

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2006-07 FACULTY SENATE

DECEMBER 11, 2006

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Burger, Calculator, Carr, Chasteen, Graham, Kistler, Morgan, Quigley, Rebellon, Reid, Schiller, Tenczar and Walsh. Excused were Ament, Becker, Berndtson, Brown, Brunet, Dorfsman, Jacobs, Jolley and Thomas.

II. Remarks by and questions to the chair – Today is the last day of the Dimond Library exhibit entitled “Unplugged”. The provost has requested that a member of the Faculty Senate’s Library Committee be identified to serve on the search committee for the next library dean. The Agenda Committee believes that the Faculty Senate should provide a representative to serve on that search committee, because this committee is analogous to the presidential search committee and because the library serves all the students and faculty in UNH.

Regarding university institutes, the senate chair will meet with the provost this week and ask him if other groups besides EOS are in the process of applying to become university institutes. The senate office will work on constructing a time line showing actions, discussions and documents about university institutes. Marco Dorfsman has last year’s minutes from the Academic Affairs Committee, and the UCAPC minutes are available on the UCAPC website. The senate chair will ask the provost to clarify which is the current UNH Policy on University Institutes, because the document on the USNH Policy Manual website differs from the document the provost sent. The senate chair will also ask the provost to send the final draft of the EOS institute proposal, as well as the version of the university institute policy which was active when the EOS proposal was written.

The Faculty Senate chair had also written to Mark Rubinstein asking what steps the administration has taken to ensure that the Office of Financial Aid understands and will implement the agreement between the administration and the Faculty Senate regarding student scholarships. On 11/15/06, the vice president indicated that he was gathering information and would respond soon; but since there was no response so far, the senate chair recently sent another note.

The senate chair told the Academic Leadership Council and the president’s staff that the Faculty Senate is being responsive and responsible regarding its business and that, although the faculty contract settlement will be retroactive, the delays caused by work to rule will not be recoverable. The Discovery Program will not be implemented for the 2007 academic year at least.

III. Minutes – The senate unanimously except for one abstention approved the minutes of the last Faculty Senate meeting, with an amendment to insert the following after the first sentence of item IV: “Since the Faculty Senate is not entertaining any motions for action, the committee found that it would not be productive to move forward on preparing such motions at this time. The committee regrets the state of contract negotiations and is eager to get to work on the faculty's business.”

IV. Procedure for reviewing proposed university policy – Todd DeMitchell suggested that a procedure should be confirmed and clarified to track what is to be done when the administration brings a proposed procedure to the Faculty Senate. The Agenda Committee has concluded that a reconfirmation of shared governance is perhaps not needed as a senate motion; but some of the proposed material could become part of the senate’s orientation document, which would be useful

for both faculty senators and also candidates for university president. A task force could be instituted to modify the orientation document and might include Senators DeMitchell and Becker.

V. Presidential search – A senator inquired about the composition of the Presidential Search Committee, asking how it was chosen and if it had enough senior faculty and senior administrators as members. He expressed concern about the small number of candidates brought to campus and asked about their credentials and about whether an internal candidate was given sufficient consideration. Although this search committee has twelve rather than twenty members, it has the same number of faculty as last time: Professors Becker, Seavey and Stine, who are each from a different college. Senator Stine said that the committee has been unanimous in its decisions and that the faculty representation seems appropriate. Regarding the number of candidates who come to campus, it is hard for sitting university presidents to announce their candidacy for a new position elsewhere; and so it is rare to have more than two good university presidents agree to participate in the public stage of candidacy. After discussing the qualifications and experience of the two candidates who have agreed to come to the UNH campus, he added that the search committee felt that they were very good candidates. The two candidates for president have done well as professors, come from a good academic background, have a lot of experience working with a legislature, and are aware of a number of the current situations at this university. A professor expressed concern that university presidents usually do not stay a long time at UNH.

When the campus meetings with the candidates are completed, the search committee collects feedback about the candidates and passes it on to the chancellor and the chair of the Board of Trustees, usually with a ranked list of acceptable candidates. The Board of Trustees will make a choice after considering input from the faculty, the chancellor and the chair and vice chair of the Board of Trustees. Faculty may provide input via Senator Stine by Friday, December 15.

VI. Use of inessential technology by students in class – Senator Feldman said that students now bring to class a variety of electronic devices, which some of the students use for entertainment purposes. When students watch unrelated movies during class, this is distracting to other students and disrespectful to the professor and the university’s mission. **Senator Feldman moved and Senator Ferber seconded that the “Student Rights, Rules and Responsibilities” publication should be amended to indicate that students should not use technology in the classroom in a way that is distracting and unconnected to the academic mission and that the penalty could be as severe as failure in the course.** A professor suggested that the problem could be dealt with by giving frequent tests on the class material. Another faculty member said that she deals with such issues via the class syllabus and announces at the beginning of the semester what behavior will be required; and many senators agreed that this would be the most appropriate approach, since the syllabus is intended as a binding contract with the students. A few professors suggested that the matter be passed on to the senate’s Student Affairs Committee. Other faculty said that students look to faculty to control the learning environment in the classroom and that faculty should tell students to close the technological device or leave the classroom. A professor said that, although faculty prefer not to confront their students, even if the proposed change were made to the publication, the rule would still need to be implemented; and so confrontation would be needed. **The motion’s mover and seconder made a friendly amendment to the motion to say that these matters should be sent to the senate’s Student Affairs Committee for review. The motion to send the issue to that committee passed unanimously except for two abstentions.**

VII. Adjournment – Today’s meeting was adjourned.