

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2001-02 FACULTY SENATE
FEBRUARY 25, 2002 MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll - The following Faculty Senate members were absent: Barcelona, Bornstein, Burger, Denis, Draper, Fletcher, Halstead, Miriam, Niese, Pollard, Shippee-Rice, Simpson and VonDamm. Excused were Finn, Hinson, Krysiak, Seidel, Slomba, Trowbridge, and Tuttle.

II. Communications with the President - The president said that the university seems to be on track regarding student enrollment for next year. The applicant pool is up three percent. Students applied earlier than usual, since this was the first year they could apply electronically. Applications from New Hampshire students are down four percent from last year but are about the same as two years ago, and applications from non-resident students are up six percent. The applicant quality seems about the same as last year. Increasing numbers of high schools no longer rank their senior students. SAT scores seem about the same, although the verbal scores are down and the mathematics scores are up. The number of minority students is expected to be similar to last year. UNH colleges will hold open houses for potential students, and there will be some off-site receptions as well. The Admissions Office now sends to the deans a list of well-qualified students who have received UNH letters of admission; and deans, department chairs and the Honors Program work to encourage those students to enroll. Most UNH departments have their own web pages for potential students to review.

Strategy 6A of the Academic Action Plan is to “clarify, support and strengthen UNH’s system of shared decision making and strong faculty governance”. The president said that we need to continue to work towards very strong faculty governance. She added that shared governance now has a fuller meaning than in the past but that UNH does not have codified rules regarding the faculty. The 1966 Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities, which was endorsed by the American Association of University Professors, the American Council on Education, and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, says that:

The faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process. On these matters the power of review or final decision lodged in the governing board or delegated by it to the president should be exercised adversely only in exceptional circumstances, and for reasons communicated to the faculty.

This 1966 document spells out the areas of responsibility for faculty, university presidents, and governing boards; but the document was written before states began to organize higher education into university systems. The document gives a philosophic framework, and the task now is implementation. When we have clarity in the goals we are trying to accomplish, we can move to plan strategies and implement the goals. The university is currently working on drafts of its smoking policy, web policy and network security policy.

III. Minutes - The minutes of the last senate meeting were unanimously approved.

IV. Communications from the Chair - The senate chair announced that the Presidential Search Committee has done off-campus interviews and will do the on-campus interviews in March. The senate chair is meeting with the PAT Council and has met with the Operating Staff Council, in order to discuss common issues such as benefits and parking. The senate chair has sent email to the senate's Finance and Administration Committee, the Research and Public Service Committee, and the Student Affairs Committee asking for a representative from each committee to serve on specific accreditation self-study committees. Current members of those senate committees could be on the self-study committees from this April until the fall of 2003, even if the professor will not be on the senate next year. That professor could continue to represent the senate and report to the senate. The self-study Steering Committee should have a representative from the senate's Agenda Committee as well.

V. Academic Action Plan Strategy 6A - The Agenda Committee is working on the strategy to strengthen shared decision making and faculty governance and would like ideas from the senators about how to strengthen faculty governance. The senate's Academic Action Plan Task Force has nine strategies to deal with, and two senate standing committees and the University Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee are working on those materials, in addition to the Agenda Committee's work on strategy 6A. All will look at five-year goals and an action plan for implementation.

A professor said that we need a process for contract negotiations that will not impede faculty governance. A senator suggested that college bylaws should be reviewed to be sure that they enhance faculty governance. We should review governance rules at all levels. A faculty member said that we should clarify the relationship between the AAUP and the Faculty Senate and for which areas each should be responsible. The Faculty Senate should focus on areas that matter to faculty, and the faculty should be proactive in those areas. The Faculty Senate should nominate faculty to serve on certain other committees, and those faculty would not need to be senators. Those committees should give a written report to the senate each year, so that faculty could decide if the committee had dealt with any issues the Faculty Senate should review. Committees should be reviewed regularly to eliminate overlap and clarify the purview and reporting lines of each. Some committees have a big learning curve and need members to serve for two or three-year terms. The provost should look at how the university rewards faculty service.

A professor expressed concern over a reorganization in one college and said that more communication is needed between the departments in the college. UCAPC normally acts as an arbitrator on curricular issues between colleges. Since students outside the college will be affected, there should be a plan for discussion outside the college, with input from faculty from other colleges. We could have the colleges and the provost's office do a review of the decision-making process, so that these mechanisms could be made explicit and modified if needed. We should see that responsibility-center management does not prevent a collaborative approach to academic planning.

VI. Report on Grade Change Documentation - Mike Merenda said that the senate's Academic Affairs Committee asked him to review when and if deans could change grades. He looked at the Students' Rights, Rules and Responsibilities Handbook, the Faculty Handbook which is dated 1984, and the collective bargaining agreement. Deans have changed grades based on

formal or informal grievance procedures or under highly unusual circumstances. It has happened that a grade of incomplete was given; but when the time came to give the final grade the instructor was no longer with the university; and so the dean finalized the grade. Once a handicapped individual was not treated equitably and corrective action was taken. The Faculty Handbook says that:

In any decisions about grades, faculty members have the responsibility for ensuring that all students involved are judged by the same criteria. Every instructor must be prepared to discuss and to explain the basis for his/her evaluation of students. After such a discussion with the instructor a student may appeal a grading decision to the instructor's department chairperson and then to the dean of the school or college in which the course is offered. The administrative review will be confined to questions of equitable procedure.

Rarely, grades have been changed under those circumstances. In addition, sometimes the registration status of a student is changed based on a petition to the Academic Standards and Advising Committee. The faculty member involved in such situations should be told of the planned change and given a chance to respond. A dissatisfied faculty member could file a grievance.

A professor said that he has worked at the university for many years and has never seen the Faculty Handbook. He asked that this document be distributed to the faculty. However, the handbook was written before collective bargaining; and so there are many sections which are obsolete. The senate chair said that he will ask the provost to review the Faculty Handbook and to send a draft to the senate's Professional Standards Committee for input.

VII. University Smoking Policy - On October 8, 2001, the Faculty Senate approved a motion that the draft of the smoking policy prepared by the UNH Smoking Policy Task Force not be accepted. The motion to not accept was sent to the UNH Smoking Policy Task Force, with recommendations for revising the draft. However, only minor changes were made in the wording, such as changing the name to the University Tobacco Policy; and no response was made to many of the concerns expressed. Therefore, the senate's Student Affairs Committee recommends that the senate still not endorse the new draft of the tobacco policy. The senate chair said that, at Monday's Agenda Committee meeting, he

will ask the president why the Smoking Policy Task Force did not respond to many of the senate committee's concerns and requests for changes.

VIII. Academic Calendar - The chair of the senate's Student Affairs Committee moved that:

In academic years when a so-called 'mid-semester' break is scheduled during the fall semester, the registrar shall designate that break to coincide with the federal "Columbus Day" holiday. The official registration/academic calendars of the University of New Hampshire should be determined in accordance with this policy, beginning with the academic year 2002-2003. In years when the calendar does not allow for a 'mid-semester' break, this policy will not be applied.

Since next year's university schedule is already in print and cannot be changed, a friendly amendment was made and accepted that the motion refer to "**the academic year 2003-2004**". **The motion as amended was unanimously approved.**

IX. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned.