

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2005-06 FACULTY SENATE

MARCH 6, 2006

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Burger, Frankel, Kaen, Kallianpur, Lugalla, Macieski, Morgan, Robertson, Sharkey, Smith and Tenczar. Becker, Brown, Givan, Haskins, Jacobs, Petty and Quinn were excused. The president and the provost were guests.

II. Remarks by and questions to the president – The president said that it has come to her attention that a commercial website is publishing the grades given by UNH professors in their courses. Since at least the year 2000, the university has provided this information after a decision by the legal counsel regarding right-to-know issues. The president said that the university is now revisiting this decision, to see if it may violate the privacy of faculty members. The university's attorney will come to the Agenda Committee meeting on Friday to discuss this issue. In addition, the Student Senate has passed a motion calling for the student evaluations of teaching to be made available on the web via Blackboard. The president said that she has advised the students and the university's Computer and Information Services that the administration has referred the students' request to the Faculty Senate for a decision, since the matter is a policy issue. Moreover, the president's three commissions which deal with minority concerns would like a question to be added to the student evaluations of teaching, about whether the class has an inclusive environment. Since there are requests to change both the purpose of the evaluation and also the questions, faculty may want a thorough review of the process and the questions. The current questions have both qualitative and quantitative components which should not be separated.

The president said that a House of Representatives' bill was revised to a form which is more acceptable to the university and which proposes to tax town, county, state and university properties which are leased for non-governmental or non-educational purposes. The bill has not been passed by the state senate. The New England Center and the bookstore at the university provide some services to the public, and also the university's outdoor swimming pool is used a great deal by local citizens from the town, as are some other university facilities. Another motion under consideration by the state legislature wants UNH to have a varsity baseball team and also a women's softball team, but the motion does not provide funding for those programs. The president will restate the fact that the UNH Athletics Department has a projected million dollar per year deficit which must be stopped. Further information on this matter is available on the Athletics Department website. The university will honor its commitments to scholarships and will help students to make the transition. Students have agreed to an increase in their athletics fee, with a promise of no more than a 5% increase for each of the next three years.

A senator said that she supports the university finding funds for health insurance for graduate students. The Central Budget Committee has made that recommendation, and the Deans' Council has approved it. The administration believes that it would be wise not to attach this core commitment to any one funding source. Although departments would normally send out letters to graduate students soon, the university does not have a provider for graduate student health insurance at this time. The university needs to be able to recruit good-quality graduate students. Whenever possible, faculty should include graduate student stipends in grant proposals.

III. Remarks by and questions to the provost – The provost said that two years ago he asked the associate dean of COLSA to become the dean for a three year term. Since that term will be completed at the end of the next academic year and since deans' searches are lengthy, the provost recently informed the dean that the provost will open a search next year in order to provide an opportunity for COLSA faculty to participate in the selection of their dean. The COLSA Executive Committee supports conducting a national search during the coming academic year; the current dean is eligible to be a candidate. He will continue to serve at least until the end of his current term. Each department chair will be asked to nominate faculty for the provost's consideration as members of the search committee, which the provost will appoint to be a balanced and diverse group. In addition, the administration may invite a member of the college's External Advisory Committee to be a non-voting member of the search committee. The committee will be co-chaired by a COLSA faculty member and a dean of one of the other colleges. The committee will prepare a position description and recruitment strategies by the end of the summer, screen applicants in early fall, and conduct on-campus interviews in the spring semester. In addition, COLSA has had an interim associate dean for research. The COLSA Executive Committee feels strongly that the search for an associate dean should be deferred until the new dean is chosen and until there is more information about the budget of the Agricultural Experiment Station.

The provost said that he is currently reviewing faculty promotion and tenure cases and that there are more disputed cases than usual. Sometimes the feedback from a faculty member's annual reviews does not correlate with the sixth year review, and that is a problem. The provost recommends that faculty, department chairs and deans read a document recently distributed by the provost and published by ACE, AAUP, and United Educators, discussing consistency and candor in faculty reviews. The provost will check into copyright rules to see if that document could be posted on the Faculty Senate website. A senator said that, in his department, annual reports are voted on and that a majority vote gives a positive review but that a positive promotion and tenure review requires few dissenters. He suggested that the annual reviews should include the number of voters for and against the review. The provost replied that the process for annual reviews varies in each department. He understands that the department chair collects faculty input and makes a report to the dean who gives the review. The faculty contract does not require any particular process and just states that the dean, in consultation with the department chair, will provide the review; and therefore there can be variation in the process. The college/school and the department need to be better informed about their respective standards. The department's promotion and tenure standards and policy are attached to each tenure proposal. There is a lot of variation among UNH departments on how many of the tenured faculty members participate in the review, but the department chair always writes the report to the dean. The provost said that many departments have three-year cumulative reviews and that faculty whose departments do not have them could try to get their department to institute such reviews. A senator suggested that there should be a university-wide procedure for annual reviews, in order to make the process fairer. The provost replied that this is a faculty governance issue.

A senator suggested that the deans write annual letters of review and that those letters be compared with the promotion and tenure letter from the dean. The provost said that he is discussing with the deans the need to be candid with the faculty being reviewed. A senator said that there is little agreement among departments on the role of research faculty and what they are required to do. The provost said that research faculty are required to supervise graduate students doing masters or Ph.D. work and that this requirement is part of the job description posted on the academic affairs website.

A professor said that the requirements for promotion and tenure are so vague that the interpretation of the requirements is not clear. The provost said that annual reviews should be candid about areas needing attention and then show how the concern was dealt with in subsequent yearly reviews, thus creating a more effective tenure package that the college would find credible. The provost asked that promotion and tenure dossiers provide objective, critical analysis rather than simply be advocacy statements. A senator said that, since annual reviews are part of the faculty member's permanent record, there is fear that putting something negative in the report would damage the candidate's possibility of success. The provost replied that showing the developmental progress would create a stronger case for tenure.

IV. Remarks by and questions to the chair – The senate chair said that CEPS senators are reviewing the CEPS shared governance issue and will report to the senate soon. Also, the COLSA Programmatic Displacement Committee, a seven member group whose three members appointed by the Faculty Senate are Professors Karen Graham, Deanna Wood and David Richman, will meet with the president and provost on March 14 to present the committee's report. In addition, the senate chair said that the senate's Student Affairs Committee has looked at study time per credit, which is an enormously complex issue beyond the scope of a senate standing committee. The matter will be tabled for now.

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

VI. Barriers to sponsored research at UNH – The chair of the senate's Research and Public Service Committee said that the Office of Sponsored Research underwent an external review of its operations in 2003. In light of that review's recommendations, OSR developed an action plan and is undergoing certain changes. The Research and Public Service Committee recommended to Vice President Aber that one of its members serve as a permanent member on an OSR advisory committee developed as part of the action plan. That RPSC recommendation has been implemented. A second recommendation by the senate committee was that a survey of all UNH faculty be conducted by the Office of Research and Public Service, to explore barriers to doing sponsored research at UNH; and Vice President Aber agreed to sponsor and fund such a survey by the UNH Survey Center. The electronic survey was based on topics identified by two focus groups of UNH researchers and faculty. Over 1000 faculty were asked to respond to the survey, and 513 did respond. Faculty saw time constraints and teaching load as the most significant barriers to research. About half of the faculty said that lack of support for graduate students was a barrier to research. Most participants view their colleagues as committed to research, although WSBE respondents perceive a low commitment by their colleagues to research. Faculty would like better support for the recruitment, funding and retention of graduate assistants and clear statements regarding expectations for faculty research. Faculty also want more release time to write proposals or research findings; and they would like a safety net for researchers and more support for equipment purchases, maintenance costs and laboratory space. Also desirable were decreased teaching loads, establishing a university-wide strategic plan for research, and improved tenure-track opportunities for research faculty. Less than half the respondents were satisfied with the way UNH supports sponsored research. Most respondents were positive or neutral about the Office of Sponsored Research. However, some faculty expressed concern about OSR being too bureaucratic, too focused on the bottom line, understaffed, inconsistent, and not knowledgeable about funding sources.

A senator said that the administration in this area is cumbersome, staff turnover is too great, and exit interviews should be done for the staff. Professor Mathur said that intellectual property views vary among government agencies and many industries, and he asked how much has been received in royalty payments on campus during the last five years from private industry and from government. He expressed concern that there is no infrastructure which can follow whether a company is infringing on patent rights held by the university or its faculty. The chair of the senate's Research and Public Service Committee asked that senator to send his concerns in writing and said that the committee chair would then pass them on to Vice President Aber and the Office of Sponsored Research.

VII. Library Funding – The proposed new responsibility center management formula contains substantial changes to the way the library would be funded. Under the old formula, the library's main source of funding was state appropriations (76.7% in 2005). Since state appropriations have not increased at the same rate as inflation and since journal prices have increased faster than inflation, the library has been able to fund less and less out of its budget and began canceling journals last year. Under the new formula which would provide a more stable source of funding, the state appropriation would provide much less of the library's budget; and tuition and indirect cost returns would provide about 30% of the library budget, with about 40% coming from the general assessment from units. **The senate's Library Committee moved that the senate endorse this change to the budget formula for the university library. The motion passed unanimously.**

In 2005, the library began identifying journals for cancellation, based on the perceived cost per use. Journals estimated as costing more than \$75 per use were identified; the community was given an opportunity to comment; and then the library made a decision on which journals to drop. Journals no longer available through subscription are available through Infotrieve or interlibrary loan, which take between one day and four weeks for delivery. 28% of the cancelled journals were for CEPS and constituted 75% of the cost of journals cancelled. 45% of the cancelled journals were for COLA and constituted only 7% of the cost of journals cancelled. The number of uses was defined as the number of on-line hits plus the number of journals left on the carts in the library. However, journals used and replaced on the shelves by the user were not counted. A professor said that he uses a journal frequently and needs it for a large grant, but he always put the journal back on the shelf himself. He sent to the library a letter explaining the need for the journal, but the subscription was cancelled anyway. It is important to consider the revenue that the journal facilitates. Another professor said that cutting certain journals has a very negative effect on teaching students how to do research. His course is taught intermittently, and so the journals used for the class may not have shown up during the identification period.

The senate's Library Committee recommends to the library that journals with more than one hundred uses annually should be kept, even if the cost per use is high, that journals that UNH faculty publish in regularly should be kept, and that the length of time needed to obtain an article through Infotrieve should be considered, as well as cost, for moderate-to-high-use journals before a journal is canceled. The Library Committee recommends to the faculty that faculty should (1) carefully review the list of journals posted for cancellation and tell the library if there is a strong case for keeping a journal, (2) use the available services such as Infotrieve so that the true need for a particular journal will be measured, and (3) never put journals back on the shelf because their use would then not be counted. Today's meeting was adjourned.