

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2004-05 FACULTY SENATE

DECEMBER 6, 2004

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Annicchiarico, Burger, Crepeau, Deem, Kenefick, Neefus, Pescosolido, Powell, Schlenrich, Tenczar, and VanDeveer. Excused were Broussard, Laue, and Shea. Jenna Coulp-Yu was a guest.

II. Communications from the chair – Senators Mathur and Tagliaferro are members of the Faculty Awards Committee. The senate chair asked that the faculty senators remind their colleagues to make nominations for the faculty awards. The deadline for nominations is February 11, and further information is available on the web at <http://www.unh.edu/academic-affairs/facultyawards/>.

A letter signed by Vice President Alan Ray and the Faculty Senate chair was recently sent to all faculty reminding them that Senate Rule 5.24, which states that no announced exam may be given during the last week of classes, is currently in force and should be observed by all faculty. The senate chair has received email from faculty who want to give exams during that week and are concerned about this rule. The senate chair will send to the senate's Academic Affairs Committee a request for review of that policy. The policy does not prevent laboratory exams from being held during the final week of classes. The senate chair asked that faculty provide input on this matter. One professor said that he was concerned to find that, in spite of the rule, about twenty percent of his students have final exams during the final week of classes.

III. Minutes – The senate unanimously approved the minutes of the last Faculty Senate meeting.

IV. Study Away Program policy – Cathy Frierson said that the Academic Affairs Committee considered input from the last senate meeting, gathered additional information, and revised the motion on study abroad academic eligibility, which is amendment one to the UNH Study Away Programs: Principles, Policies, Procedures. The revised motion now says “study away” rather than “study abroad” and includes a grammar change as well as an explicit reference to the possibility of petitioning for academic variance if grades have been good in the previous two semesters. **The motion recommended by the Academic Affairs Committee is:**

PROPOSED AMENDMENT I: Study Away Academic Eligibility

Students enrolled in UNH baccalaureate degree programs may participate in approved study away programs provided they meet the following eligibility criteria:

- 1. Must have earned at least 32 credit hours, at least 12 of which must have been earned at the University of New Hampshire at the baccalaureate level;**
- 2. Must have a minimum 2.5 cumulative grade point average at the time of application to and at the time of departure for the study away program. Study Away Programs provided by UNH or approved institutions may have higher minimum GPA requirements.**
- 3. Must have a declared major.**

Transfer students, including transfer students from Thompson School of Applied Science (TSAS) are not eligible to study away during their first semester of their baccalaureate program at UNH.

Students enrolled in the degree programs of the Thompson School of Applied Science may participate in approved study away programs appropriate for two-year degree candidates. TSAS students must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- 1. Must have earned 32 credits, at least 12 of which must have been earned at the University of New Hampshire at the associate degree level;**
- 2. Must have a minimum 2.5 cumulative grade point average at the time of application to and at the time of departure for the study away program. Study Away Programs provided by UNH or other approved institutions may have higher minimum GPA requirements.**

Special consideration will be given to those students who, although below the 2.5 cumulative GPA threshold, have demonstrated promise in the previous two semesters. Those who wish to be considered for academic variance should go through normal variance procedures.

(Note: upon approval of this amendment, the Faculty Senate will instruct ASAC to take note of the “special consideration” clause.)

The motion on study away academic eligibility was unanimously approved. Cathy Frierson then moved on behalf of the Academic Affairs Committee that the senate pass proposed amendment two on study away eligibility and student conduct, a second amendment to the UNH Study Away Programs: Principles, Policies, Procedures. This motion was distributed to the senate prior to its November 22 meeting. The proposal had been reviewed first by the University Committee on Study Abroad and then by the University Committee on International Studies, as well as by the Center for International Education. Cathy Frierson said that the UCSA recommended approval of the proposal but that faculty in UCIS said they would write a letter to the provost with their objections to the proposal but did not do so.

This second motion includes the wording: “Any student sanctioned by the University Student Conduct System for a serious violation of the UNH Conduct Rules and Regulations, including but not limited to academic dishonesty, repeated alcohol abuse, illegal drugs, destruction or theft of property, physical or sexual assault, or unlawful behavior, is generally ineligible for participation in a UNH-managed or UNH-approved study away program.” The motion also includes a sentence added by the Academic Affairs Committee, stating that “Requests for variance to this policy will be directed to the University Standards and Advising Committee.” There are also five items on procedures, including assessment and review procedures.

A senator asked who would decide whether a violation of conduct rules is serious and what the criteria would be. Cathy Frierson said that the list of offenses was an attempt to clarify that issue and that the section on procedures indicates who would be consulted on these matters, including the Student Conduct Board and the Academic Standards and Advising Committee, which has

broad vision and experience. The phrase “generally ineligible” is meant as a signal that petitioning for variance is possible. Since no language can cover all circumstances, that phrase allows a little discretion. The section on procedures allows for faculty review, to ensure that a reasonable understanding of “serious violations” is being followed.

Another senator said that not allowing a student with a conduct violation to participate in study away is a form of double jeopardy, as the student has already paid the penalty for his original offence. The senate chair asked the student observer to consult her constituency about this issue. Another professor replied that a consequence of many forms of conduct is that a person may lose certain privileges as a result, even though other persons with the same conduct may not be interested in exercising those particular privileges. A faculty member pointed out that this matter could affect a student’s ability to major in Languages, Literatures and Cultures, which requires study away. Cathy Frierson said that the Academic Affairs Committee has concluded that this is not double jeopardy, if the rules are published in advance. Those groups listed in the section on procedures could decide whether this rule would be applied to students who entered the university prior to the publication of this policy.

A professor expressed concern that “unlawful behavior” could cover a huge range of behavior, including non-violent protest or drinking one beer. He added that the host institution should be able to decide what behavior is acceptable. Cathy Frierson responded that the petition process is there to ensure that only serious violations would prevent participation in study away. A faculty member said that a student may be drafted into the army at eighteen but in some states, although not others, may not drink alcohol legally. After a discussion of the pros and cons of alcohol laws and the deaths associated with excessive drinking, a past senate chair suggested that the matter be sent to an ad-hoc committee with members from the senate’s Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committees and which could meet with the Student Conduct Board and perhaps the Academic Standards and Advising Committee, to find out what behavior is considered serious and what might be petitioned successfully. The Academic Affairs Committee chair said that ASAC informs his committee promptly and regularly of the decisions ASAC makes. The purpose of the policy on study away is to establish a consistent standard of behavior and judgment, since study away students are often seen as representatives of the university and the country.

How does the university’s Student Conduct Board find out about unlawful behavior by students? Does the board usually find out only about arrests by the Durham police? A professor suggested eliminating the phrase “unlawful behavior” and modifying another phrase to refer to “repeated serious alcohol abuse”. Another faculty member said that the student should have to show that he or she would be a good representative rather than that he or she had not participated in a list of behaviors. The chair of the Academic Affairs Committee said that his committee would consider the above input and revise the second motion on study away. That motion was unanimously tabled.

V. New Student Statement of Commitment – Liza Finkel, who chairs the senate’s Student Affairs Committee, described the proposed statement of commitment and the cover letter which would be signed by the university president, the Faculty Senate chair, and the vice president for Student and Academic Services. The administration believes that students should be asked to sign such a statement, but some faculty members said that the statement is too much like a

loyalty oath. Do applicants for admission know in advance, before they apply to UNH, that they will be asked to sign such a statement if admitted? A professor suggested adding “political and philosophical viewpoints” to the phrase “regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, or religion”. Mark Rubinstein had said that he thinks the Statement of Commitment originally came from the senate. Whether the student signs or not, the student is still required to follow the Students’ Rights, Rules and Responsibilities. A professor said that a student who does not participate in class would be guilty of violating this statement. Another faculty member said that the phrase “engage actively in my classes, academic programs, and living environment” is the most offensive. There is apparently no penalty if a student does not sign this statement. The purpose of the statement is to create a university culture in which students accept their responsibilities. The statement would be sent to new students only and would be posted each year.

A senator said that only the statements to “abide by university policies on academic honesty” and “inform myself about and follow all university policies and rules including those covered in the Students’ Rights, Rules and Responsibilities” would be enforceable. A professor said that having students sign a form is not the way to create a culture of acceptance and participation. Another professor suggested having a university 101 course in which students meet with faculty to talk about students’ rights, responsibilities and other such issues. A senator said that all but the last item about university policy and Students’ Rights, Rules and Responsibilities should be eliminated. A professor suggested that, instead of having students sign the Statement of Commitment, students should sign that they have read the Students’ Rights, Rules and Responsibilities. The senate chair said that the Student Affairs Committee will consider the input received at today’s senate meeting.

VI. Report on the recommendations from the Task Force on Academic Expectations and Student Behavior – Liza Finkel, the chair of the senate’s Student Affairs Committee, said that her committee supports the goals of the task force and believes that top priority should be given to link two on the articulation of faculty expectations. Link one on student/faculty interaction and also link four on student culture should be encouraged but not mandated. Link three on academic advising should be considered by the Academic Affairs Committee. No student observer has been attending the senate’s Student Affairs Committee meetings. The senate chair said that a student observer will attend next semester. Faculty should be expected to act as role models for students, with regard to work ethics and scholarly activities and as an academic professional in the largest sense of the word. Senators are asked to review the Student Affairs Committee’s report on the Task Force on Academic Expectations and Student Behavior and send input to Liza Finkel.

VII. Preliminary report from the Academic Affairs Committee – Michael Kalinowski, the chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, presented his committee’s interim report, which will be sent to the senators with the senate minutes. He asked that senators review the report and send input to him.

VIII. Other business – A senator asked that senate emails include “senate” in the subject line.

IX. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned.