

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

I. Roll - The following Faculty Senate members were absent: Archer, Becker, Burger, Denis, Draper, Elmslie, Fletcher, Frankel, Halstead, Merenda, Pollard, Simpson, Tuttle and VonDamm. Excused were Carr, Finn, Kies, Krysiak, and Trowbridge.

II. Communications with the Provost - The provost said that the Academic Planning Steering Committee will review, digest and combine the academic action plan strategies and submit a draft for input from the Faculty Senate and other groups. The provost hopes this process will be complete by the end of the semester. U.S. News & World Report has included UNH in a list of twenty institutions whose athletes have an exemplary combination of academic performance and athletic competitiveness. This spring the UNH Alumni Association will honor President Leitzel with the Pettee Medal. Please attend the ceremony and invite your colleagues to attend, on April 19 at 3:00 p.m. in the Whittemore Center Arena. The provost commends the Faculty Senate and its General Education Study Committee for their initiation of and work on the current review of general education.

III. General Education Study Committee Recommendations - This committee was formed by the Faculty Senate in 1999, has met weekly for about twenty months, took extensive steps to get input from all the UNH constituencies, and has proposed a plan for the revision of the UNH general education program. A draft was issued last November, and then a major revision was circulated as a result of the input received. Goals of the proposal are to strengthen the undergraduate academic climate, bring greater focus on the first-year experience, encourage interdisciplinary efforts, enhance the integration of general education with the other courses, and strengthen funding for this effort.

During their first year, students would have to prove competency in mathematics or take a course to achieve that level. Testing would also assess the students' abilities in information technology, and remediation would be offered if needed. There would be a dialogue on a chosen theme with readings, discussions, a one-credit pass/fail course, and co-curricular activities on the subject. English 401 would continue to be a required first-year course, have greater consistency among its sections, and give more coverage to library research. A second course on the processes of inquiry and research would also be required.

In addition, students would have to take a minimum of seven other discovery courses to fulfill requirements in all of the following ten areas: quantitative reasoning, biological science, physical science, historical perspectives, foreign culture, fine and performing arts, social sciences, humanities, social identity and the individual, and lastly technology, environment and society. Some discovery courses might satisfy up to two of the categories plus a writing-intensive requirement. Writing across the curriculum would continue to be required, and a capstone experience would be included.

A UNH Discovery Program Committee would be set up, and a faculty member would be appointed as the director of the UNH Discovery Program. Support for the Discovery Program

would be the highest priority for university discretionary funds, and \$100,000 from those funds and from private gifts has already been designated for next year and each of the following two years. Faculty development funds could help with new course development. Two new university awards for faculty teaching would be funded for the Discovery Program. The program would be phased in over time and would include annual reports to the Faculty Senate and a program evaluation every five years. Service learning exists at the university but is not part of the Discovery Program. Local non-profit organizations asked that service not be made a general education requirement.

A professor asked if the administration would hire any additional faculty and provide other resources needed to teach extra courses required by this program. Some resources may be reallocated to focus on the first year and the senior year. Perhaps some junior-level courses could be bigger. Regarding the proposed capstone experience, a faculty member expressed concern that the academic level of internships varies greatly. Some departments already have a course that could serve as a capstone. Professors pointed out that the courses currently required in some majors are extremely tight and that adding any additional requirements would be a problem. A course might be planned to satisfy more than one general education requirement, but the committee which approves those courses would need to show flexibility. Each school or college will have a representative on that committee. Under the proposed system, if courses are taken which satisfy multiple requirements, it may be possible for a student to take one less general education course than in the present; or if multiple-requirement courses are not used, up to two more courses than the currently-required ten might be needed. A faculty member will direct the Discovery Program and help to implement it appropriately.

Please email John Seavey at [jws@cisunix.unh.edu](mailto:jws@cisunix.unh.edu) with further comments on the committee's recommendations. The discussion will continue at the next senate meeting. Some professors are concerned about the costs of implementing this program and how it would affect both students and faculty. A faculty member from the library said that colleagues in the library had given suggestions that are not included in this draft.

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

V. Communications from the Chair - The Professional Standards Committee provided a written copy of its recommendation at the last senate meeting, to oppose the creation of a new faculty code of conduct. The senate chair presented a handout showing the schedule of the on-campus interviews for presidential search candidates and asked faculty to meet with the candidates at these sessions. Faculty response to the candidates is very important and informative to the search committee.

VI. Academic Action Plan Strategy Draft - The chair of the senate's Academic Action Plan Task Force presented a draft of the action plans for strategies assigned to senate committees. He asked for faculty input and said that he will revise this document and send it to Jim Varn who will combine it with the action plans for other strategies and bring the entire document back to the senate for input. A professor said that various kinds of faculty service and not just public service are important. Page eleven of the document says that the Faculty Senate would create a task force to review the evaluation of teaching, research and public service in promotion and tenure and faculty reviews. Requests were made to change "public service" to "service"

wherever it appears in the document and to define what is meant by that word and other such phrases. The task force chair will include this request in the appendix of the strategies draft. Coordination with the AAUP is advisable, since these matters affect promotion and tenure.

A faculty member asked that language be included in the strategies to indicate that this plan should not be used as an excuse to increase the teaching load. A professor suggested that a statement be included about optimal class size and student-teacher ratio for writing-intensive classes. Faculty should review what the course loads and the class sizes are and also whether faculty with large class sizes can attain excellence in research. Concern was expressed that some of the strategies might be unrealistic in some departments and also that funds might be moved from one focus to another. The task force chair will ask Jim Varn to contact him with any concerns that may arise during the combining of the strategies. The task force chair will also indicate to Jim Varn which language in the document is especially important to faculty. The chair will send information from today's senate minutes to the university-wide committee.

VII. University Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee - Pedro de Alba, the chair of this committee, said that it was set up by the senate as an oversight committee to deal with any disagreements between colleges, under responsibility center management. The committee has sixteen members, of which twelve are faculty with staggered three-year terms. The UCAPC chair suggested that three of the faculty should be senators so that, if one leaves before the term is up, there would still be two Faculty Senate members on UCAPC. Two administrators and two students are also UCAPC members. The UCAPC chair said that other groups are dealing with some of the UCAPC charges and that UCAPC should just mediate inter-college curricular concerns.

VIII. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned, and the report by the senate's Student Affairs Committee will be postponed to the next meeting.