayes, twenty-seven nays, and three abstentions. A senator said that the motion as a whole means that the administration should bring any new policy recommendations to the Faculty Senate for input, prior to a decision. Kevin Gardner asked that faculty email to him this week their concerns and approvals of the Blue Ribbon Panel's recommendations. The Research and Public Service committee will compile concerns and input, for presentation at the next senate meeting. **The motion as it was first presented today by the chair of the senate's Research and Public Service Committee passed with thirty-three ayes, no nays, and two abstentions.**