

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2006-07 FACULTY SENATE

JANUARY 22, 2007

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Afolayan, Balling, Burger, Calculator, Carr, Morgan, Robertson, Schiller and Walsh. Excused were Ament, Bartos, Brown, Brunet, Haskins, and Slomba.

II. Remarks by and questions to the chair – Prior to work-to-rule, the Faculty Senate approved co-sponsorship along with student government and the administration, of a spring forum on free speech on campus. That forum will be held on February 14, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. in the Squamscott Room of Holloway Commons. The provost has asked what role the Faculty Senate will play, and the senate chair has told him that the senate voted to co-sponsor but that current work to-rule does not permit the senate leadership to participate in setting up the forum. This is to inform the senators of that forum and its time and place and to invite senators and other faculty to attend if they care to do so.

Vice President for Student Affairs Mark Rubinstein said in an email that he was assembling a committee to examine the issue of classroom availability. He said that, although the unexpectedly high level of freshman enrollment is not expected to continue indefinitely, the process of refurbishing buildings has put a premium on classroom availability. This situation is especially acute for medium-sized classrooms. He has invited Faculty Senate representation on this committee, and the senate should decide if it chooses to participate.

The senate chair has asked the provost verbally and in writing for the final draft of the proposal for EOS and also the draft of the University Institutes Policy which was in place when the final draft of the EOS proposal was made, and we await receipt of those documents. The senate program coordinator developed a detailed time line of senate interaction in the deliberations on the University Institutes Policy and the EOS proposal. Authority for approval of institutes and for EOS is a matter of shared governance. A senator said that his department has a poorly defined relationship with the EOS institute and has asked for the EOS institute proposal. He added that the dean has also requested it. The senate chair will follow up on this matter. [The documents were received on 1/26/07.]

At the next Agenda Committee meeting, the committee will consider the suggestion of establishing a policy for quasi-judicial procedures. In the event that the senate should consider a motion of censure or lack of confidence, what safeguards ought to be in place regarding due process? The Agenda Committee will also consider the formation of an ad-hoc committee to add to the senate's orientation materials a restatement of the procedure for reviewing proposed university policies.

Professor Glenn Shwaery has brought up a suggestion for the development of a homeland security curriculum at UNH. Faculty met with Dr. Stanley Supinski of the Naval Postgraduate School, where there is a Master's Degree in Security Studies, and with Christopher Pope, Director of NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management, and Dennis Treece, Director of Corporate Security for the Massachusetts Port Authority, to discuss challenges in security management and the hiring and training of security executives. When suggestions for new curricula become formal proposals, they should be sent to the senate's Academic Affairs Committee for review.

III. Discovery Program – The senate chair and vice chair and the Academic Affairs Committee chair have met with the Discovery Program team of Joanne Curran-Celentano, Cliff Brown and Michelle Holt-Shannon to discuss the Discovery Program. At that meeting, it was made quite apparent that the program will not be implemented in academic year 2007-08. Time will be needed for senate deliberation and revision and then a senate motion to implement or not to implement the Discovery Program categories. Should the senate vote to implement, this will be followed by necessary changes to the UNH catalog and web-sites, departmental staffing and budgets, and time and room scheduling and an intense period of instruction for advisors and faculty about the implications of the changes. Therefore, the implementation phase will not be brief. It was the assessment of those at the meeting with the Discovery Program team that, if there is not senate action on the Discovery Program categories within the next ninety days, the program will not be implementable for the academic year 2008-09. This conclusion was delivered to the provost and discussed by the Agenda Committee which deliberated at length, considered the work-to-rule motions passed by the senate, and declined to ask the senate for any further action at this time. The Discovery Program 444 courses are progressing, the dialogue component is in place, and planning was in progress; but according to the “phased-in implementation plan”, the Discovery Program categories and the capstone component cannot become requirements without a Faculty Senate vote approving them.

IV. Scholarship procedures – The senate chair had asked Vice President for Student Affairs Mark Rubinstein to give confirmation on the procedures the university has put in place to assure compliance with the senate and administration agreement on the awarding of scholarships. He replied with a copy of the policy and noted that “the policy reflects a distinction between those awards where a faculty committee has traditionally made the award (but where neither need nor merit is specified) and those awards where the awarding has been done by the financial aid office and where this award has traditionally been treated as need-based.” He added that he is working on creating a complete list of these awards and will work with the Office of Financial Aid to do so over the course of the next month, on a case-by-case basis. If there is any uncertainty among the faculty, he will review on an ad hoc basis.

The scholarship procedure states that “All department gift/endowment scholarship accounts that reference ‘need’ in the Memorandum of Understanding will be treated in accordance with the guidelines established for University and Federal need-based financial aid. Department gift/endowment scholarship accounts decided by a faculty committee that do not specify ‘need’ or ‘merit’ will be used as merit awards. The remaining gift/endowment scholarship accounts that do not specify ‘need’ or ‘merit’ will be used as need based awards. Only students who have a demonstrated financial need based on University guidelines will be eligible to receive need based awards.” A senator expressed concern that scholarships formerly controlled by academic departments have been taken over by the deans, even though the memoranda of understanding stated that the scholarships should be awarded by faculty. The senate chair will follow up on obtaining the list of scholarships awarded by departments and others.

V. Provost’s letter – In the Agenda Committee, a question was raised as to how Faculty Senate leaders should respond to the provost’s letter which stated “In my own view, participation in shared governance is part of the work of faculty, not a matter of discretion contingent upon temporal circumstances or individual interpretations of one’s obligations. I feel like I have lost a dance partner.” In the Academic Leadership Council, formerly known as the Deans’ Council, the senate chair said that the Faculty Senate continues to meet and to pursue an agenda of its own design but

that the senate passed motions in October and November stating that, during this period of work to rule, the senate will hold in abeyance most academic decisions and expects the university administration to take no actions on all those areas over which the faculty has primary or co-equal responsibility. The Faculty Senate is the legislative body that reviews and develops policy concerned with the academic mission of the university. The senate made its own decision on how to respond to work to rule, and there was no attempt at inappropriate influence by union leadership. Today some senators said that the statement in the provost's letter is incorrect and inappropriate. The provost was present when the senate chair originally gave the above response at the Academic Leadership Council meeting; and also the senate chair's response at that meeting was sent to the provost as part of the Agenda Committee minutes; and the provost will receive the minutes of today's senate discussion as well. Faculty are doing their jobs in an appropriate manner under the current circumstances, and the senate chair's response to the provost's letter is clear and sufficient.

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

VII. Presidential search – Although they were well qualified, the two presidential candidates who came to campus may not have been an excellent fit for UNH; and the search committee will meet on Friday to start a new search effort. There is a chance that the search may conclude by July 1, but it may take longer. A senator asked if the decision about the two candidates was made without sufficient faculty input or against the search committee's recommendation. The senate vice chair said that he does not think so but will have more information after the search committee's meeting on Friday. Previous search committees have operated in a very similar manner to this one. A senator suggested that candidates may be chosen on the basis of their likelihood of encouraging or not encouraging change at the university and that such a choice should be made publicly with a great deal of faculty input. The senate chair said that the Faculty Senate entered that discussion this summer with visioning seminars on what the university should become. The notes of those sessions were transcribed and sent to the president, provost and chancellor. Now, however, many senate charges have been postponed until the end of work to rule. The presidential candidates had ideas about the process of change but said that they would expect to spend considerable time exploring with the university constituents what the practical details should be. Successful presidential candidates should be accustomed to operating by means of shared governance.

A senator said that there is tension between candidates' needs for anonymity and the university's needs, and he asked if it would be possible to invite future candidates to participate in an anonymous email forum. The senate vice chair will present that idea to the search committee. At the next senate meeting, he will give an update on the 1/26/07 meeting of the search committee. Consultants are continuing to work with the search committee and are being paid by the university system.

VIII. Athletic-like scholarships for national merit scholars – David Bachrach moved and David Feldman seconded that we encourage the university administration to make a commitment to support excellence among the undergraduates by offering the same package of scholarships and benefits to national merit scholars as the university offers to scholarship athletes. Any national merit scholar who comes to UNH should receive this package of benefits as long as the student maintains a 3.0 grade point average on a year-to-year basis. This would avoid having a student lose a scholarship after dropping under a 3.0 for a single semester. The senate chair said that this proposal will go as a charge to the senate's Academic Affairs Committee and Student Affairs Committee for review.

IX. COLSA reorganization – Last Friday a formal recommendation for the COLSA strategic plan and structural reorganization was sent to the faculty.

X. Pick-a-prof.com – Last year students asked if student evaluations of faculty and their courses could be made available electronically rather than in the library in hard copy. The Faculty Senate declined to approve that, pending a review of that issue and several related matters. However, the university counsel said that, if the university collects data of this kind, the university must share that data with whoever requests it. The student evaluations of faculty are now on pick-a-prof.com for a fee. A professor suggested that, given that fact, faculty should also allow the information to be put on the university's "blackboard" electronic system or that the Faculty Senate should give further consideration to the whole issue and its related concerns. Perhaps the university should stop collecting the data centrally. At the least, faculty should be aware that the student evaluations of their courses are available to anyone on the web. The senate chair said that these matters continue as committee charges for review after work to rule ends.

XI. Adjournment – Today's meeting was adjourned.