

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2004-05 FACULTY SENATE

FEBRUARY 7, 2005

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Burger, Pescosolido, Powell, Sheriff, and Tenczar. Excused were Hinson and Lewis. Joanne Curran-Celentano, John Ernest, and Jenna Coulp-Yu were guests.

II. Communications from the president – President Hart said that the campus and town had been quiet after the super bowl game and also after a number of previous athletic events and yet the press printed a number of articles describing the disturbances of several years ago. She said that the university is conducting tours for legislators, of the campus buildings slated for renovation and repair in Project KEEP. These buildings belong to the state and can only be renovated through state funds, and the need for renovation is clear. The university is focusing on continuing to establish good relationships with key legislative leaders. Events include meals and receptions at the president's home, bus tours, hockey games, a theatrical play, and meetings with trustees. The university is also working to develop a core set of legislative advocates, including parents and alumni.

III. Communications from the chair – A bill to repeal the hate-crimes act has been introduced in the New Hampshire legislature and is now in committee. This house bill 136-FN would reduce such crimes from a felony to a misdemeanor. The Agenda Committee has sent a letter to the provost, expressing concerns about how the termination of the DCE associate's degree would affect university staff. The University Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee met with the vice provost and the senate's Academic Affairs Committee chair to discuss how UCAPC's charges interrelate with the work of the Academic Affairs Office and the senate's Academic Affairs Committee. There will be continuing discussion on the scope of UCAPC's charge, which originated in the senate. Any faculty members who have concerns about the implications of RCM for research and public service should give input to Tony Tagliaferro with a copy to the senate chair, so that these items can be included in the RCM review process. Faculty are also asked to review RCM as a whole and send any concerns to the senate chair, because the Agenda Committee plans to make a statement at a RCM review forum on February 24 at 3:00 p.m. in the MUB Theatre 2. Chris Shea and the senate program coordinator will send the current schedule of the RCM review meetings to the senators.

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

V. Discovery Program – Joanne Curran-Celentano distributed a document which includes the time table of the proposed phase-in schedule for the Discovery Program components. In October of 2003, the Faculty Senate endorsed a Discovery Program implementation plan with phased-in components and evaluation of each, prior to a decision on final approval of that component by the Faculty Senate. The program is currently in "year minus two" of the plan. That the program is in the creation stage and does not yet formally exist will be made clearer on the program's website. The Discovery Program Advisory Committee meets weekly. This year the director was appointed, the committee constituted, and faculty were invited to submit inquiry courses for review. Under the Discovery Program, each student would take both a first-year seminar course

designed to introduce the process of inquiry and research and also a revised composition course in the opposite semester.

There is funding for course development. Twenty-two courses are running now, with a goal of fifty expected by next spring. Faculty are encouraged to create Discovery Program courses or to redefine existing courses if that is appropriate. The Discovery Program Advisory Committee has been working closely with the Honors Program. The committee is also setting up a knowledge framework for the discovery categories and hopes to have that completed by spring break. The committee intends to work with colleges and departments to evaluate the current general education courses as to whether they could become Discovery Program courses. The committee plans to have information on the needed forms and procedures by spring break.

Students will be required to complete courses in ten discovery content areas, and some discovery courses may satisfy the requirements of two categories. The committee wants to help faculty build assessment into the courses as well as into the program as a whole. A number of faculty-development activities such as workshops are available. The Discovery Program has been working to develop appropriate budget models. The administration has committed to one-time development funds and to working towards a RCM model to support the Discovery Program.

John Ernest said that the university dialogue component of the Discovery Program is a work in progress. Many universities have the first-year students read and discuss a book, but the UNH Discovery Program is considering something different: choosing a topic, getting position statements from faculty across campus, and facilitating dialogue, debate and reasoned discourse on that topic. The discussions with students would be linked with courses and with the residence halls. There would be small group discussions and one large, public “town hall” meeting for the whole community. Some version of this plan will be piloted next year and part of the following year and then go to the Faculty Senate for a decision on approval of that component.

A professor expressed concern that the intellectual level of students in his general education course has declined over the years and also that some students are not taking the courses planned for their first year in that year. John Ernest said that the committee is considering how the activities on campus could be better coordinated and how to set the standards high from the beginning of the program. Inquiry courses will require scholarly investigation and research, and faculty can establish and maintain the standards. A faculty member said that offering too many inquiry courses before they are required could lead to low enrollment. Joanne Curran-Celentano replied that all inquiry courses count as general education credits. That information is on the website, and Judy Spiller has been working with the Advising Center. A professor asked when general education courses will cease to count if they are not re-approved, and John Ernest replied that this would depend on a vote by the Faculty Senate. Faculty are invited to send input on Discovery Program implementation to Joanne Curran-Celentano.

VI. Scholarship guidelines – Faculty are concerned about a change in the university’s scholarship guidelines so that, unless a department-controlled scholarship specifies that it is not need based, the university will consider the scholarship to be need based. This means that, if a department makes such an award, the amount will be deducted from the student’s financial aid package and thus will not give the student any extra funds. By this ruling passed by the deans

but without faculty consultation, the ability of departments to award extra funding was limited. However, if the department has a memorandum of understanding that mentions merit, the scholarship will not be automatically deducted from the student's financial aid. A senator said that departments know their students better than anybody and that this autonomy should not be taken from the departments and the funding taken from the students. Also, only students who have completed the financial aid forms are eligible for the university's financial aid package. The new guidelines were expected to be in force for the aid applications that are due this March.

Stacy VanDeveer moved and Jeff Salloway seconded that these scholarship guidelines should not be implemented this year and should await review and approval by the Faculty Senate. This motion passed unanimously. The senate chair asked Chris Shea to bring this issue as a charge to the senate's Finance and Administration Committee, for further investigation as to the facts and cascading consequences.

VII. Honors Program – The chair of the senate's Academic Affairs Committee said that he appreciates the Honors Program director meeting with his committee regularly and presenting information to the senate. The committee worked with her to set up a series of understandings about what changes should be brought to the senate's Academic Affairs Committee and to the Faculty Senate in advance and what could be communicated to the senate after the fact. Two proposals for changes to the Honors Program will be reviewed soon by the Academic Affairs Committee and then by the Faculty Senate. Regarding funding for the program, last spring the Faculty Senate passed a motion affirming its interest in the quality and performance of university-wide academic programs, such as the Honors Program, that do not fall under the purview of individual colleges. Michael Kalinowski added that Alan Ray sees his role as an advocate for those programs. The chair of the senate's Finance and Administration Committee said that these matters have been discussed in the RCM review; but the Faculty Senate should continue to be sensitive to the fact that these programs will be at risk until the funding is set. Perhaps the senate should consider a motion on that issue soon.

VIII. Campus Planning Committee charges – Stacy Vandever said that the committee's charges are to (1) send an observer to meetings of the Space Allocation, Repair and Renovation Committee; (2) track the Master Plan implementation and communicate with the Office of Campus Planning on issues which arise, providing recommendations to the senate on those issues; (3) initiate a "cross walk" analysis of the relationship between the Master Plan and the implementation of the Academic Plan; and (4) track implementation of initiatives to conserve energy under the fiscal emergency strategy, in order to identify educational and programmatic impacts and opportunities. He said that the full master plan will be available on the website within a few weeks. The senate's Campus Planning Committee has asked for assessment of whether the university has enough classrooms and other facilities which will be required by the Discovery Program. Also, is there equity in the choice of which campus buildings are high on the list for repair and renovation? The buildings at the top of the list are scientific buildings. Another issue is faculty housing for junior faculty, which is a long-standing problem. Faculty are invited to send their input on these matters to Stacy VanDeveer.

A faculty member said that many years ago he had bought the land for his house, from the university at below market value. He added that the university has a great deal of land and that

the fact that faculty are increasingly dispersed changes their ability to interact with students. He said that faculty housing is a key issue, especially for recruitment. A professor suggested that the university should have a village of students and young faculty, to create a sense of community, and that there should be a car-free campus.

IX. New business – A senator asked that faculty read an article, from the February 4 Chronicle of Higher Education, that discusses student evaluations and how to make them more useful. The article also says that the drop-add period should be shortened because it disrupts classes. Another professor mentioned an article which says that evaluations of teaching seen but not heard were nearly the same as evaluations of teaching that was both seen and heard.

X. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned.