

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
2004-05 FACULTY SENATE

APRIL 4, 2005

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Broussard, Burger, Collins, Drake, Herold, Leichtman, Nagy, Powell, Sheriff, Smith and Tagliaferro. Excused were Emison, Gumprecht, Kenefick, Laue, Lewis, and Trubowitz. Jenna Coulp-Yu was a guest observer.

II. Communications from the chair – The senate chair said that the senate-approved statement on RCM concerns has been transmitted to the RCM Review Committee via Bruce Mallory, Candace Corvey and Chris Shea and that a copy was sent to the senators as well. The senate chair and vice chair, the provost, Jim Varn and the COLSA dean met to discuss faculty governance and maintaining the faculty role in choosing department chairs and program directors. The dean agreed to respond in writing, and the senate chair will inform the senate when she receives that communication. The senate chair said that she has sent to the senators a formal statement on how the Faculty Senate approaches the process of shared governance communication and consultation. In addition, the provost has written a draft statement and is expected to send it to all faculty this week. There will be some procedural changes regarding the commencement and honors convocation ceremonies, and she is trying to arrange for that information to be presented at a senate meeting in the near future. Concern has been expressed about the need for extended university discussion on both first amendment rights and civil discourse. The University Writing Committee asks that faculty send input to Joanne Curran-Celentano, on plans to reform the requirements of the Writing Program.

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

IV. Thompson School renumbering – Don Quigley reminded the senators that last year a motion on Thompson School renumbering was proposed and tabled by the Faculty Senate. This motion is not on the senate floor at this time. Sam Shore, who is chair of the senate's University Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee, said that UCAPC is addressing, from a university-wide perspective, the two motions passed by the COLSA Academic Affairs Committee and also certain cross-university impacts of the renumbering of Thompson School courses. Today's progress report by UCAPC states the COLSA Academic Affairs Committee motions and the history of discussions and motions on Thompson School numbering and expresses some concerns about the renumbering issue. UCAPC has not finished its deliberations and will present further information at the next senate meeting. Faculty may access the UCAPC website at <http://euclid.unh.edu/~sds/UCAPC/> to review all the relevant documents.

The COLSA Academic Affairs Committee has passed two motions:

Motion 1: that the Thompson School of Applied Science courses follow the UNH course numbering guidelines for courses taken for baccalaureate credit and renumber Thompson School of Applied Science courses with 400-499 numeric designation. Any exception to this numbering system will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by participating departments and subject to approval by the COLSA Academic Affairs Committee.

Motion 2: that the Academic Policy 05.33 (fs) Thompson School Courses be amended to read: Baccalaureate and Associate in Arts degree candidates may take Thompson School courses for credit with the following stipulations:

1. The TSAS course must be transferable to UNH at the time it is taken.
2. Grades received in TSAS courses will be recorded on the student's transcript but will not affect or be included in the student's GPA.
3. TSAS courses may not be used for general education, writing intensive, or foreign language requirements. TSAS courses may be used for major or minor requirements only if specifically approved on a course-by-course basis by the department granting the major or minor and when the student meets the usual minimal grade requirements of that program.

UNH has only a few 300-level courses, such as some high-school-level mathematics courses which do not count for baccalaureate credit. Currently, TSAS students may take, with approval, 400-level courses and enter BA/BS degree programs as transfer students. BA/BS students may take up to sixteen credits of TSAS courses, and the grades are shown on the transcript but do not affect the grade point average. Those courses may not be used to satisfy general education or writing requirements and may satisfy major or minor requirements only with the approval of the major or minor department or program. If the COLSA Academic Affairs Committee motion were followed, 200-level courses would be renumbered at the 400 level; and baccalaureate degree students would no longer be restricted to taking no more than sixteen credits of Thompson School courses.

UCAPC brought up a number of concerns about the rationale for renumbering and the primary mission of the Thompson School, course equivalency, accreditation, course duplication, pass/fail, and possible ambiguity in the positions of the COLSA dean and the COLSA Academic Affairs Committee. Thompson School students comprise one third of the COLSA students, and the Thompson School is profitable. Faculty are asked to review the information available and give input to Sam Shore.

