

UNH FACULTY SENATE
MOTION # XIX-M1

on the formation of an ad hoc committee to investigate alternatives to the UNH semester system

1. Motion presenter: James Connell, Agenda Committee
2. Dates of Faculty Senate discussion: 8/31/2015, 9/14/2015

3. Rationale: Ever-increasing restrictions on UNH's budget, whether from lack of support from the New Hampshire legislature, or from desire to halt the continued rise of tuition, calls for examination of other methods of raising money to fund UNH's endeavors. As well, the competitive pressure to provide students with increased flexibility in the completion of their degrees calls for a look at possible new methods.

One such method is to transfer from a dual semester system to a tri-semester system. UNH's facilities are relatively empty during the summer months, although there is some summer programming which must be considered.

Benefits to such a change include the potential for more tuition dollars, while students will have the option to finish in less than four years, or to be able to include semester abroad study without needing to add an extra semester to their education. Faculty could have the option to take their "summer break" in the fall, spring, or summer, depending on the needs of departments, increasing the potential for flexibility in pursuing off-campus research and development opportunities.

Concurrent with the above has been the rising enrollment at UNH Durham and the resultant pressures on many programs that are limited by specialized spaces such as instructional laboratories, performances and practice spaces, etc.

Drawbacks include the amount of funding needed to prepare facilities for a year-round operation and the interruption or lessening of summer programming aimed at children and adolescents, as well as some long-standing summer workshops.

The benefits, at first glance, seem to outweigh the deficits. Dartmouth transitioned to a tri-semester system and has enjoyed increased tuition as well as faculty and student satisfaction with the change. Such a change, however, should only be undertaken if it will serve the academic mission of the University.

For the reasons above, the Agenda Committee proposes that the Faculty Senate lead the way in determining the appropriateness of the suggested change by engaging in a feasibility study which would focus on the benefits and detriments to the academic programming of the University.

4. Motion:

The Faculty Senate will undertake a study to gather the pros and cons of alternatives to the current semester system relevant to the UNH academic mission. The Faculty Senate will form an ad-hoc committee which will have faculty representatives from each college, UNH-Manchester, the School of Law, the Library, and undergraduate and graduate student representatives. The Agenda committee will appoint the committee and invite selected non-faculty members who could contribute to the study to serve on the committee. The Agenda Committee will charge the committee to meet these goals. The committee should report its findings to the Faculty Senate by the end of March 2016.

5. Senate action: The motion passed with 33 votes in favor, 4 votes opposed, and 2 abstentions.

6. Senate chair's signature: Deborah A. King

Forwarded to: President Mark Huddleston, on September 29, 2015

Interim Provost P.T. Vasudevan, on September 29, 2015

Mary Rhiel, Interim Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, on September 29, 2015

Registrar, on September 29, 2015

All college deans, on September 29, 2015

All department chairs, on September 29, 2015