

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2003-04 FACULTY SENATE

OCTOBER 20, 2003

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Bocarro, Burger, Herold, and Niese. Excused were Becker, Broussard, Rentschler and Slomba. Guests were the president, the provost, and Mark Rubinstein.

II. Communications from the president – The president said that many people had put a lot of effort into planning for more responsible celebratory behavior in regard to the sports events which occurred last week. Flyers about expectations and consequences had been distributed, and alternative celebrations were set up with food and music. Both student leaders and adults from the university community circulated in the crowd, asking the participants to leave the area of the disturbance. Even non-violent observers to a riot are culpable if they do not disperse when asked by the police to do so. The university must consider changes to sections of the code of conduct and the Students' Rights and Responsibilities booklet. Faculty Senate groups including the Student Affairs Committee are working on dealing with celebratory behavior. The university's Office of Student Affairs will take action based on the arrests and on photographs and video tapes of the disturbance.

A professor suggested a variety of punitive measures that might be considered. The president said that the university must have a process that is appropriate and enforceable. A faculty member asked if it would be helpful for faculty to take a few minutes of class time to discuss these issues with their students, and the president said that would be very useful. There is a strong connection between the disturbances and the consumption of alcohol. The disturbances are not spontaneous, but the university has not identified a core of leaders. The university is concerned, because people might be seriously hurt in the future if crowds continue such behavior. We must speak out strongly against violence of all types, work to maintain our community values, and pursue a serious examination of all these issues. The culture of violence must be changed. Perhaps student athletes, coaches and professional athletes could speak on these matters. Also, offensively-worded cheers at hockey games are a problem. A professor suggested that the local police could communicate with Scotland Yard in the United Kingdom, to get information on what has been effective in dealing with celebrating crowds there. The president described security measures that were taken in Boston recently during and after an important sports event. The president stated that the university needs to move forward both on these matters and on the academic proposals that are now under consideration. The provost asked that the faculty senators encourage faculty discussions with students about celebratory behavior.

III. Communications from the chair – The senate chair invited faculty to attend the open forum with the NEASC visiting team at 3:00 p.m. on October 21, in 330 Memorial Union Building. He also asked faculty to fill out and return the questionnaire that the Task Force on Academic Expectations and Student Behavior has emailed to all UNH faculty and full-time instructors. Those who are concerned about anonymity could send the response via campus mail. Faculty may read the Graduate Student Organization's letter to President Hart on concerns about Forest Park and the president's response, by accessing the Graduate Student web site at http://www.gradschool.unh.edu/GSO/open_letter.html. The Future Marine Officers Association

needs a faculty advisor, and interested faculty are asked to contact Dan Turaj at dturaj@cisunix.unh.edu. The Agenda Committee has reviewed the minutes process and has approved the current procedure. The minutes are a summary. Faculty may listen to the tapes of the minutes. In order not to delay the agenda, any senator desiring to modify the minutes should come prepared with an amendment when the minutes are presented for approval. Then the senate will vote on the amendment.

IV. Minutes – the minutes of the last Faculty Senate meeting were approved unanimously.

V. Update from Mark Rubinstein, Vice President for Student and Academic Services – Mark Rubinstein said that eight to nine percent of the students go through the conduct system and that most cases are for minor offences. Also, eight to nine percent of the students are having academic difficulty. Thus, most of the students are doing well; and the problems tend to be caused by a small minority of students. The majority of students suffer from the behavior of a few. We need to reemphasize the academic focus of the university. The Academic Plan talks about creating a holistic experience, combining academics with other aspects of the students' lives.

In the past, the university only notified parents about student drug or alcohol infractions in one quarter of the cases, usually after a second offense. This situation created a false sense of security in the parents who did not get notified, and some students push the limits until they run up against a hard boundary. This year, the university is notifying parents the first time a student is charged. Alcohol is a big problem, both on campus and in Durham. The university needs very clear-cut rules that work quickly. Mark Rubinstein gave statistics on how many hours freshmen say they spend on studying and other activities. These students apparently spend about twice as much time doing video and computer games as they do studying. Perhaps the university should create a common reading that would become the basis for a yearlong exploration of a topic that builds shared understanding and community among the freshman class. A professor suggested that the university should make it clear to students that certain behavior is expected of responsible adults and that the consumer mentality undermines the culture of learning. The provost said that we need to help students to understand the effects on others of violent behavior and what the students' responsibility for those people is. These violent disturbances could cause injuries or death. These disturbances also make it difficult for students to study and come to class prepared to learn. Students have a role in the quality of life in Durham.

The incoming freshman class has about 2,640 students, which is 2.5 percent smaller than last year but the second largest freshman class in the university's history. The incoming students are as strong academically as the freshmen in the last seven years. Also this is the most diverse class ever. There are 165 students of color. The university now has 4.9 percent students of color, up from 3.3 percent in the recent past. Fifty-four percent of the freshmen are in-state students; fifty-nine percent are female; and about twenty-five percent are undeclared Liberal Arts students. A professor said that setting boundaries and consequences is essential and that issues such as teacher reviews and grade inflation deserve separate discussion. The proper balance between friendship and mentoring is important. Student organizations need advisors. Soon every student organization will have to have a faculty or staff mentor, so that the student organizations can have more guidance.

VI. Discovery Program – Mark Wrighton made and Jim Farrell seconded a motion to have all votes with the exception of votes to adjourn be taken by roll call and published as such in the minutes, including each voter's name and department. This motion was defeated by an overwhelming voice vote. On behalf of the Agenda Committee, Elizabeth Hageman presented **the Discovery Program motion which was distributed with the senate agenda. After several paragraphs of rationale, the motion concludes by saying that the Faculty Senate endorses the adoption of the Discovery Implementation Plan, as outlined in the minutes of May 5, 2003, (and expanded upon on September 22, 2003) and encourages the provost to go forward with the appointment of a full-time Faculty Fellow and the establishment of an advisory committee to initiate the processes specified by the Implementation Plan.**

A professor claimed that this motion is out of order because the motion is in conflict with a standing resolution of the senate passed on April 22, 2002. He said that, under parliamentary procedure, no motion is in order that conflicts with the constitution, bylaws, standing orders and resolutions of the assembly or any resolutions already adopted during the session. On April 22, 2002, the senate had passed a motion which commended the efforts of the senate's General Education Study Committee and supported the basic design of the program. The motion also recommended that no further action on the GESC report be taken until such time as a comprehensive plan for implementation of the program could be developed and approved by the Faculty Senate. The professor emphasized that the 2002 motion said that the plan was to include a commitment from the university administration for resources adequate to implement the proposed general education changes and that those resources should include but not be limited to new faculty positions in departments where current resource limitations, high student enrollment, high student/faculty ratios, and other factors would create significant obstacles to implementing certain features of the proposed general education program. The professor said that those commitments have not been made, especially with regard to new faculty positions.

The senate chair ruled that today's motion on the Discovery Program is in order. Jim Farrell appealed the chair's decision, and Mark Wrighton seconded the appeal. Another professor said that the Faculty Senate's Ad-hoc Committee on the Discovery Program has worked on these implementation concerns for a year and has presented recommendations for a step-by-step plan to evaluate the resources available and then to have the Faculty Senate vote later on whether or not to approve final implementation of the various parts of the Discovery Program. In addition, a number of senators, although not all, thought that the session in which the April 22, 2002, motion passed is now ended. The professor appealing the chair's decision said that the April 22 motion was passed to make sure that the senate and the administrators would not forget the concerns stated, even after several years had gone by.

After a vote to call the question, the appeal of the chair's decision was defeated by a voice vote. Jim Farrell then moved and Mark Wrighton seconded that the main motion should be sent to the senate's Academic Affairs Committee for consideration, claiming that there has been two-and-one-half years of study of the Discovery Program but that the substance of the Discovery Program has never been seriously debated in the senate. Another professor responded that there has been enough discussion and that he and his departmental colleagues want a vote on the main motion today. The first professor said that, at the April 4, 2002, senate meeting, the Agenda Committee had asked the senate to vote in favor of the basic design of the General Education Study Committee recommendations and had specified that this did not mean endorsing every

word of the report, adding that approval was needed in order to name the UNH Discovery Program Committee and the faculty director of the program, so that they could begin to design the process and prepare an implementation plan for the consideration of the Faculty Senate. Today, another faculty member urged that the senate vote now on the Agenda Committee's motion; and she called the question on the motion to refer the main motion to the Academic Affairs Committee. This motion to refer was defeated by a voice vote. **The main motion as distributed with the agenda passed with twenty-seven ayes and thirteen nays.**

Jim Farrell moved to refer the discussion to the full faculty, since the senate constitution says that decisions by the Faculty Senate that envision fundamental changes to current practice must be ratified by the faculty as a whole, if one third of the senators or the majority of the tenure-track faculty of any college or school votes that a decision is of such fundamental importance. The motion to refer was defeated by a senate vote of twenty-eight to thirteen, with one abstention. The main motion which was passed today means that the step-by-step plan is to be followed. The provost expressed his appreciation for the work of the senate's Ad-hoc Committee on the Discovery Program, in devising this plan. He added that he will move quickly to appoint a director, and he asked faculty to give him suggestions about that appointment. A professor said that he understands the concern about resources but that the Faculty Senate will have the right to vote on final implementation of the program, after evaluation of the resources during the step-by-step plan.

VII. Academic Plan – On behalf of the Agenda Committee, Edward Hinson **moved the Academic Plan motion which was distributed with the senate agenda. After several paragraphs of rationale, the motion concludes by resolving that the Faculty Senate endorses the implementation of the Academic Plan for the Future of the University of New Hampshire and continuing consultation between the Office of the Provost and the Faculty Senate to ensure that implementation issues are addressed to secure the necessary resources, tools, and an institutional culture that will serve to foster achievement of the goals and values set forth in the Academic Plan of the University of New Hampshire.**

A professor claimed that the motion was out of order, because a previous motion on the Academic Plan had been tabled by the senate on September 8, 2003. The senate chair ruled that this objection was out of order, because Robert's Rules states that there is no obligation to take up a tabled motion. Jim Farrell appealed the ruling of the chair, and Mark Wrighton seconded the appeal. Another faculty member urged the senate to consider the Agenda Committee's Academic Plan motion, because it is clearer and more to the point than the tabled motion. The appeal of the chair's decision was defeated by a vote of twenty-three to sixteen.

A professor said that the main motion on the Academic Plan is particularly sound because it directs that faculty should be very much engaged in all the decisions on the Academic Plan and that the Office of the Provost must consult with the Faculty Senate on implementation and on securing the necessary resources. Jim Farrell made and Mark Wrighton seconded an amendment which they proposed to be inserted in the last sentence of the main motion, after "the Academic Plan for the Future of the University of New Hampshire". That amendment is "with the proviso that the plan be amended to include goals for optimal class sizes necessary to achieve the academic goals outlined within the plan, especially for inquiry and writing-intensive courses, and

that class sizes across the university be investigated to determine where smaller classes are needed to reach the academic goals of the plan.”

A faculty member said that, while those issues are important, there are other things that also need to be done and so those specific items are not needed in this more theoretical motion. Several senators objected to the amendment’s phrase “optimal class sizes”, as this could mean almost any size and could mean either financially or academically optimal. Another professor said that it is important for the amendment not to take away the right of departments to make decisions about class sizes. The professor proposing the amendment said that in the March 11 and 25, 2002, Faculty Senate meetings, one of the concerns discussed was the issue of class size and student/teacher ratio and that a professor had said that this plan might be unrealistic in some departments and should not be used as an excuse to increase the teaching load. Today, a professor said that the proposed amendment should be defeated, because it imposes unnecessary burdens and complicates the original motion. **A motion to postpone consideration of the motion until the next senate meeting carried.**

VIII. Adjournment – The senate meeting was adjourned.