V. Diversity, minority recruitment and retention – The twenty-four member Diversity Strategic Planning Task Force prepared a university-wide diversity plan for presentation to the senate's Academic Affairs Committee. The plan includes seven strategies with action steps and specific persons responsible for each strategy, as well as outcome assessment and annual reports. The strategies cover organizational structure, recruitment and retention among faculty, students and staff, enhanced integration of diversity in curricular and co-curricular activities, community climate issues, and outreach and engagement. The plan will soon be available on the web at <http://www.unh.edu/diversity>. Paul McNamara said that the senate's Academic Affairs Committee approved the plan and unanimously recommends that the Faculty Senate adopt the motion as follows:

Whereas on March 8, 2004, the Faculty Senate passed the "Statement on Diversity as a Compelling Interest" (<http://unhinfo.unh.edu/fac-senate/pub/Diversity-VIII-M8.htm>) and has thus gone on record as committed to the improvement of diversity at UNH, and

Whereas the senate in that document not only recognized the need to promote diversity and the rationale for doing so, but further noted the special challenges our university faces in achieving a diverse community, and

Whereas we now have before us, for the first time, a comprehensive plan with systemic reinforcers, for the promotion of diversity at UNH, and

Whereas the senate desires not only to see diversity efforts promoted but to be engaged in and contributing to those efforts,

Be it resolved that:

The Faculty Senate endorses the seven strategies of the Diversity Strategic Task Force Plan, as well as the vision expressed in the introduction to that plan; and that

The Faculty Senate will appoint two senators each year to serve as the senate representatives on the Diversity Council for that year and will charge that pair of senators to report back to the senate on diversity plans, efforts, and progress that year; moreover

The Faculty Senate hereby gratefully acknowledges the leadership demonstrated by Provost Bruce Mallory and by the new Vice Provost for Diversity, Wanda Mitchell, in promoting and enhancing UNH's efforts to build a more diverse community; and the senate also gratefully acknowledges the considerable efforts and dedication of the diverse group of colleagues (student, faculty, and staff) that constituted the Diversity Strategic Planning Task Force, as well as the many guests who appeared to consult and aid them in their endeavors over the past year.

The Academic Plan includes diversity as an integral component, and a vice provost of diversity was appointed in January. The provost initiative announced a focus on faculty hiring of racial and ethnic minorities and also women in certain technical areas. Please consult your colleagues and send input to Paul McNamara.

VI. Article 3 – Terry Savage, who is chair of the Ad-hoc Committee on Article 3, said that the committee was charged with reviewing Article 3 of the Constitution of the UNH Faculty Senate and has tried to craft a proposal that (1) clarifies the role of the senate as a representative body empowered to act on all matters within the faculty's purview, (2) provides the faculty at large with a practical means of exercising its right to override the resolutions and motions of the senate, and (3) provides reasonable protection from abuses that could undermine the normal operations of the senate. Seeking the advice of the senate, the ad-hoc committee provided a discussion draft of a motion to amend the UNH Faculty Senate constitution:

Moved: to delete the current Article 3 of the Constitution of the University of New Hampshire Faculty Senate ("Referral of fundamental issues to the faculty") and to replace said section with the following:

**3. Faculty referendum on senate actions.** Any motion or resolution acted upon by the Faculty Senate is subject to a referendum by the faculty of the University of New Hampshire. Any issue may go to referendum upon petition of at least twenty percent of the tenure-track faculty, provided that such petition is made within 45 days of the senate action in question (excluding vacations). The petition shall be delivered to the chair of the senate. The senate chair shall cause transcripts of all relevant senate discussion of the issue to be distributed to all faculty. The chair will arrange for a vote of the faculty by ballot. Faculty members will have not less than two weeks and not more than four weeks to consider the issue and complete ballots. The majority vote shall be binding provided that at least fifty percent of the faculty submit ballots. In the event of a participation rate of less than fifty percent or a tie vote, the original senate action shall stand.

The current Article 3 reads as follows:

**3. Referral of fundamental issues to the faculty.** Decisions by the Faculty Senate that envision fundamental changes to current practice must be ratified by the tenure-track 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, a faculty meeting to ratify the decision will be called by the Faculty Senate chair. This meeting will be conducted by the procedural rules of the Faculty Senate.

The members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Article 3 believe that this provision should be replaced because:

1. It undercuts the authority of the senate as the representative governing body for the faculty.
  - a. Instead of providing a mechanism for *overriding* a senate decision, the article is now interpretable as requiring *endorsement* of all “fundamental” senate decisions. This creates the presumption that the senate is not empowered to act independently on matters of “such fundamental importance.” We reviewed the Faculty Senate Bylaws of several other universities (University of Vermont, Central Connecticut State University, University of Maine, University of Maine at Farmington, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Washington State University, and University of Hartford). None had a comparable provision. Instead, all used the power of faculty review of senate actions as an override.
  - b. The proposed replacement preserves the right of the faculty to challenge decisions of the senate, while acknowledging the senate’s role as the representative voice of the faculty on all matters within its purview. The new article 3 eliminates the reference to “fundamental changes”, thereby acknowledging the right of the faculty to seek a referendum on any senate motion or resolution.
2. The current Article 3 makes it possible for a minority of senate members to refer, to the faculty as a whole, any action of the majority of the senate simply by declaring the action to involve a “fundamental change.”

- a. None of the other senate constitutions we reviewed included a provision for part of the senate itself to invoke general faculty action on a senate decision.
  - b. The proposed change shifts this role exclusively to the faculty. We believe that 20% of the faculty is a large enough percentage, to assure that the issue is a significant concern, but small enough to be practically invoked (approximately 135).
3. The requirement in Article 3 for a general faculty meeting to ratify senate action on matters of fundamental importance is impractical. The proposed article substitutes a ballot system for a vote at a general faculty meeting.
- a. Only 88 faculty members of the 331 required for a quorum attended the faculty meeting called in response to the first implementation of Article 3 last year. We do not know the reasons for the low (13%) faculty turnout. We do know that it will not be possible to find a time and place at which all faculty could attend a general faculty meeting. Some faculty (e.g. Manchester) will be disadvantaged by distance, others will have scheduling conflicts, and all can be affected by weather conditions. A ballot system will make it possible for all (or nearly all) to participate. The provision for distribution of the minutes of senate discussion is a practical way of assuring that those who vote are aware of the issues involved. The motion also provides a period of at least two weeks for interested parties to share their views.
  - b. Sallie Ricker has reported to the committee on the logistical challenges and expense of arranging last year's general faculty meeting. She notes more than twenty specific tasks and \$495 in expenses. In short, arranging for such a meeting is a time-consuming task, and our experience to date with faculty attendance is not encouraging.

Some senators expressed support for the new wording, but one senator said that some issues debated by the Faculty Senate can be very complex and that fully informing the faculty could be difficult. Another professor expressed concern that the phrase "provided that such petition is made within 45 days of the senate action in question (excluding vacation)" allows too much time when summer vacation is included. The ad-hoc committee decided not to specify the ballot method, because circumstances could change and thus it seemed better to allow the senate chair, in consultation with the Agenda Committee and staff, to decide on the most appropriate method at the time. Since the motion would amend the constitution, the issue will come up for a vote at the next senate meeting; and a two-thirds majority will be needed for the motion to pass.

VII. Motions on the Honors Program – **Michael Kalinowski on behalf of the senate's Academic Affairs Committee presented motion one as follows:**

**The University Honors Committee voted to eliminate the current designation of "University Honors." This designation involves 6-7 general education courses and 4-8 credit thesis. We would seek to make this change beginning with the class of 2009.**

**The rationale is as follows:**

**The designation was instituted at a time when many departments did not have Honors in Major programs. Now, however, this designation allows students to graduate with Honors without doing advanced work in their fields of specialization. We believe the designation is outdated in the current context of the university.**

In answer to a question about dual majors, Michael Kalinowski said that having the change occur in 2009 would allow for the development of programs for those who might be impacted. Also, the motion does not preclude the granting of exceptions. **Motion one passed with no nays and one abstention.**

**Michael Kalinowski on behalf of the senate's Academic Affairs Committee presented motion two as follows, and it passed unanimously:**

**The University Honors Program embraces the values of Discovery, Engagement, and Community that are articulated in the Academic Plan of the University, and we affirm our commitment to provide academically ambitious, motivated, and able students with a coherent, challenging academic experience and a strong sense of intellectual community. We seek students who actively commit to those ideals: they demonstrate, and continue to demonstrate, excellence at the highest level; they embrace intellectual life with energy and a sense of adventure; and they share the desire to pursue their academic work in diverse venues, communities, and contexts. Essential to our effort is a community characterized by active cultural exchange, one that values a range of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives, and which is broadly representative with regards to race, ethnicity, gender, economic background, first-generation college students, geographical region, specific talents, etc.**

VIII. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned.